

INSPECTION REPORT

WINDMILL HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Runcorn, Cheshire

LEA area: Halton

Unique reference number: 111177

Headteacher: Mrs E A Murdoch

Reporting inspector: Mrs Janet Gill
18706

Dates of inspection: 12th to 15th November 2001

Inspection number: 194601

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Windmill Hill Runcorn Cheshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Brian Lee
Date of previous inspection:	14 th April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18706	Mrs Janet Gill	Registered inspector	English Art & design Music Physical education Religious education Foundation stage Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
19664	Mr John Bayliss	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well is the school led and managed?
10204	Mr David Vincent	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography History Equal opportunities English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Windmill Hill Primary School was built as a Community School in 1978, as part of Runcorn New Town in the Borough of Halton. It has 107 full-time pupils in five classes from Reception to Year 6. There is a high rate of movement into and out of the school at other times than usual transfer times. Most of the pupils come from the surrounding area. The school is part of an Educational Action Zone and part of a Family Stress area. There is considerable unemployment and the school is subjected to vandalism and criminal damage. The school is smaller than at the last inspection and is smaller than the average sized school. This reflects the decline in the population in the area. There are approximately equal numbers of boys and girls. Children are admitted at the start of the year of their fifth birthday. Attainment on entry to Reception is well below average; it is weakest in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematics and social skills. Sixty one per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well above average. Nearly half of the pupils have special educational needs. Four of these pupils have a statement of special educational need. This is well above average. The school has gained Investor in People status for the third time.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Windmill Hill Primary School is a very effective school. The headteacher, strongly supported by all the staff and governors, is providing the school with outstanding leadership. She has already achieved positive improvements. The quality of teaching is good; as a result standards are improving. Pupils now achieve standards that are average at the end of Year 6 in mathematics and science. In English, however, they are below average. Children are enthusiastic, enjoy learning and make good progress. The school uses its resources well and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership which is directed at improving the quality of education and raising levels of achievement for all pupils, whatever their ability.
- There is very good teamwork. All staff fully support each other with an excellent shared commitment, and the capacity, to improve the school's provision for the pupils in their care.
- Standards are improving and are now at the expected levels in mathematics and science
- The quality of teaching is good overall, with very good teaching in the Foundation Stage¹ and for pupils with special educational needs. This helps all pupils to be fully included in lessons.
- The quality of the curriculum is good, it is very good in the Foundation Stage. This, combined with a stimulating learning environment, helps pupils make good progress.
- Behaviour management procedures and pupils' moral and social development are consistently very good. This results in pupils behaving well. Most of them have positive attitudes to school and learning.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing are not yet high enough throughout the school.
- Attendance levels are unsatisfactory and consistently below the average for primary schools.
- Teachers do not always share what it is their pupils are to learn in the lesson, or how to improve their work.

This area for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

¹ Nursery and the reception classes.

Improvement, since the last inspection in April 1997, has been very good. Under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, supported strongly by all staff and the governing body, leadership and management have remained very good. The school has taken very positive steps to address the key issues raised in the previous report in relation to standards, assessment, behaviour of pupils and cost effectiveness of spending. There have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching and this is one of the reasons that standards are rising and behaviour has improved. Very good improvement in the care and welfare of pupils, and their moral and social development, has led to their positive attitudes and improved behaviour. The governors' role has improved; they are proud of the significant strengths of the school and are aware of the weaknesses. The school is in a very strong position to continue to tackle its priorities.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	D	E	E	B
Mathematics	D	E*	A	A*
Science	E	E	A	A

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In the 2001 Year 6 National Curriculum tests, standards in mathematics and science were well above average, but well below average in English, particularly in writing. In comparison with pupils from schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, results were above average in English, in the top five per cent in mathematics and well above average in science. The school has worked hard to secure this improvement and exceeded its target for mathematics. However, in English the target was not met. The school has small classes and two higher attaining pupils in English, were absent for the tests which had a significant impact on the results. In addition, many of the pupils with special educational needs have significant difficulties in literacy. The improvement over the last four years has been greater than the national trend in all three subjects. Children enter Reception year with low attainment, particularly in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and social skills. Because attainment on entry is low, standards remains well below average in areas of learning at the end of the Foundation Stage. Pupils achieve well and make good progress throughout the school.

Currently, standards in Years 1 and 2 in English, mathematics and science are below average. Given pupils low starting point this represents good progress. Whilst in Years 3 to 6, pupils build successfully on their knowledge and skills and, by the age of eleven many are working at average levels in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science. Standards are not high enough in writing. The quality of teaching has improved significantly and having a positive impact upon pupils' achievement and their attitudes to learning. Average standards have been maintained in information and communication technology, religious education, design and technology, and physical education. Limited observations in music and geography in Years 1 and 2, and history in Years 3 to 6, meant that a judgement could not be made on standards. In art and design, standards have been maintained in Years 1 and 2, and are above average; they have improved in Years 3 to 6 and are now above average. The school has identified gifted and talented pupils in mathematics, art and sport and has started to address their needs in addition to those of pupils with special educational needs. This makes the school truly inclusive and helps all pupils succeed.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes to school are good. The pupils enjoy coming to school, work well together, sustain concentration, work hard and give of their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour throughout the school is good. Pupils behave well in the playground, playing together without any sign of bullying or other anti-social behaviour. There were thirteen fixed term exclusions in the last reporting year but this reflects the school's determination to ensure that its standards are upheld for the benefit of the majority.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. There is very good social inclusion within the school and harmonious relationships exist throughout the school community, both among pupils and between pupils and adults. The pupils respect the values and beliefs of others and this is apparent in the way they relate to each other.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory. It is below the national average. In spite of the best efforts of the school, children are taken out for holidays. This has an impact on progress as pupils miss important work

Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes help them to learn well.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching has improved significantly and is now good across the school. The strongest teaching is in Reception. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed in the school, and nine out of ten lessons were good or better. This is good quality teaching, and is one of the main reasons for the pupils' positive attitudes to their learning and their improving standards. The teaching of English and mathematics is consistently good or better in the majority of classes. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being implemented effectively. Standards are rising, although they not yet high enough in writing, partly because there are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length. Planning is satisfactory, although learning objectives are set they are not always shared explicitly with pupils, which is a relative weakness. In many ways pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own and each others' learning, as in PE, but pupils are not generally involved in devising and evaluating their own targets. Teachers manage pupils very effectively in lessons, with most pupils responding well. There are good opportunities for all pupils to learn and make progress, whatever their ability. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well in their learning. Teachers use very effective questioning to focus, check and extend pupils' thinking. Marking is good; it is positive and helps pupils improve their work. The use of homework is satisfactory, it is relevant to the lesson and consolidates and extends learning well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality of the curriculum is good; it is very good for children in Reception. There is a good emphasis on English and mathematics, which is helping to raise standards. All the subjects of the National Curriculum, as well as health and sex education are included. The school offers a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The management and provision for pupils with special educational needs are very good. They are very well supported by all staff, and make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good; it enhances the quality of learning. The school encourages pupils to think about, and care for others. The principles of right and wrong are clearly taught and pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and others. The school promotes a good understanding of other cultures and faiths through attractive displays of artefacts.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a safe, secure and caring learning environment, where children are happy. Health and safety and child protection procedures are very good. Assessment procedures have improved in English, mathematics and science and are developing in other subjects.

The school works very hard to maintain an effective partnership with parents. Involvement of parents and other helpers in the work of the school makes a positive contribution to the pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher sets an exceptionally clear direction for the school. She is very aware of what the school needs to do next to improve. This is shared with the staff and governors. There is very effective teamwork, and the headteacher and all staff show an excellent commitment to raise standards further.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their statutory duties well. They are very supportive of the headteacher. They know the school well and are committed to its further development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school works hard to self-evaluate its success and weaknesses and is well aware of its overall performance. The school has taken good action to improve, and is now a very effective school.
The strategic use of resources	Educational priorities are linked very well to financial commitments. The budget is very well planned and monitored by the headteacher and governors. Specific grants are used well to help pupils make good progress. Day-to-day procedures are very effective as a result of the efficient school's secretary. The school offers good value for money.

The principles of best value are very well understood and implemented by the headteacher and governors. The provision for staffing, accommodation and learning resources is good overall.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teaching is good• Behaviour is good• The school is very approachable• Children are expected to work hard• The school is well led and managed• The school helps children to become mature and responsible individuals	A very small number of parents expressed concern about: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school's homework policy• Information about progress• How the school works with them

Inspection evidence supports parents' positive views and finds no support for the concerns expressed by a very small number of parents. Homework policy is appropriate. There are plenty of opportunities for discussing attainment and progress. The school reaches out to parents to work in partnership with them.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When children start in the Reception at the beginning of the term in which they are five, their attainment is well below average compared to national expectations. Many children have poorly developed skills in communication and language, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and social skills, when they start school. Because of the very low standards on entry, attainment remains well below average in these areas of learning at the end of the Foundation Stage. While in Reception, children make good gains in all areas of learning because the teaching and provision for them is very good. By the end of the Foundation Stage many children are reaching standards expected for their age in personal, social and emotional development, and creative and physical development.
2. In the 2001 Year 2 National Curriculum tests, the results in reading, writing and mathematics were in the lowest five per cent nationally. There were no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. Results were well below average in all three subjects, when compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. It is the lack of pupils reaching the higher levels that depresses the overall scores. However, given that many pupils join the school with limited experiences and underdeveloped literacy skills, the standards achieved constitute good progress. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards appropriate for their ability, and they make good progress over time. Teacher assessments in science indicate that the standards are well below average nationally, and below average when compared with similar schools. Despite the below average levels in all subjects, standards are nevertheless improving. They are beginning to rise at the end of the present Year 2, as a result of good teaching and provision. For example, in the present Year 2, there is a small group of pupils who are clearly achieving Level 3 in reading.
3. In the 2001 Year 6 National Curriculum tests, the results in English were well below average, but in mathematics and science they were well above the national average. When compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, standards are below average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. There has been steady improvement in English and a dramatic rise in mathematics and science. This is because of the high focus on mathematics and science since the last inspection, when standards in both subjects were unsatisfactory. This meant that targets set for mathematics were exceeded. However, standards are below average in English at the time of the inspection because of the significant number of pupils with special educational needs, particularly in literacy. In addition standards are affected adversely by the high level of pupil mobility. The school is determined to make further improvements and reach the targets set for 2002 in English, as they were not met in 2001. This was partly due to two pupils being on holiday who were likely to gain at least Level 4 in English. This had a significant impact on the overall results.
4. Overall, the trend in the school's improvement since 1997 has been above the national trend. Challenging targets have been set for the current year. Given the good tracking of pupils' progress, evidence suggests that targets are likely to be met. The school keeps good tracking records of individuals, and it is evident that there is an improvement in standards. However, cohorts of pupils are often small and some degree of caution has to be taken when interpreting overall data. The school was disappointed that they did not reach their targets for English. Higher targets have been set for the current Year 6. These are likely to be met, with a significant group likely to achieve Level 5 in the tests.
5. Improvements have been secured due to successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Effective monitoring by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators, has had a direct impact on the improved quality of teaching and learning. English, mathematics and science have had a high profile in the school and have been well resourced. There has been good

analysis of test results and pupils' progress. This contributes well to teachers' medium-term planning, and will identify pupils for booster classes next term. Teachers know what it is they need to teach, which means the work is set at the appropriate level. In English and mathematics the school has identified able pupils in Year 4, these pupils join older pupils in lessons. The school successfully ensures all pupils, whatever their ability, have good opportunities to achieve. This is good educational inclusion.

6. Inspection findings indicate that in English standards are still below average, but they have improved and are still improving. A few pupils are attaining the higher levels, but still too few to raise the standard overall. When children start school, their attainment is well below average. Good progress is made throughout the school. Overall, standards of attainment in speaking and listening are broadly in line with the national average throughout the school. There are a few pupils who have below average standards. This is because they have difficulty verbalising what it is they want to say because their vocabulary is limited. By the end of Year 2 standards in reading are just below average, with a significant group of pupils reaching higher levels. At the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment in reading is average. Good progress is made throughout the school. Reading standards are improving because pupils are benefiting from the increased focus on reading both fiction and non-fiction in literacy. Some pupils do not have enough reading practise at home; this hinders their progress. Inspection evidence from lessons and the scrutiny of work indicates that, by the end of both key stages, writing is below the national average. However, at the end of Year 6, there are a few pupils reaching the higher levels, but there are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length. Teachers offer their pupils a good range of work within literacy and across the curriculum. They encourage their pupils to write in a variety of forms, but standards at the end of both key stages are still below average because pupils do not use interesting vocabulary, extended sentences or use more advanced punctuation. In addition, some initiatives to raise achievement have not been in place long enough to have had a significant impact upon standards. Handwriting and presentation have improved since the last inspection, and spelling is improving in Years 1 and 2 since the introduction of a new spelling programme.
7. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are improving significantly in mathematics by the end of Year 6. Raising standards in mathematics was a key issue in the previous report and whilst achievement at the end of Year 1 is below average, this still represents a significant gain from the very limited levels of mathematical knowledge and understanding children have when they enter the school. Continuing good progress results in standards that are similar to the national average at the end of Year 6. The reason that the present Year 6 is not likely to achieve such high standards as in 2001 is because there are more pupils with special educational needs in the class, and a few are not likely to achieve the average level. All pupils gained the average level, and above, in 2001. However, the proportion of pupils gaining the average and higher levels is a considerable achievement, bearing in mind their very low attainment on entry to the school. By the end of Year 2 most pupils count to 100 and beyond. They can mentally add and subtract numbers to 10, and sometimes beyond this. The proportion who are beginning to understand place value, use some of the multiplication tables, understand halves and quarters is, however, below average. Many require additional support in order to collect information systematically and to construct simple graphs to illustrate their findings. Too few are able to make independent decisions, as they use and apply their mathematics to solve problems. By the end of Year 6 the proportion of pupils who are able to add, subtract, multiply and divide, with expected competence and accuracy, is similar to the average. Pupils' understanding of decimals, fractions and percentages is in line with that expected. Pupils collect, interpret data, and use a range of graphical representation when applying mathematics to different situations. Standards are broadly average. The school due places an emphasis on pupils' numeracy skills, which are used across the curriculum well. They apply their mathematical skills in subjects, such as science and design and technology, when they measure accurately, before cutting wood and produce graphs and charts.
8. There have been a number of improvements since the inspection report of 1997 that are having a positive impact on standards in science. There are better assessment procedures and more attention to investigative work. The rate of improvement in Years 3 to 6 has been particularly rapid. Standards have improved in science and are continuing to do so. Many children enter the school with knowledge and understanding which is well below that expected for their age. Achievement in

science is below the national average at the end of Year 2, but average by the end of Year 6. The reason that standards are likely to be average and not as high as in 2001 is similar to the situation in mathematics, where there are a few pupils who not likely to gain the average level. Pupils in Year 2 identify a range of common materials and describe some of the similarities and differences and undertake simple classification. However, many require support and guidance when conducting scientific investigations. In all these areas attainment is below average, but this still represents a significant gain from the time they enter school. Pupils conduct scientific investigations with increasing confidence, and they have a sound understanding of fair testing. They are encouraged to design tests, hypothesise, predict outcomes, and to reach conclusions based on the evidence available. They display good independence when investigating.

9. By the end of both key stages, pupils achieve standards similar to those found nationally in information and communication technology (ICT). The improved expertise and confidence of the teachers, and better planning, is helping to raise standards. All year groups are making good progress because of this. The provision of up-to-date resources in the ICT suite is improving the breadth of learning. By the end of Year 2 pupils have built up the basic skills of ICT. By the end of Year 6 pupils use e-mail to convey messages. They log on confidently, and use the Internet well, to help their work in other subjects. Word processing skills are extended and pupils are very competent in this aspect of their work. Many, for example, are able to combine text, colour and pictures. Most enter, sort and classify data and present the findings using a good range of graphical representations. There is good use of pupils' ICT skills across the curriculum. For example, Year 2 pupils use a variety of tools well in a painting program to create effective pictures in art and design.
10. Standards have been maintained in religious education in both key stages, and are in line with the expectations as set out in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make sound progress in their understanding and knowledge of Christianity and other world faiths. They have a satisfactory understanding of special places and what it means to be special. They are familiar with stories, festivals and ceremonies from Christianity and Hinduism. In Years 3 to 6, pupils build on their knowledge of stories from the bible and world religions satisfactorily.
11. Due to the way the curriculum is arranged there was too little work available in history in Years 1 and 2, and geography in Years 3 to 6, to make a judgement about standards. In music, as in the last inspection, there was limited evidence in all but singing, which is average. Standards have been maintained and they meet national expectations in design and technology, geography (Years 1 and 2), history (Years 3 to 6) and physical education (PE). In art and design above average standards have been maintained in Years 1 and 2. They have risen in Years 3 to 6, where standards are now well above average. In PE, by the end of Year 2, pupils move confidently around the hall. They display satisfactory levels of control and agility and they move and balance with the expected level of competence. Often at the end of Year 6, there is higher attainment in PE. Evidence from planning and discussions with pupils, indicate that by the end of Year 6 pupils acquire satisfactory skills in swimming, so that by the time they leave the school the majority of pupils swim at least 25 metres.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The inspection in 1997 found that most pupils had a satisfactory attitude to learning but a number were less responsive, unenthusiastic and lacked the ability to concentrate. It is a much improved picture now, with the very large majority of the pupils having good attitudes to learning and being well motivated. Throughout the school the pupils are polite, friendly and well behaved. They are confident and relate easily with adults, although never in a disrespectful way. They are keen to come to school and show an above average level of interest in whatever they are doing. They listen carefully and courteously to teachers, almost all being very ready to participate in question and answer sessions, doing so in a sensible and mature way. They work well together and individually, readily taking turns and showing a willingness to apply themselves to whatever task is presented to them. This is particularly noticeable when, frequently, teaching is stimulating and pupils are swept along with the excitement of the lessons. There is a keenness to collect rewards for good behaviour and effort. All the pupils readily involve themselves in charitable activities showing

recognition of the need to help those less fortunate than themselves. Inspectors confirm the view of most parents that the school is helping pupils to become mature and responsible individuals. The attitudes displayed by the pupils help their learning.

13. Children enter the school with immature skills in personal and social development. This area of development is given a high priority to good effect. Teaching is very good which helps most children make good progress and, as a result, some are likely to reach the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve. The relationship between staff and children, and those who care for them, is very good. Children quickly learn to work and to have respect for each other. They become independent, and concentrate and persevere in their learning. Adults have very high expectations of children's behaviour. Children respond well, learn to know what is right and what is wrong quickly, and why they should behave in an appropriate way. They line up quietly and walk sensibly through the school to get to the hall for some of their activities, where they listen to instructions and respond appropriately. They are keen to work with adults, such as sharing and discussing books, where they listen carefully to each other describing the events in 'Bear Hunt'.
14. There is an ethos of good behaviour, and an orderly and constructive atmosphere throughout the school, that encourages learning to take place. This is a much improved picture since the previous inspection. It was good to see all pupils, even the youngest children relatively new to the school, responding well to the high standards of behaviour expected. Boys and girls of all ages and backgrounds get on well with each other, showing respect for the feelings of others. Break times are pleasant social occasions when the pupils behave well, playing together without any sign of bullying or other anti-social behaviour. There is some boisterous behaviour in the playground but no more than that to be expected when pupils are given the opportunity to let off steam away from the constraints of the classroom. The standard of pupils' behaviour in classrooms, in the playground, when moving about the school, and when eating their lunch, is usually good and frequently very good. No unsatisfactory behaviour, other than of a very minor nature, was observed during the inspection. Nothing was seen to suggest that when misbehaviour occurs it is oppressive, or that there is vindictive bullying or sexism within the school.
15. Although there were thirteen fixed term exclusions in the last reporting year, reflecting the school's determination to ensure that its standards are upheld for the benefit of the majority. The misdemeanours were associated with pupils having recognised behaviour problems who are not typical of the pupils as a whole.
16. Pupils' personal development is very good. It is much improved since the previous inspection when it was judged to be 'generally satisfactory'. There is social inclusion within the school and harmonious relationships exist throughout the school community. The pupils respond very well to the school's very good provision for their personal development, which contributes to a positive learning environment within the school. They have opportunities to assume responsibility that steadily increase throughout their school life. They enjoy being monitors, happily accepting a range of responsibilities such as being school and class monitors, helping with assemblies or when acting as 'toast monitors' preparing and distributing morning snacks. The pupils are diligent in fulfilling these responsibilities, which they undertake with enthusiasm. They work well on their own or in group activities readily offering help to each other. Relationships are very good, both among pupils and between pupils and adults. The pupils respect the values and beliefs of others and this is apparent in the way they relate to each other, both in lessons and elsewhere.
17. Attendance levels have been consistently below the average for primary schools nationally in recent years, but there is no truancy and very little unauthorised absence. There has been some improvement in the level since the previous inspection. Overall, the school's performance is unsatisfactory. There is a considerable incidence of short term illness reported by parents which, together with parents organising holidays during term time, in a small school, has a disproportionate effect on the overall picture as a single absence represents a movement of some one percent in overall attendance. Absence is a concern to the school because of the impact that it has on the attainment of those pupils that are involved. There is some lateness but when it occurs it is of a minor nature and not disruptive to lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. Improvements in the quality of teaching have made a significant contribution to the rise in standards seen since the school was last inspected. In the April 1997 inspection a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching was seen, although the majority was satisfactory or better. The improvements in the standard of teaching are largely due to the very good monitoring and development of this aspect of the school's work. In the current inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Of the 33 lessons seen, the majority (30) were good or better with 14 being very good and one excellent. Very good teaching was seen across all year groups and also the majority of subjects. However, teaching in the Foundation Stage was virtually all very good. The teaching of some foundation subjects as topics in half termly blocks means it is not possible to make an overall judgement about teaching in geography at Key Stage 2, and history at Key Stage 1. Too little music was seen in both key stages to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. However, it appears from the quality of pupils' singing in assembly that teaching is at least good in this element of the music curriculum. The high levels of good and better teaching results in good learning taking place throughout the school.
19. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very effective. This, coupled with a very good curriculum that is well structured, ensures that all children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Excellent teamwork between the class teacher and the learning support assistant helps to create a safe, secure and stimulating environment, where effective learning takes place. In line with the very good procedures implemented throughout the school, children's personal, social and emotional development is given a high priority to good effect. Teaching is very good in this area which helps most children make good progress and, as a result, some are likely to reach the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Classroom organisation and the management of children are extremely effective. The arrangements for teaching literacy and numeracy are good when they are taught in small groups, following a whole class introduction. Children are set appropriate work and those that need extra support are identified and supported very well, which greatly enhances learning. Teachers make learning fun, create a sense of anticipation, and use resources very effectively, as in a music lesson where the teacher had wrapped instruments for the children to identify.
20. There are very few weaknesses in any elements of teaching. Teachers have good expertise, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. As a result, the majority of the basic skills are well taught and pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress in learning and using these. Reading skills and the skills of writing for different purposes are taught well. There is a better emphasis on promoting presentation and handwriting skills, and learning the spelling rules, where they are closely linked to sounds. Despite the current good teaching of writing skills some of the initiatives are relatively new, such as the spelling programme; consequently there has not been sufficient time for pupils to achieve higher standards. Also there are too few opportunities offered to pupils to write at length in literacy.
21. Numeracy skills are promoted well. Many pupils experience difficulty in the more subtle aspects of the English language, therefore teachers have to work hard to ensure that concepts are understood. There is a good focus on ensuring that pupils acquire a suitable mathematical vocabulary, as well as the mental recall of basic number facts and simple calculations. This helps learning to be productive. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. They also make sure that pupils learn to apply their skills in practical and problem solving activities in other subjects, such as design and technology.
22. Science is taught well. Teachers effectively use scientific inquiry as a means of successfully developing knowledge and understanding across the various aspects of the subject. ICT skills are taught well, and the quality of teaching is good in both key stages. Teachers and learning support assistants have good levels of expertise and expectations, which helped pupils in a Year 5/6 prepare a 'Powerpoint' presentation relating to their personal interest.

23. The quality of lesson planning is satisfactory overall. It is well related to medium-term planning, with effective adaptation according to the progress pupils have made previously. A good feature of the planning is the clear learning objectives identified for each lesson. However these are not always shared explicitly with pupils, which is a relative weakness. In the very best lessons, these are revisited at the end of the lesson and pupils are asked for their opinion on the progress they have made. This approach helps to motivate and challenge pupils and ensures they gain a good knowledge of what they are learning. In all lessons in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, pupils are grouped according to their ability. In English and mathematics in Years 4 to 6, the class groups are organised by ability across the three years. This is very effective in allowing teachers to plan focused work for pupils, and gives very good opportunities for younger higher attaining pupils, who work with older pupils. In all these lessons teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and this, together with the interesting activities provided, results in the vast majority of pupils achieving well, whatever their ability.
24. An effective range of teaching methods is used, being adapted well to both the requirements of different subjects and the needs of pupils in the class. Teachers explain things very clearly, give good examples and demonstrate well. Teachers use very effective questioning to focus, check and extend pupils' thinking. For example, in religious education, although the teacher had to work hard to draw ideas from pupils, she received appropriate responses to what they had learnt about Islam through her effective questioning. The good teaching methods seen throughout the school in all subjects help pupils to acquire knowledge and skills easily, and to work hard.
25. The very good relationships seen in the school, together with the consistent application of the very high quality behaviour management procedures, ensure that the organisation and control of pupils in lessons is very good. A particularly good example of this was seen in a Year 3 numeracy lesson when all pupils were kept very well focused on the lesson, despite a few who found it difficult to concentrate. This very strong aspect of teaching, together with the challenging and interesting activities provided, means pupils are interested in what they learn. Most concentrate well and begin to take responsibility for their own learning. A particularly good aspect of pupils' learning is promoted well by the many opportunities pupils are given to discuss their work with a partner, and then report back to the whole class. A good example of this was seen in Year 1 / 2 literacy and science lesson, where pupils had to work out the differences and similarities of their features and then tell the whole class. Further opportunities are given to pupils to discuss their work in assembly. This promotes speaking and listening opportunities very well, as well as promoting pupils' self-esteem and a pride in their work.
26. The contribution made by the learning support assistants is of a very high quality. This is partly due to the fact that they receive very good training from the school. In addition, class teachers prepare well for the work they undertake in each lesson. They give particularly good support in ensuring the pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities, which helps them to achieve well for their capabilities. Teachers are very skilled at moving learning forward and in all lessons a good pace is maintained, ensuring that pupils remain focused. Resources are very carefully chosen and effectively used to help pupils understand and make good progress. This is especially so in literacy lessons where the careful selection and use of texts gives very good support to learning. The use of homework is satisfactory. It is used particularly in literacy and numeracy, where it is relevant to the lesson and consolidates and extends learning well. However, not all pupils are given the support at home in some homework, including reading.
27. The scrutiny of work that pupils had done previously showed good quality of marking, particularly in literacy and numeracy, where teachers are successfully marking and evaluating pupils' work. This allows them to clearly identify which pupils have learnt a new skill or concept and which of them still need support. This information is then used effectively to help plan the next stages in learning. What is often missing from these good arrangements is sharing individual targets for improvement with the pupils. This would help them to improve as they would then know what they have to achieve next.
28. The provision and the teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. When pupils are withdrawn to work with the special needs teacher very good teaching and learning takes place.

Class teachers have a very good knowledge of the needs of individual pupils in their class, and work is well matched to pupils' needs. Careful planning helps pupils to achieve their targets in their individual education plan. On some occasions, teachers work with the lower ability groups and then good progress is made, with pupils achieving well for their abilities. In a Year 4 / 5 literacy lesson, the teacher worked with lower attaining pupils stressing the correct sounds for 'th' words, which helped them to make good progress. There is very effective liaison between the class teachers, teacher for special educational needs and the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). This helps the pupils make good progress.

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

29. There has been a good response to the curricular weaknesses identified in the last inspection. There was criticism of planning and this is now at least satisfactory. The programmes of teaching, which were said to be in need of greater clarity, are now satisfactorily specified although further definition is needed in some subjects. Shortcomings in the programme of multi-cultural education have been rectified.
30. The school teaches all the subjects required by the National Curriculum and meets the legal requirements. The requirements for religious education are also met. The curriculum offered provides a good range of opportunities for learning. In particular, the school successfully motivates its pupils to have a good attitude to work and this has a positive effect upon their learning. The school places considerable emphasis upon English and mathematics and although this puts pressure upon the time available for other subjects, all are given a secure place in the overall programme. Satisfactory links between subjects are established and this has the effect of enhancing the meaningfulness of learning. The topic relating to Egypt, for example, provides opportunities to develop geography, history, writing and art. The school has introduced the National Literacy Strategy effectively and there is good use of literacy skills in other subjects. The National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented with consistency and care and this is having a good effect upon the provision for mathematics. The use of numeracy to help learning in other subjects is good.
31. The school is determined to provide an education which meets the particular needs of each of its pupils, and lessons routinely contain activities designed specifically for the higher and lower achievers. Pupils with a particular talent, such as art, are identified accurately and the school is beginning to make provision to further enhance such gifts. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and the requirements of the Code of Practice are fully met. Pupils with the potential for higher achievement are encouraged and challenged. This is a school in which every pupil is valued and encouraged to flower. The dedication and hard work of all who work at the school creates a warm, secure environment. Staff are extremely sensitive to the personal circumstances and characteristics of each pupil. There is genuine belief that pupils can achieve high standards in work and relationships with others. No effort is spared to provide opportunities which will enable pupils to develop into well-adjusted, capable persons. The whole thrust of the school is to ensure that every child is included in this process.
32. The governing body has approved an appropriate policy for the teaching of sex education and matters relating to health education are given considerable emphasis. The school's programme for health education includes the required emphasis upon the dangers associated with the misuse of drugs as the school seeks to ensure that pupils are provided with the knowledge and awareness which will help them make informed choices as they grow older. The personal development of pupils is given a high priority and a programme that deals with a range of important and sensitive issues is successfully delivered. The development of good relationships and consideration for others is deeply embedded in the life and work of the school. Considerable efforts are made to develop pupils' self-esteem, to enrich their experiences and to develop them as 'rounded', confident young people. Overall, the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.

33. The school has adopted sound guidance in order to describe what should be taught to each class. This documentation provides a satisfactory basis for ensuring that a balanced programme is delivered. In some areas, for example, map-work in geography, further definition is required to ensure that skills and knowledge are built more systematically. There is keen awareness of the need to review the way subjects are taught and the staff meet regularly to discuss curricular matters and to improve their expertise. Staff are keen to extend their professional knowledge and training in mathematics and ICT are recent examples of how this has enabled teachers to deliver the curriculum more effectively. There is a clear determination, shared by all associated with the school, to continue the process of curricular improvement.
34. The number of extra-curricular activities, which is largely dependant upon the voluntary efforts of teachers and others, is satisfactory and the school regularly organises a number of inter-school competitive events. Visits to places of educational value, including a residential visit, make beneficial contributions to several subjects.
35. Satisfactory links with the community are evident. The school has established valuable contacts with a number of local companies such as ICI and these are used productively to generate educational opportunities for pupils. A visit to the local church, for example, provided meaningful experiences to enhance work in religious education, history and geography whilst a visiting scientist provided opportunities for practical, scientific investigation. The school is used extensively by various local groups and, whilst this does not impact directly upon pupils' learning, it helps to promote the association with the community.
36. Links with other educational institutions are also satisfactory. Teachers meet regularly with their colleagues in other schools in order to pool ideas and to ensure that the move between the Primary and Secondary stages is as smooth as possible. The school participates in a number of innovative schemes involving other schools. This often has the effect of increasing teachers' expertise, making more sophisticated facilities available and providing stimulating opportunities for pupils. The sharing of a technician to support ICT, for example, promotes greater efficiency in the use of resources and of teachers' time. The school has recently been involved in setting up initiatives for improvement with the Educational Action Zone, as yet there has been too little time in this partnership to make an impact on standards.
37. As was found when inspected previously, the school is very successful in the promotion of personal development including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, through assemblies and in other areas of the curriculum. This very good provision, firmly embedded in the school aims, enriches the curriculum and helps to raise pupils' self esteem.
38. Provision for spiritual development and the quality of collective worship is good. Statutory requirements for a daily act of worship are met by whole school assemblies every day except Thursday, when class teachers organise prayers that focus on the days work. Spiritual development is effectively promoted by opportunities for reflection on assembly themes, using a lit candle as a focus, and an awareness of the beliefs and views of others. There are very good links with the local parish church with the Vicar visiting the school regularly to lead the act of collective worship. Reception children were fascinated by a visit to the Church during the inspection week, when the Vicar tolled the bell for them and let them look at the font and kneel around the altar for a prayer. Vibrant and attractive displays around the school provide opportunities for stimulation and consideration of spiritual matters. Teachers implement the school's policy for spiritual development in lessons in a satisfactory way. In the best lessons the pupils are given time to reflect and consider what they have been learnt and how it impacts on their daily life. Pupils gain knowledge and understanding of their own and other people's beliefs and feelings through religious education. Overall the school is working effectively to promote spiritual awareness with a consequent positive impact on the development of the pupils.
39. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. All staff promote the principles of right from wrong consistently, and they are very good role models for the pupils. Pupils are taught to reflect on theirs and others' actions. Opportunities for reflection are provided in Circle Time

lessons, such as that, when Year 3 pupils considered the moral and social implications of their discussion on how to deal with feelings of anger. This clear moral code provides a firm basis for the good behaviour evident throughout the school, both in the classroom and outside. School assemblies provide opportunities to show consideration for others, to empathise, listen to others and learn to respect their views. The pupils are frequently given the opportunity to work together in pairs and in larger groups or in team games. The pupils are taught to be polite to visitors and to other members of the school community and to show an awareness of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves, when, for example they involve themselves in charitable activities. They are encouraged to care for their environment and do so in a sensible and mature way. The pupils undertake a wide range of responsibilities and duties, are involved in team games, and experience a number of residential and other trips that promote their social development.

40. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to appreciate their own and others' cultural traditions. Much of this is delivered through the curriculum, for example, through stories from other cultures and religions, studies of contrasting communities in geography, and the work of a range of artists. A variety of musical styles presented at the start and close of assemblies stimulates interest. Visitors provide expertise for workshops in dance, drama, artwork, music appreciation and composition, and singing. These enhance pupils' awareness of customs and traditions in their own and other's lives and although there are only limited opportunities the school provides appropriately for life in a multi-cultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school's procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. Its provision for the care of the pupils had a number of strengths at the time of the previous inspection. There was high quality support and guidance given by teachers and support staff who showed genuine care and concern for the pupils' welfare. These features have been further developed. The need identified at the time of the previous inspection to develop strategies to improve behaviour has been addressed successfully. The very effective support provided by the school enhances the quality of education provided.
42. Led by the very caring headteacher, who puts the interests of the pupils before everything else, all members of the school community work together to provide surroundings in which the pupils feel well cared for and secure. Educational and social inclusion have a high profile in the school so that all the pupils are treated equally, and given proper support appropriate to individual need whatever their background or personal circumstances. All staff respond sensitively and positively to these individual needs. The school is successful in promoting social integration and harmonious relationships exist both in and out of the classroom. Lunch time supervisory staff, who relate well to the pupils, provide effective support during lunch times that has a positive effect on behaviour and safety.
43. There is an emphasis on the whole child with their individual welfare needs being recognised so that they are given support appropriate to them. The health of the pupils is supported by the provision of milk, fruit drinks and fresh fruit every day. Toast and crumpets are particularly welcome at morning break times. The positive emphasis on care and support allows the pupils, whatever their personal situation, to enjoy their time at school secure in the knowledge that when they need help or advice it will be given by staff that have a good knowledge of them as individuals. Year 6 pupils tell inspectors that the school is a good one because the teachers are kind, helpful and give good explanations.
44. School staff and governors, who undertake regular risk assessments, have proper regard for the health and safety of the school community. Effective supervision ensures that the physical well being of all is protected. Fire safety and first aid arrangements are good. The school's procedures for dealing with the very occasional accident are good and appropriate records are maintained. There are good procedures for liaison with parents when necessary.

45. Child protection arrangements are very good. They meet statutory requirements. All members of staff understand their duty to be aware of the need to be attentive and they undertake this responsibility conscientiously and well.
46. The school tries hard to improve attendance. It is enjoying some success. It recognises that absence from school reduces the quality of learning, and can, as last year, significantly affect the school's published performance in national assessment tests. Procedures for recording absence and punctuality are rigorous. Morning registration routines are efficient in all classes and there is a prompt start to the day. Records of attendance are properly maintained and comply with statutory requirements. Through its recent involvement in the local Education Action Zone the school has targeted attendance levels with a strategy to increase liaison with parents so that they understand the need for regular attendance. First day contact with parents is having some effect on those parents inclined to keep their children away from school for very minor reasons. It is not for want of trying that the school has been unable to raise overall attendance levels further than has been the case so far.
47. The policies that are in place for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. They are well focused on the need to promote good behaviour and there is good definition of rewards and sanctions. These are well understood and accepted by the great majority of the pupils. The need to continue to develop strategies to improve the behaviour of some pupils, identified during the previous inspection, has been addressed positively. Despite having a number of pupils with recognised behaviour problems, some of whom have individual behaviour plans, all teachers have good strategies for dealing with the occasional instances of inappropriate behaviour and as a result there is very little disruption to the flow of lessons.
48. The school has very good arrangements, including comprehensive tracking sheets, for the promotion and monitoring of pupils' personal development. The promotion of personal development is a strong feature of the school's provision with many opportunities being provided. Formal arrangements for monitoring, including teacher records and summaries in the pupils' annual reports, are supported by informal arrangements that benefit from teachers' good knowledge of pupils as individuals.
49. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. Formal assessments relate largely to English, mathematics and science and are characterised by their cohesive structure and by the systematic way in which data is recorded. The school carefully considers what it is seeking to achieve, and then uses a wide range of data to identify the strengths and weaknesses in what it is providing. This information forms the basis for whole school initiatives and for individual targets. The latter are not always presented to the pupils as a series of short-term, attainable targets that give a sense of purpose and achievement. Improving standards in pupils' writing and enhancing skills in solving mathematical problems are examples of how the school has used data analysis to establish its priorities for improvement. In addition teachers make a regular evaluation of the success of their lessons and adapt forthcoming lessons accordingly. These measures constitute good use of the assessment data in determining what should be taught next.
50. The previous inspection report judged the assessment procedures as lacking rigour and to be insufficiently related to the content of the National Curriculum programmes. Assessment is now much more thorough and is closely related to the taught programmes. The analysis and influence of this data is likely to be increasingly more effective as systems become well established and further planned initiatives are introduced. Overall, the school has made a good response to the issues raised.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. Parents are supportive of the school. They think it is a good one, liking much of its provision for their children. The parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and those who attended the pre-inspection parents' meeting, have positive views about almost all aspects of the

school's provision for their children, although some aspects do not score quite so highly as at the time of the previous inspection. Parents' views about the standard of behaviour have improved considerably since the previous inspection.

52. Areas of concern, now indicated by a very small number of parents, remain the school's homework arrangements together with new worries about how they are advised about progress and the ease of approaching the school. Other than these, no significant negative views were expressed by parents. The particular strengths of the school identified by parents are that behaviour is good, teaching is good, the school is approachable, their children are expected to work hard, the school is well led and managed and it helps their children to become mature and responsible individuals. Inspection evidence supports parents' positive views but finds no support for the concerns expressed by a small number of parents. The school's homework policy is well explained and appropriate, there are plenty of opportunities for discussing attainment and progress, and the school reaches out to parents to work in partnership with them.
53. Since the previous inspection the school has developed its links with parents and they are now very good. Most of the good features found at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained. Others have been further developed. Home-school links are supported by a home-school contract that provides for commitment to the improvement of standards. The school adopts an 'open door' policy and parents and other helpers are warmly welcomed into school. They are encouraged to actively participate in its work. An excellent example of working in true partnership, is the invitation extended to parents of the school's youngest children to spend the first twenty minutes of every day in class sharing a variety of activities with their children. This is a most enjoyable and effective start to the day. It is a time enjoyed by parents, staff and children alike. Elsewhere the involvement of parents in social and fund raising activities, in sports coaching and helping with school trips, is good. Parental support at home is variable; being a function of personal circumstances, but, overall, it is good. The involvement of parents and other helpers in the work of the school makes a positive contribution to the pupils' learning.
54. The quality of information provided formally by the school is very good. Newsletters, class letters, pre-school visits, parents' meetings, questionnaires and curriculum evenings provide parents with a wide range of information about school activities and the progress made by their children. The school prospectus with the complementary information for new parents and the wide range of information contained in the parents' handbook, and the governors' annual report to parents are well organised and helpful to parents although the latter is somewhat brief.
55. Parents are informed very well of their child's progress and development at formal parents' evenings throughout the year and, annually, through a written report. The quality of the latter is good. Although there is some inconsistency between teachers, and more information might be provided about how attainment compares with that expected for their age, parents are presented with individual reports giving a good view of what their children know and can do. There is good use of a general progress section with well focused and objective comment, and target setting, which is clearly the result of teachers taking much time and trouble to make these reports truly individual. The reports meet statutory requirements fully.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. Windmill Hill Primary School is very well led and managed. All the key issues identified at the time of the previous inspection have been addressed positively. The headteacher and senior staff manage the school very capably. The leadership provided by the headteacher is outstanding. She has maintained the strong commitment to providing a clear educational direction to the school that was a feature of her work when inspected previously. She is not complacent and has a clear view of what the school needs to do to improve the quality of the pupils' education and the standards they attain. It is her determination to do the best for all the pupils, whatever their aptitude or background, that fires the rest of her staff to join with her to make the school the success it is.

57. Appropriate monitoring measures have been introduced since the previous inspection. For example, pupils' progress is tracked from the time they enter the school and the headteacher has good arrangements in place for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school as evidenced by the improvements made to the overall quality of teaching. Staff work together to identify issues for whole-school development. They have contributed to the successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. As a result, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum tests, taken by pupils at the end of Year 6, has shown progressive improvement in recent years. This is despite facing many challenges, not least of which is the impact of a high proportion of the pupils joining the school mid way through their formative schooling, and hence not enjoying the positive start enjoyed by those who join the school in the reception class
58. The school's mission statement sets out to develop confident, caring, enquiring individuals, prepared for the future, and in this it is successful. The headteacher sees her main role as to ensure the quality of teaching and learning, to promote the school's aim to provide a supportive and successful educational experience for all the school's pupils. In this she has been, and is, spectacularly successful. Since the previous inspection the quality of teaching has improved from what was predominately satisfactory and often good, to what is now consistently good with much of it very good. The small element of unsatisfactory teaching seen during the previous inspection has not been repeated this time. The headteacher has generated a strong team spirit amongst the staff. It is no surprise that the school has maintained its Investors in People status. All staff fully support each other with an excellent shared commitment, and capacity, to improving the school's provision for the pupils in their care. There is a consistency of approach that ensures that the school's fundamental aims and values are reflected in everything that they do. This results in a well-ordered, stimulating and pleasant learning environment in which pupils are able to learn effectively. It looks easy, but much effort is put in by the whole school community to make it appear so.
59. A range of responsibilities has been appropriately delegated to staff all of whom have subject and other responsibilities in addition to their teaching commitment. Job descriptions clearly define responsibilities that are shouldered happily and with considerable confidence. In general, supported by the school's very good provision for appraisal and performance management, teachers have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are playing an increasingly active part in the further raising of standards although as yet, with the time constraints that apply in a small school where staff carry a heavier load than in bigger school, they have had only limited opportunities to observe teaching, learning and the delivery of their subjects in classrooms, other than their own. Therefore, there is some room for improvement in this aspect of their work. Overall, however, they have a very good understanding of their subjects and work enthusiastically at managing them efficiently. They provide support, encouragement and help to ensure the consistency of approach, which is such a strong feature in the school.
60. The deputy headteacher, as well as her responsibilities for English and Key Stage 1 co-ordination, is also the special educational needs co-ordinator. She works diligently, co-ordinating the work of the special needs teacher and the learning support assistants, together with visiting specialists. Thorough individual education plans and reviews are undertaken, with good liaison with parents when necessary.
61. The governing body has developed its role since the inspection in 1997. It now fulfils its duty to be a critical friend of the school effectively. The governors are well informed and have a clear picture of what goes on in the school. They are rightly proud of the school, showing an active interest in all aspects of its work. Governors are properly involved in the work of the school both as members of various committees and as individuals properly undertaking their responsibilities. They liaise closely with the school, offer support and monitor developments in provision and standards. Governors fulfil their statutory duties fully, including agreeing performance targets. They are helping to shape the direction of the school in a quiet, supportive way.
62. The school's priorities for development and the action taken to meet its targets are very well chosen and implemented very well. They are set out clearly in the school's development plan,

together with specific targets and suitable action plans to help it achieve its intention. There is a good focus on the promotion of improved standards. The school has a carefully worked out plan of key targets, together with additional supplementary targets relating to management training and the premises. In addition, each curriculum area has a carefully considered development plan, which is the responsibility of the co-ordinator to fulfil. Financial planning effectively links spending with priorities in the improvement plan. This enables governors and the headteacher to systematically and thoroughly review the progress being made towards improvement targets and amend the plan, where necessary, to ensure that adequate time and funding is available for staff to carry out improvements thoroughly.

63. The school's strategic use of its financial resources, which are well above average, even for a small school, has improved since the previous inspection. It is now very good. The financial planning process is very well organised with a clear cycle of planning and review that is linked directly to the school development plan. There is good liaison between governors, the headteacher and staff in formulating the budget. Governors play an active part in managing the budget. The school benefits greatly from the expertise of some members of the governing body, and the experience provided by the headteacher, who is very well supported by the school secretary. Governors, especially those directly involved in financial matters, feel ownership of the budget. They explore all options open to them fully, and take decisions with confidence because of their individual expertise and the objective information provided to them by the headteacher. There is very effective corporate decision making that ensures that the financial resources available to the school are properly targeted to improving the quality of education, and raising standards throughout the school.
64. Planned financial reserve levels are low but governors, well advised by the headteacher, have proper regard for the use of reserves. They are aware of the implications of reduced numbers of pupils and their decisions are taken against this background. There is prudent contingency planning in place to ensure the continuation of its present strategies. The headteacher and governors are very aware of the need to provide as high a standard of education as possible and their planning is solidly based on ensuring that the school's educational provision is sustainable and that, as far as is possible, its educational targets are met. Expenditure has been targeted to directly benefit pupils' attainment and progress, by maintaining staffing levels, providing additional learning resources, and creating an improved working environment.
65. The use of the specific funds element of the school's finances, and other additional funding, including that resulting from the school's recent involvement in the Education Action Zone, is very well focused. There is very good use made of the funding for pupils with special educational needs and others in need of support. The school contributes a significant amount from its own funds to supplement the specific grants to address special learning or behaviour needs.
66. The school's overall administration arrangements, and the day-to-day control of its finances, are of very high quality. The school secretary is very well organised, competent and committed. She makes a very significant contribution to the smooth running of the daily life of the school community. The school office is well equipped and there is effective use of new technology here and elsewhere in support of the work of the school. There is very good use made of the information available from the school's computerised management system and there are some excellent financial and administrative control procedures in place that have been developed by the school. There were only minor recommendations made as a result of the school's most recent audit, none of which remain a matter of concern. The positive picture at the time of the 1997 inspection has been further strengthened.
67. The headteacher and members of the governing body use the four principles of compare, challenge, consult, and compete, well to ensure that the school provides best value in its educational provision. The school's self-evaluation procedures are well organised. A range of assessment tests provides opportunities for the monitoring of attainment and progress. Pupils' attainment is compared with all schools nationally and also with similar schools; results are analysed by gender to ensure equal opportunities are given to all pupils. Pupils' results are also analysed in order to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum. All elements of

the school's spending are evaluated to ensure that the most economic, effective and efficient quality of education and support is provided for the pupils in its charge. Governors have a good appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of the school as a result of the detailed, objective reports that they receive from the headteacher together with their own knowledge as parents or regular visitors to the school. They are aware of the need to challenge what is going on in the school and do so sensitively, but with increasing rigour.

68. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum has improved since the previous inspection, and is now good. The school places a high priority on the provision of teaching and support staff. Pupils with special educational needs or others with identified needs are well supported in both in class by suitably experienced staff and, more particularly by being withdrawn from mainstream classes for small group work with the special needs teacher. All members of staff are committed to the well-being and support of the pupils. They work very well as a team and in their various ways make a contribution to the effective running of the school that enhances the quality of education provided by the school.
69. The overall adequacy of accommodation for the delivery of the National Curriculum is satisfactory. The school presents a very welcoming and stimulating environment that facilitates learning. Disabled provision is good. Internally the building is well maintained by the school caretaker who, together with the cleaning staff, works hard to provide a clean and tidy environment in which learning can take place. A wide range of very good quality displays brightens the school environment. Specialist teaching areas, such as the computer suite, the special educational needs room, the school hall and the rather small library, complement the classroom provision and effectively support learning.
70. There is sufficient playground space for the size of the school. It is of good quality with provision for pupils to sit and talk quietly. Children in Reception have very good access to their outdoor play entitlement. The school provides wellingtons and capes so that whatever the weather the youngest children can benefit from the physical and social development offered by being outside the classroom. Well-maintained grounds, with a profusion of trees and shrubs enhance the appearance of the school and its educational provision. Recent expenditure on learning resource provision has been well directed. Overall provision is now good rather than satisfactory as previously.
71. Windmill Hill Primary school is a very effective school. The quality of teaching has improved, standards are rising and the majority of pupils behave well with good attitudes to learning. Given the low starting point when children enter the school and the good progress they make, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

72. The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection. It has improved the quality of its provision and raised standards. Its strengths significantly outweigh the weaknesses.
73. In order to improve standards further, the headteacher, governors and staff should:
- (1) Raise standards in writing* by:
- Continuing to implement the action plan for the subject;
 - Providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length in literacy and in all subjects;
 - Share literacy targets with pupils more frequently

Paragraphs: 3, 6, 20, 23, 27, 49, 83, 87 and 91.

Continue to improve pupils' attendance* through regular communication with parents.

Paragraphs: 3, 17 and 46.

*The school has already identified this as a priority and provided for it in the school development plan.

In addition the following minor issues should be addressed:

Ensure that learning objectives which teachers identify in planning are shared explicitly with pupils during lessons.

Paragraphs: 23, 91, 99 and 149.

In addition to sharing literacy targets with pupils, share targets that are set in other subjects for example, in mathematics and science.

Paragraphs: 27, 49 and 100.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

33

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	13	16	3	0	0	0
Percentage	3	39	48	9	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 three percentage points

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	107
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	65

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	53

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	10	8	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	4	7
	Girls	7	5	8
	Total	12	9	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (59)	50 (41)	83 (88)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	6	7
	Girls	7	7	8
	Total	12	13	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (59)	72 (82)	83 (71)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	5	6	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	1	3	3
	Girls	4	6	6
	Total	5	9	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	45 (67)	82 (40)	82 (67)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	2	4	5
	Girls	4	6	6
	Total	6	10	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (73)	91 (67)	100 (73)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	90
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.9
Average class size	21.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	64

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	13	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	364,431
Total expenditure	359,897
Expenditure per pupil	3,461
Balance brought forward from previous year	6,101
Balance carried forward to next year	10,635

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	108
Number of questionnaires returned	14

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	14	7	0	7
My child is making good progress in school.	50	36	0	0	14
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	43	0	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	29	14	0	14
The teaching is good.	64	29	0	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	36	0	14	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	93	7	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	93	7	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	71	14	14	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	71	21	0	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	86	7	7	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	29	0	0	29

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

74. The Foundation Stage is a strength of the school because virtually all teaching is very good, which has a significant impact on the good progress the children make. There have been very good improvements in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection. There are 14 Reception children in the mixed Reception / Year 1 class. Positive links are being established with the parents through daily contact. Children are very soon settled and get used to school routines. Some have had pre-school experience prior to starting school. When children enter the Reception class, their attainment is generally well below that expected for children of their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and social skills. This is similar to the previous inspection. The entry testing data confirm this attainment profile. Children make good progress and, by the end of the Foundation Stage their attainment in personal, social and emotional development is nearly average. It is in line with expectations in physical and creative development. Overall, attainment is still well below average in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world, although a few children are likely to achieve more highly.
75. There is a very good curriculum in place for the children in the Reception class. It is well structured to ensure coverage of each area of learning. This helps all children, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress. Excellent teamwork between the class teacher and the learning support assistant helps to create a safe, secure and stimulating environment, where effective learning takes place. The arrangements for teaching literacy and numeracy are good; children are taught in small groups following a whole class introduction. Assessment arrangements are good. The information available, such as the entry data, is used well to ensure children are set appropriate work and identify those that need extra support. Consequently, children with special educational needs are supported very well, which greatly enhances their learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

76. Children's personal, social and emotional development is given a high priority to good effect. Teaching is very good in this area which helps most children make very good progress and, as a result, some are likely to reach the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Classroom organisation and the management of children are extremely effective. This has a positive impact, consequently behaviour and attitudes to learning are very good and children respond positively to instructions. They are confident and friendly, forming very good relationships with adults and one another. Adults encourage the children to be independent, including undressing and dressing after PE, although this takes a long time at present. They take opportunities to use their initiative, to work independently, and to make choices about their activities. Good opportunities exist for the children to play together, particularly in the role-play areas, where they share toys and co-operate, for example, when they play in Grandma's house in the Red Riding Hood area and outside when planting Mary's garden. A small group of children concentrated on their game for a good length of time. They took turns planting flowers in the garden, and working out a menu to make Grandma better. They played together and talked to each other well, using their resources constructively, such as taking the wheeled vehicles to go through the woods to see Grandma. Children are encouraged to tidy up at the end of sessions; this helps them learn routines that will help them later.

Communication, language and literacy

77. On entry to school, children's communication, language and literacy skills are well below those expected of children of a similar age. The quality of teaching is very good; this helps children make swift progress and to learn effectively. By the end of the Foundation Stage many still have attainment that is well below average, although a few do reach higher levels. Children enjoy looking at books and they understand how books are organised. They are beginning to understand that print conveys meaning, where the title is, and that an illustrator draws the pictures. A small group excitedly recall the story of 'Bear Hunt' using the illustrations to explain different parts of the story. They are beginning to make good progress, learning their letter sounds through a new letter/sound programme, and they know many sounds including the initial sound of their name. This is because the teaching of basic skills is very good. The teacher has a very good understanding of how young children learn and makes learning fun and appropriate. This helps all the children make good progress, including those with special educational needs, who are supported by the learning support assistant, extremely well. Very good attention is paid to developing children's literacy skills in all areas of learning. Good opportunities for mark making are given in the role-play area. Children 'write' their menu for Grandma and a more able child is able to read back his story of 'Goldilocks' from his early writing, consisting mainly of symbols. Most write their name; this is because there has been a concerted effort at the beginning of the day when parents work with their children. Children are encouraged to recognise and write their own name on their work, which they do.

Mathematical development

78. When children enter the Reception class, their attainment in mathematics is generally well below that of children of a similar age. The quality of teaching of mathematics, and the provision for the development and awareness of mathematical language, are both very good. The teacher has a very secure knowledge and understanding of mathematics and makes learning fun. The children make good progress and a few are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage but most will not. There is an extremely good balance between practical activities and work that is recorded. For example, an enthusiastic 'sing-along' of number songs takes place, followed by practical ordering and recognition of number cards in the hall. The pace of the lesson and an interesting variety of activities maintain the children's interest and they are keen to take part. The lesson observed was very well planned and much thought had gone into the lesson to ensure individual needs were met. The most able child counts and orders numerals to at least 20, with the average child working within ten and most know their colours. The teacher promotes learning very well with her enthusiasm as in the singing session of counting songs, where many participated well demonstrating their prior learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

79. Provision and teaching for children to develop knowledge and understanding of the world around them are very good. Children's learning is promoted well, and they make good progress. By the end of the Foundation Stage, a few are likely to achieve the early learning goals but most will not. Scientific concepts are developed when the learning support assistant encourages them to use appropriate language to make choices about different types of bread. Poor communication skills hamper children's responses, but they gain in confidence as they see their choices written on a group chart. None of the children could state where cheese came from, emphasising their lack of knowledge of the world. Through walks in the grounds children are gaining geographical skills, as well as scientific knowledge, as they look at different autumn leaves and spider's webs. Particularly good links are made with literacy, numeracy and art, which help to reinforce children's knowledge of the world. For example, they make spider masks and ensure that they have eight legs on their spider. There are good literacy links when they write to the spider that frightens Miss Muffet. Visits are used to support children's learning in geography and RE when they go to the church to find out about the artefacts. Few have any prior understanding for the reason for the church, but a few recall going to a church for a christening. The bell is tolled which creates a sense of awe amongst the children and one boy enjoys having the responsibility of putting out the candles. There is very good acquisition of new knowledge as a direct result of very effective planning and use of resources. Children are given good opportunities to develop their technological skills. They work on the computers, both in the classroom and in small groups in the computer

suite. They have learnt to drag icons across the screen using the mouse and operate the tape recorder when listening to stories.

Physical development

80. Teaching is very effective which helps children make good progress and many are likely to attain the early learning goals in physical development by the end of the Foundation Stage. They are still taking a long time to change but are supported well by the adults. In PE lessons, children enter the hall appropriately, listen attentively and follow instructions. They are being taught a good awareness of health and safety issues in PE, as several children know what needs to be done first and one little girl states that a warm up is to 'make you warm'. They show a good use of space and an increasing awareness of those around them, moving confidently on the floor and are becoming well co-ordinated when running, hopping and skipping. Very good support from the teacher and the learning support assistant, and attention to skills acquisition, help the children throw and catch the beanbags. Some have difficulty, but good opportunities to practise and watching their peers demonstrate, helps them to improve. The teacher trains the children to put away the equipment, which they do tidily and without fuss. Provision for learning in the outside area is being developed; however it is already used very well. There are very well planned activities for the children, particularly to promote physical activities and role-play. There are large wheeled vehicles and an area designated just for the Reception children. They steer the vehicles well, being careful to park properly when stopped by the 'policeman' asking 'who has been eating Grandma' and set off again. Dexterity is developed through the handling of objects, such as working in sand and water, planting seeds and painting. Children handle scissors, glue, pencils and brushes successfully and, from the time they start school in September, their writing, cutting and sticking skills develop well.

Creative development

81. Children make good progress and many are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Teaching is very good and creative development is strongly promoted. This forms the basis of good art seen throughout the school. Children learn about colour, pattern and texture in two and three-dimensional representations. Children have good opportunities to mix their own colours and paint pictures of *Goldilocks and the three bears*. They carefully include many features in their self-portraits. It is in such pictures that their initial immaturity is seen. However, they obviously enjoy art and try very hard. Good skills teaching is evident as children are careful when handling paint as few drips are seen. Children's work is valued and displayed very well to make a stimulating learning environment. Opportunities for role-play are very good. The children have good opportunities to play in 'Grandma's house' and walk, and ride their vehicles, through the woods to get there. There are very good resources to promote creativity and imaginative play, which helps to develop the imagination. All adults successfully intervene, which helps to develop children's activities providing some direction to their play. A very well planned exciting music lesson helped children develop new skills very well. The teacher's enthusiasm and very good strategies results in a good response from the children. She creates a sense of anticipation that contributes to a positive learning environment. Instruments are wrapped in paper and children identify what they are. They recognise a range of percussion instruments and go on to make different sounds with them. They enjoy making long and short sounds whilst tapping, shaking, and banging the instruments. They are very excited and keen to be involved, yet very good discipline meant that children respond instantly to instructions, were very attentive and listened well to others playing their instruments.

ENGLISH

82. The previous report indicated that standards in English were well below average at the end of both key stages. The school has made good progress in all aspects of English and standards have improved and are still improving. These better results are associated with the effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, which is used well for a scheme of work. There has been a strong commitment to raising attainment in the school by staff and governors, with

literacy as a high priority in the school development plan. There has been strong leadership in this area and the co-ordinator and headteacher has been involved in the monitoring of planning, teaching and learning. The quality of teaching has improved and there are now good procedures for assessment, and effective use is made of the information gathered to set school and individual literacy targets.

83. Children enter the school with well below average attainment in all aspects of English. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress through both key stages². However, by the age of seven and eleven, overall attainments are still below the national average. This is because too few pupils reach the higher levels in English, as many of the pupils with special educational needs have more difficulties in English, than in mathematics and science. Nevertheless, the few pupils capable of attaining more highly do have appropriate opportunities to reach higher levels in English. By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment is near to average. Standards are in line with the national average in speaking and listening and reading but it remains below average in writing, nevertheless standards are rising. The school is aware that it still needs to tackle standards in writing and is identified as a priority in the school development plan.
84. Inspection evidence indicates that overall standards of attainment in speaking and listening are broadly average throughout the school. There are a few pupils, however, who have below average standards because they have difficulty verbalising what it is they want to say because their vocabulary is limited. This is particularly evident in Key Stage 1 and in lower Key Stage 2, despite good teaching. For example, in a Year 3 Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) lesson pupils struggled to articulate their thoughts in complete sentences; they tended to use brief phrases. Teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and encourage pupils to use appropriate vocabulary in literacy and in other subjects, such as mathematics, design and technology and science. In a Year 2 science lesson for example, the teacher encouraged pupils to use correct terminology, which helped them to explain the differences between plants and animals. They talked about plants having petals and a stem. The teacher valued the responses, and encouraged the pupils to speak in complete sentences. Teachers use questioning skilfully, to promote speaking and listening and to elicit responses from pupils. The Year 4 / 5 teacher challenged pupils to speak out about what they had learnt in a RE lesson about Islam; this helped them to reinforce what had been learnt effectively. Teachers are particularly sensitive how they help pupils to improve in all aspects of learning. In a successful Year 6 PE lesson, pupils were asked 'how can we help X improve their work'. This not only valued what it is the pupil has achieved but gives others good opportunities to give their opinions in a constructive manner. This is very good teaching and helps all pupils to be fully included in lessons.
85. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards in reading are below average, although there is a small group of pupils reaching higher levels. Standards are rising and good progress is made, particularly at Year 2. Pupils are benefiting from the introduction of the literacy hour and the increased focus on literacy. All pupils, including lower-attaining pupils, are beginning to use their knowledge of sound and letter relationship to work out the text. There are additional reading sessions, which is helping pupils to have sufficient practise in reading, as many do not have enough help at home. Teachers organise shared text sessions well, with a good range of suitable texts, both fiction and non-fiction. A particularly good example was seen in a Year 1/ 2 lesson when literacy was successfully linked with science. A high focus on reading is helping to raise standards for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a good understanding of the role of the author and illustrator and the contents page and index.
86. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in reading is close to average, with satisfactory progress being made across the key stage. A few pupils are attaining the higher levels. Some pupils do not have enough reading practice at home; this hampers their progress. Pupils have a secure knowledge of library terms such as contents, index and glossary but too few have classification skills to help them locate books in the library. Too few pupils have the skills to read challenging texts or read with deeper meaning, consequently overall standards for most, remain

² Key Stage 1 is Years 1 to 2; Key Stage 2 is Years 3 to 6.

around average. Dictionary skills are promoted well, as Year 4 / 5 pupils independently get dictionaries to help them find the meanings of words that sound the same but are spelt differently. Pupils successfully use their reading skills in literacy and other subjects, for example in history in Year 5 / 6, when they find evidence about the Victorians. Research skills are well employed as pupils carry out a thoughtful, competent, investigation using a variety of computer programs. Teachers make reading interesting and relevant to every-day life, as in the Year 5 / 6 literacy lesson, when pupils had to read instructions to make pizza bases. Sensitive groupings of more and less able pupils ensured that all could tackle the cooking successfully.

87. Inspection evidence from lessons, the scrutiny of work, and the school's own monitoring, indicate that by the end of both key stages, standards in writing are below the national average with a few pupils reaching the higher levels. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Pupils have too few regular extended writing sessions held outside the literacy hour. The strategy has worked by giving reading extra specific time and standards are beginning to rise. Teachers offer their pupils a good range of work within literacy and across the curriculum. They encourage their pupils to write in a variety of forms. Standards at the end of both key stages are still below average because many pupils do not always use interesting vocabulary, extended sentences or more advanced punctuation. The variable handwriting and presentation seen at the time of the last inspection has improved. This is because a new handwriting scheme has been introduced and there is a strong drive by all staff to insist on good standards of presentation.
88. In Key Stage 1, pupils write lists and label diagrams in science and design and technology, and write accounts of harvest for different religions, using appropriate vocabulary. ICT is used for word processing, such as pupils' address where they use appropriate fonts and layout. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to use a joined script with letters correctly orientated. The lower attaining pupils write in simple sentences sometimes using capital letters and full stops. Ideas are developed through short stories in a logical sequence and higher attainers write with a good awareness of the audience. The recent introduction of a letter / sound programme is beginning to have a good impact in Key Stage 1, which is addressing a weakness in spelling found in the last inspection. Good teaching of word sounds has helped to improve spelling, as seen in pupils' work since September, they use their knowledge gained in the literacy hour well.
89. By the end of Key Stage 2, a good range of work is covered and pupils write in appropriate styles, including instructional text, letters, and reports in literacy and in other subjects. For example, Year 3 pupils wrote out rules that might help everyone to live happily together, displaying their good ideas in an appropriate format. By the age of eleven, higher attaining and average pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of grammar and punctuation. There is good use of suitable descriptive language by Year 6 pupils when they report news items. ICT is used well to support literacy and writing in other subjects. For example, clear instructions are written out by Year 6 pupils, using a good layout, bullet points and sub-headings within a table. Year 4 / 5 lower attaining pupils reinforce their knowledge of 'th' words, successfully using a spelling program.
90. Teaching is good and this has a significant impact upon pupils' learning and the progress they make. Teachers have worked hard to implement the National Literacy Strategy, which they do with good understanding of the requirements of this strategy. Their subject knowledge and understanding is good, as is their competence to teach basic skills, this helps pupils make progress, for example, in their use of letter sounds. In a Year 5 / 6 literacy lesson the teacher successfully challenged pupils to extend their answers when she asked for a command phrase for step 1, in instructional writing. This they could do, and they knew that instructional writing needed to be sequential. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are provided for very well. In withdrawal sessions with the teacher responsible for special educational needs, the lessons are challenging, fun, and very well targeted to the needs of small groups of pupils. For example, two pupils had to give the teacher specific instructions for making a cheese sandwich. They quickly realised the importance of giving clear detailed instructions. Once the sandwich was made they recorded their instructions using a well-presented chart with correct vocabulary and format. Teaching is very good in these sessions and pupils often make very good progress. Most pupils enjoy literacy and their attitudes to the subject are usually good. Teachers challenge pupils to

think carefully. They use good questioning skills and encourage pupils to listen carefully and value the spoken contributions of fellow pupils.

91. Day-to-day assessment procedures are used well, and marking is helpful in enabling pupils to know how well they have achieved in the lesson. In the best lessons many pupils meet the high expectations of their teachers. Pupils work with a reasonable pace and concentrate whilst completing their work. Overall planning is sound with clear learning objectives set. However, these objectives are not shared explicitly with pupils. This means it is not always clear to them what it is they are supposed to be learning. The headteacher and class teachers set out what pupils need to do to improve but these targets, as set against National Curriculum levels, are not shared specifically with pupils. This means pupils do not share in evaluating their own performance, and consequently not know clearly what they need to do to improve and what the next steps in learning are. Teachers assess pupils' reading ability during group reading sessions, identifying strengths and weaknesses; this provides valuable information for planning future work. However, the recording of reading in the school is inconsistent. Each teacher devises her own individual records of pupils' reading skills and strategies to chart progress, which can be time consuming and not easy to chart progress from class to class. Teachers use homework appropriately, mainly in literacy and numeracy, to reinforce and extend work in lessons.
92. The co-ordinator provides good leadership for the subject, and ensured the priority of raising achievement to be met. She, along with the headteacher has monitored the effectiveness of teaching, learning and planning. The school has made good improvement in the subject and is in a powerful position to continue to improve the standards pupils achieve.

MATHEMATICS

93. The previous inspection found that there was variable progress, and that standards at both key stages were below average. Some pupils were said to be easily distracted and work was not always presented with sufficient care. Raising standards in mathematics was a key issue in the previous report and whilst achievement at the end of Key Stage 1, is below the average, this still represents a significant gain from the very limited levels of understanding when pupils are admitted to the school. Continuing good progress results in standards that are similar to the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. Attitudes to the subject are now good with many pupils identifying mathematics as their favourite subject. Overall, there has been a good response to the shortcomings identified at the time of the last inspection.
94. The majority of pupils enter Key Stage 1 with mathematical skills that are much lower than those expected for pupils of this age. A high proportion have special educational needs, and the problem is exacerbated by the significant number of families who move into and out of the school. Most make good progress as they move through Key Stage 1, even though attainment remains below average. This good progress is maintained at Key Stage 2 and results in standards that are in line with the national average. In all parts of the school, pupils with special educational needs are sensitively and effectively supported, and such pupils also make good progress. The quality of learning is good in both key stages
95. The school places considerable emphasis upon mathematics and there is proper attention to the development of sound understanding of mathematical principles. Many pupils enter the school with limited language skills and the school works hard to extend their vocabulary and enrich their experience. A focus upon key mathematical words is routinely included in lessons. Nevertheless, many pupils lack assurance when assimilating new concepts, and it requires consistently good teaching to ensure the good progress which is clearly evident. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils can count to 100 and beyond, and they can mentally add and subtract numbers to 10 and, sometimes, beyond. The proportion who are beginning to understand place value, use some of the multiplication tables, and calculate and understand halves and quarters is, however, below average. A majority can identify the common two and three-dimensional shapes and describe some of their features and properties, but the range of knowledge is limited. Many require additional support in order to collect information systematically and to construct simple graphs to

illustrate their findings. Pupils are beginning to use standard and non-standard measures of weight; capacity and length, but their understanding and skills are below average. A less than average proportion is able to make independent decisions as they use and apply their mathematics to solve problems.

96. By the end of Key Stage 2 the proportion of pupils who are able to add, subtract, multiply and divide with expected competence and accuracy is average. Pupils' understanding of decimals, fractions and percentages is in line with that expected. Most name a range of two and three-dimensional shapes and have some appreciation of their various features and properties. Pupils are able to collect and interpret data and to use a range of graphical representation. The number who can apply mathematics to different situations is average. The higher achievers have a clear concept of angle as a measurement of turn.
97. In both key stages pupils make good use of their mathematical knowledge to situations in other subjects. There is also good use of ICT to support learning. There is some emphasis on the importance of mathematical pattern, although opportunities to extend this aspect of the subject into an aesthetic appreciation and to generate excitement through the exploration of such patterns, are less evident.
98. At both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 the response of pupils to mathematics is good. Almost all enjoy the subject and have an extremely positive attitude. Most pupils, including the youngest, collaborate productively. They work hard, sustain concentration and often become absorbed in the task. Most will persevere to overcome problems and display interest, and they are keen to discuss their work. In several lessons pupils responded particularly well with thoughtful discussion and a real determination to do well. These good attitudes mean that there is little loss of productive time during lessons and this has a clear-cut impact upon their learning.
99. The quality of teaching is good at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Because many pupils experience difficulty in the more subtle aspects of the English language, teachers have to work hard to ensure that concepts are understood and that good learning occurs. Teachers are conscientious in the support which they provide, and they display awareness of the individual needs of their pupils. Lessons focus sharply upon promoting the underlying mathematical understanding and teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. A good range of activities to support learning and help to sustain interest are used. Sound planning contains the precise objectives of the lesson. When these are shared with pupils it helps to create a sense of purpose and achievement. In the better lessons the need for pupils to articulate their mathematical reasoning is well understood, and is used effectively to help deepen language and mathematical understanding. Lessons relating to the estimation of three-dimensional 'nets' provided examples of these qualities in each key stage. Here the mathematical expertise of the teachers, thorough planning and organisation and the ability to involve all the pupils, combined to promote good progress.
100. Teachers know their pupils well, and this enables them to assess day-to-day progress accurately and to respond meaningfully. A good range of formal tests is used to monitor individual progress. Results are thoughtfully analysed so that the strengths and weaknesses of the programme can be identified. Teachers establish individual targets as a result of this analysis, although these are not always kept in front of pupils as a means of providing short-term and attainable aims for improvement. The information gained should become increasingly useful in determining what should be taught next as planned computer analysis is introduced. Overall, the procedures for assessing pupils' work and their influence over what is taught next are good.
101. The co-ordinator provides thoughtful and committed leadership. She is helping to foster a collaborative drive for sustained improvement. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy with commitment and rigour. All teachers have a clear understanding of the rationale of the strategy, which is properly reflected in planning and lessons. The thoroughness with which the National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced together with consistently good teaching is having a direct and positive influence upon the learning and standards in both key stages.

SCIENCE

102. The previous inspection report judged attainment at Key Stage 2 to be below average. It found shortcomings in the assessment procedures and in relation to investigative work. Achievement at Key Stage 2 is now in line with national averages and this is due to good progress made throughout the school. Assessment procedures and the use of investigation are now good. Overall, the progress in addressing the issues raised in the last inspection has been good.
103. A significant proportion of pupils enter the school with knowledge and understanding which is well below that expected for their age. In addition many have undeveloped skills in language but most make good progress as they move through the school. Achievement in science is below the national average at Key Stage 1 but average by the time the pupils reach the end of Year 6.
104. Pupils in Year 2 identify a range of common materials and described some of the similarities and differences. They are aware of some of the changes which can occur to materials and undertake simple classification. They understand some of the elements essential to life and how humans change as they grow. Many require support and guidance when conducting scientific investigations. In all these areas the attainment expected for their age is below average but this still represents a significant gain from the time they enter school.
105. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards have reached the national average. Such achievement relates to the inter-dependence of plant and animal life; to an understanding of the human body, to knowledge of materials and the associated properties; to their ability to classify according to given criteria; and to forces such as magnetism and the advantages and disadvantages of such forces. Most pupils have a keen appreciation of the importance and value of the environment to living things. Pupils conduct scientific investigations with increasing confidence and have a sound understanding of fair testing. Higher achievers clearly appreciate the importance of isolating each variable. Most pupils plan and record experiments using a scientific structure appropriate to their age. Pupils are encouraged to design tests, hypothesise, predict outcomes and to reach conclusions based on evidence and they display suitable independence in these investigational skills.
106. There is satisfactory use of ICT to support the subject with increasing use of the Internet as a scientific tool to find out information.
107. The majority of pupils enter the school with scientific knowledge and understanding which is well below what might be expected for their age. The school works conscientiously to build scientific understanding and to enrich pupils' experience. These efforts result in most pupils making good progress as they move through both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs are sensitively and effectively supported. In both key stages teachers and learning support assistants work particularly effectively to ensure such pupils make good progress in their scientific knowledge and understanding. Pupils who are capable of higher achievement are encouraged and given opportunities to extend the depth of understanding.
108. Although little direct teaching was seen at Key Stage 1, other evidence confirms that teaching is good and this results in good advancement. The relationships between teachers and pupils are productive and class control is secure. There is effective use of scientific inquiry, as a means of developing knowledge and understanding across the various aspects of the subject.
109. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is also good. Teaching is founded on good subject knowledge and explanations are effectively communicated. Opportunities for genuine scientific discovery are provided and pupils are encouraged to predict outcomes and evaluate their experiments. This was particularly well demonstrated in a very good Year 5 / 6 lesson relating to sound sources where the infectious enthusiasm of the teacher and the sharp focus on the scientific method successfully motivated the pupils and supported good quality learning.

110. Most pupils have a positive attitude towards science. With a few exceptions, pupils concentrate well and work industriously. Interest in scientific inquiry is demonstrated by almost all pupils. Pupils collaborate productively when engaged in practical work and are keen to demonstrate their growing knowledge by answering in class and by contributing to discussion. Overall, pupils' attitude to science is good at both key stages.
111. The co-ordinator provides committed and informed leadership. This is giving clear direction for sustained improvement. There is suitable balance between the required aspects of the subject and experimental work is given proper emphasis. Learning is systematically assessed and the information gained is used well in evaluating effectiveness and in determining what should be taught next.

ART AND DESIGN

112. The attainment in art and design of seven-year olds exceeds that expected for their age. By the time pupils are eleven; standards are well above those found nationally. Attainment at eleven is even higher than at the time of the last inspection, when standards were found to be above those for their age. This is an immense achievement for the school considering the strong focus on raising standards in the core subjects. The headteacher and the staff are determined that art in the school should not suffer. It is an area where many pupils who have difficulty with more academic subjects can excel. The school has recently identified gifted and talented artists in the school and gives these children further opportunities by working with them in art club. The good progress pupils made in Key Stage 1 continues throughout Key Stage 2, so by the time pupils are eleven, standards are well above that expected nationally.
113. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1, as they express their ideas through a range of different experiences in art and design. They have regular access to paint, textiles and clay and learn how to mix colours, and from an early age apply paint with care. The Key Stage 1 pupils' study of famous artists allowed them to create good quality work, for example based on the work of Van Gogh. An extensive range of work has been produced already this term, starting with the sunflowers that were grown by the children during the summer. This is because the teacher has given pupils good opportunities to develop their creativity. Sunflowers are sketched, created as clay relief tiles, printed on materials and painted. Cultural development is brought in well, following a discussion of Aboriginal art, when paintings are finished off using the 'dot' technique typical in this art form.
114. In Key Stage 2, pupils make very good progress in art and design, building successfully on skills learnt previously. A very good balance is maintained between the need to learn about different techniques, and the opportunity to explore creativity. Pupils are directed to plan a task in a specific way, as well as being given the freedom to express themselves. This is done particularly well when working in abstract, for example, when Year 3 pupils successfully work in the style of Kandinsky. Year 4 pupils recreate carefully drawn portraits of Madame Matisse in pastels; they capture the cool and warm side of the painting extremely well. There are good links with other subjects, particularly history. Older pupils use their good observational skills and ability to recreate fine pencil drawings to depict the designs of William Morris.
115. Teaching in art and design is good and pupils are challenged to undertake new experiences and experiment with different ideas. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding, and they are confident to demonstrate techniques and skills where appropriate, for example using fine paintbrushes for finishing off paintings of sunflowers. Very high expectations and effective skills teaching, helps pupils to learn well in art and design and this gives them a good basis upon which to work. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their work and make improvements with very good attention to the finished work. The way teachers present art work shows pupils that their efforts are valued and appreciated. Pupils' work is exhibited in the locality such as in the Norton Priory Gardens, where an interesting variety of paintings and batik were created by the last Year 2 class, based on a visit to the gardens. Pupils gain self-esteem and confidence as they proudly share their work and thoughts about art. Good use is made of day-to-day assessment to plan

subsequent work, although there are no formal systems in place for assessing pupils' skills or progress over time.

116. The co-ordinator is new in post, but has great enthusiasm to continue the high quality work already found in the school. The art and design curriculum is broad and rich, as well as being well planned to give pupils experience of different techniques and media, including working with three-dimensional material, such as clay. It builds well on pupils' previous knowledge and skills and so they make good progress in their learning as they move through the school. Recent development in the teaching of ICT supports work in art well. Particularly good use is made of ICT, as pupils in Year 2, imaginatively create their own versions of sunflowers. Pupils' learning in art and design also supports their work in mathematics well, as symmetrical and repeating patterns are created. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development, through the richness of interesting and stimulating displays of pupils and other artists' work, including those from non-western cultures. Social development is promoted very well in allowing freedom of choice and development of pride in their achievement, as well as encouraging good co-operative work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

117. Pupils in both key stages achieve levels of knowledge and skill in design and technology that are appropriate for their ages. Pupils are able to select from a satisfactory range of materials when designing and making products and proper consideration is given to the purpose of each item and to the subsequent design and construction. Pupils in both key stages are competent in their ability to relate what they are making to their associated design. They make thoughtful evaluations as demonstrated by the comments made by Year 5 / 6 pupils relating to a wooden frame. Skills associated with design and technology are satisfactorily developed as pupils move through each key stage. The quality of learning is satisfactory and the majority of pupils in both key stages make sound progress. Satisfactory use is made of ICT.
118. Although the number of lessons observed was limited the available evidence indicates that teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. Teachers are clearly aware of the essential elements of design and technology such as providing opportunities for original and creative generation of ideas. Teachers include material to develop knowledge associated with mechanisms, structures and applications and how products can be refined and improved.
119. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good in both key stages. They are interested and motivated in their work, which they discuss with animation. They concentrate well and persevere to overcome problems. Collaboration is promoted well and is particularly productive.
120. The school has adopted national guidance to guide teachers' planning. Supplementary material helps to support the development of skills and ensure that learning occurs systematically. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of her role and has suitable subject expertise. Meaningful links with other subject areas are established.
121. The previous inspection report was positive and, despite the pressure on teaching time resulting from the introduction of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, design and technology remains securely placed within the overall curriculum.

GEOGRAPHY

122. Standards in geography are similar to the national expectations in Key Stage 1. The quality of learning is satisfactory and pupils make good progress. Because geography is taught in blocks of time, no lessons were observed at Key Stage 2 and no formal judgement relating to standards, progress or attitudes was made. Other evidence suggests that geography has a secure place in the curriculum and that a comprehensive programme is delivered, with proper emphasis upon both knowledge and geographical skills.

123. At Key Stage 1, pupils have a rudimentary awareness of the features around the school. Older pupils are beginning to gain knowledge relating to the countries and main features of the United Kingdom. Competencies associated with the use of maps, such as how roads and buildings can be represented on a plan, are understood. Overall, pupils' depth of knowledge in these areas is broadly in line with that expected of pupils of similar ages. Given that many pupils join the school with limited experiences and undeveloped literacy skills, the standards achieved constitute good progress.
124. Teaching at Key Stage 1 is good. Teachers have positive relationships with their pupils and the range and quality of work shows that they give the subject proper emphasis and that their geographical knowledge is secure. No judgement was made relating to teaching at Key Stage 2.
125. Pupils' attitudes are good at Key Stage 1. They discuss their work with obvious interest and enjoyment and can recall their previous work with accuracy.
126. What is to be taught to each year group is set out broadly, although greater detail is required so that teachers have more exact guidance when planning their programmes. The identification of mapping skills, for example, is not sufficiently specific to promote more advanced accomplishment. Good cross-curricular links are established through the topic approach that the school has adopted. An example is the topic relating to the Egypt, which helps to show how the modern country has been influenced by historical factors. Some visits, such as the residential trip to North Wales, enhance the value and the stimulus of the subject.
127. The subject is satisfactorily managed as in the last inspection. The co-ordinator monitors planning and ensures resources support the planned curriculum, but as yet there have been limited opportunities to monitor teaching and learning.

HISTORY

128. The levels of historical skills and understanding acquired by pupils in Key Stage 2 is in line with that expected and pupils make satisfactory progress. Because of the topic system of delivering the history programme, no lessons or work was available and no formal judgement was made for standards or learning at Key Stage 1. Other evidence indicates that a substantial and balanced history programme is delivered.
129. At Key Stage 2 the standards attained are in line with those expected for their age. Most recall important events related to the topics studied such as the Ancient Greeks, Tudors, the Victorians and life in Britain since 1930. Their concept of chronology is satisfactorily developed. Pupils described the important features of the topics studied together with the reasons for some of the major events. In a Year 4 / 5 lesson, for example, pupils discussed the context and influences surrounding life in Ancient Egypt. They identify some of the changes which have occurred over time. Pupils are able to investigate, interpret and explain the past. They are beginning to analyse the reliability which can be placed upon such the evidence from which historical information is drawn. Satisfactory use is made of ICT to support learning as exemplified in the use of the Internet to research historical data.
130. Good progress is made as pupils proceed through Key Stage 2. Those with special educational needs are well supported and such pupils also make good progress.
131. No formal judgement was made in respect of pupils' attitudes in Key Stage 1 although the available evidence suggests that it is good. Pupils' attitudes in Key Stage 2 are good. Most are interested in the subject and discuss their work with animation. Most collaborate with other pupils in a mature and responsible fashion. When working, concentration is sustained.
132. No judgement was made in relation to teaching at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is good. Lessons are conducted at a purposeful pace within a productive working atmosphere. Teachers work hard to make the material meaningful. In a practical Year 4 / 5 lesson, for example, pupils were challenged to think creatively, to offer opinions and to make

interpretations about Egyptian artefacts. This had the effect of motivating pupils and of enhancing their learning and enjoyment of the subject.

133. Delivery of the curriculum is through a series of topics which properly reflect the programme of the National Curriculum. Published guidance forms a sound basis for teachers to plan their programmes but further definition is required in order to specify more exactly what should be taught and when. Various visits and events such as a visit to the Norton priory Museum and to Tatten Hall provide further valuable experiences.
134. The last inspection report was positive and this position has been maintained. There is satisfactory leadership of the subject. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of her role and monitors planning but as yet, had limited opportunities to monitor teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

135. Standards in ICT towards the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils at the end of Year 2 display sound competencies in basic keyboard skills and have satisfactory levels of proficiency in word processing. The ability to save and retrieve information, with support, is secure. Most pupils are able to select options when investigating on-screen situations and can use 'painting' programs with appropriate skill.
136. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' competence in the skills required by the National Curriculum is similar to that expected. Most can save and retrieve stored information independently. Word processing skills are extended and pupils are very competent in this aspect of their work. Many, for example, are able to combine text, colour and pictures. Pupils are able to print the finished product and can establish, test, modify and store sequences of instructions to control on-screen events. Most enter, sort and classify data and can present the findings using a range of graphical representations. The school has recently installed Internet access and many pupils confidently log on and use the search facility well to help their work in other subjects. There is good use of ICT to support learning in other parts of the curriculum. The use of a 'painting' program in Year 1 / 2, for example, provided valuable extension of the work in art and design relating to Van Gogh.
137. The quality of learning is good in both key stages and the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they move through the school. The school has recently made major improvements to the provision for ICT and the emphasis upon the direct teaching of skills and the ability to allow immediate 'hands on' experience contributes significantly to pupils' learning and to their attitude to the subject.
138. Teaching in both key stages is good. Teachers and support assistants have good levels of expertise. Lessons are carefully planned and the purpose of each lesson is shared with the pupils. Class management is very secure and relationships between teachers and pupils are warm but purposeful. These qualities were effectively demonstrated in a Year 5 / 6 lesson in which pupils were preparing a 'Powerpoint' presentation relating to their personal interest.
139. Throughout the school pupils display very good attitudes to ICT. Almost all pupils strive to achieve the desired outcome and interact well with each other and with staff. There is productive co-operation and behaviour is mature and responsible. Almost all pupils clearly enjoy their work and the school is harnessing these favourable attitudes well. The very positive response and confidence of most pupils together with systematic and informed teaching contribute significantly to progress and standards.
140. The school has made a substantial financial investment in order to promote ICT. It has created a modern, attractive computer suite and staff have undergone comprehensive training to extend their skills. A technician with very good levels of expertise has been appointed and this is helping to ensure that resources and teachers' time are used efficiently. In addition to these improvements a well-structured programme is now in place which describes what should be taught and when. The school intends to define the content with even greater precision. A direct result of these initiatives

is that the majority of pupils are making good progress as they move through the school. The school is currently drafting a means of more rigorously charting individual experience and progress and for ensuring that every pupil receives his or her entitlement. Strong links with the local High School further raise the profile of the subject and benefit many pupils.

141. The last inspection report was generally favourable although it criticised some aspects of planning and assessment. Since then the requirements and prominence of ICT within the National Curriculum have been greatly increased. The school has defined what is to be taught and when, and teachers maintain satisfactory records of pupils' progress. Further development of both the programme and assessment is planned. The very good leadership of the co-ordinator and with her vision for the future has ensured that the school has made good progress in responding to the identified shortcomings.

MUSIC

142. As at the time of the last inspection, insufficient evidence was available to make a judgement about pupils' attainment and progress in Key stage 1 and 2. However, from evidence in assemblies, pupils throughout the school make good progress with their singing and achieve good standards of performance. They enjoy singing, showing good control of dynamics, pitch and have a well-developed sense of rhythm. The headteacher and staff ensure that the pupils' love for singing is developed effectively in assemblies. This was evident during the inspection, as music was put on, pupils started to sway in time to the rhythm and pupils successfully sang in two parts, maintaining them well. They learn songs quickly, as evident in singing assembly. All pupils have a good sense of performance and an awareness of their part.
143. No overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching but from the evidence of pupils' singing this aspect is taught well. Teachers were previously insecure about teaching music. This has been partly addressed when teachers exchange classes, so that those with greater expertise teach music for their colleagues. It would appear from the one lesson observed in Key Stage 2, that musical skills are taught well and most pupils enjoy composing. Pupils have opportunities to compose and refine their performance using percussion instruments. They are introduced to simple graphic notation to define phrases of music. They play instruments carefully maintaining the beat in a simple pattern and realise the importance of a 'rest'. Instrumental work is reinforced in assembly as pupils are chosen each day to accompany the hymns with untuned percussion instruments. This most do well, concentrating and keeping in time with the beat in the song.
144. From the planning and scheme of work there is a structured approach to teaching music. There are, as yet, no formal systems in place for monitoring pupils' progress over time. Music, particularly performing and listening, makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils take part in productions, which gives them good opportunities to work together and perform before an audience. The school uses visits and visitors well to enhance the music curriculum. The church is used for services such as the annual Christingle service, where children have further opportunities to sing together. Other visitors include the Blue Grass band and strings players. Photographic evidence and accounts in literacy show how much the children enjoyed the recent visit of a local drummer.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

145. The satisfactory standards that were reached at the previous inspection have been maintained for both the seven-year-olds and the 11-year-olds. Although attainment is satisfactory overall there are many more pupils reaching higher standards in Key Stage 2. This is due to good teaching. The school has recently identified two particularly able pupils, who have very good skills in sport. There is no difference in standards between boys and girls and pupils with special educational needs achieve standards similar to other pupils. All the elements are covered appropriately and pupils experience a broad and balanced PE curriculum. In addition older pupils are taken on residential visits, where they take part in dance and outside pursuits. This not only promotes PE well, but also social development.

146. Throughout the school there is a good attention on health and safety aspects in PE. All pupils are aware of the necessity to warm up and cool down at the end of exercise. They carry equipment correctly and with a good awareness of the safety of themselves and others. This is because teachers promote safety aspects very well. Pupils in Key Stage 1 travel over and under a variety of apparatus displaying satisfactory levels of control and agility when jumping, climbing and balancing on the floor and apparatus. During the lesson pupils link several movements and demonstrate their skills with confidence to the class.
147. In a Year 5 / 6 lesson the teacher challenged the pupils to 'think about the quality of your work'. This and the very good evaluation of pupils' work by both the teacher and other pupils helped to improve the quality and standard of work. The more capable pupils were able to devise and perform fluent sequences of movements on the floor. Other pupils performed their movements well, using a range of linking movements. Good evidence of dance was seen in celebration assembly. During a recent residential visit the Year 6 pupils created a dance to music using quite complex movements. They performed really well, maintained good postures and balance keeping in time to the music. This was due to very good teaching and a high level of co-operation amongst the children. Key Stage 2 pupils have regular swimming lessons and standards reached are satisfactory.
148. Learning by all pupils is promoted well because attention is given to explaining how to improve performance. It could be further enhanced if more opportunities were taken to encourage pupils to comment on their own and each other's work as in a successful Year 5 / 6 lesson. This was an issue in Year 3 lesson, although pupils demonstrated their movements they did not suggest how the movement could be improved. All pupils are keen and they really enjoy their lesson. Most of them try hard and they are not afraid 'to have a go'. However, there are a few occasions when younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not listen carefully enough to instructions, consequently they start to use the equipment while the teacher is still giving out instructions.
149. The quality of teaching is good overall, but better at the end of Key Stage 2. In most lessons teachers use resources, including time effectively; and take time to teach and reinforce skills and safety aspects. Teachers' planning is satisfactory, but teachers do not always share the learning objective of the lesson explicitly with their pupils. Day-to-day assessment procedures are usually good, but there is no consistent assessment of pupils' PE skills to establish what pupils have learnt and identify what they need to do next to improve.
150. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and gives good support to her colleagues. Monitoring of teaching and learning is mostly informal, but plans are monitored to ensure coverage of the curriculum. Each aspect is taught for half a term, which gives pupils good opportunities to learn and consolidate physical skills.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

151. By the age of seven and eleven, pupils reach standards that are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus, as at the last inspection. There has been very little written work at the end of Key Stage 2, but in discussion with pupils, it was evident that they had a sound knowledge of Christianity and world faiths. Overall most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding in religious education.
152. By the age of seven pupils have a sound understanding of special times and special places in Christianity. Year 2 pupils know that the Bible is a special book and identify celebrations such as baptisms and weddings. Visitors help to give the children the experiences upon which to build their religious knowledge, such as the visit to the school of the local vicar who demonstrated the sequence of events in baptism. The school also uses the local church well. It is because of the visits the children make to the church, that they can talk knowledgeably about features in the building. Some children were enthralled with the stained glass windows and appreciated their beauty, while others remembered the special clothes and colours that the vicar wears. Pupils

recognise that religions have different ceremonies and have some understanding of important festivals such as Sukkot to Judaism, and Easter to Christians. They are able to relate some stories from the Bible, such as the parable of 'The Sower'.

153. In Key Stage 2 pupils build on their knowledge of stories from the Bible, as in Year 3 when they learn about 'Noah's Ark' and 'The Plagues of Egypt' and recall the main events in the stories. In Year 4 pupils build on their knowledge of churches and the role church leaders play. The way the curriculum is planned, using the national guidance, is helpful for teachers to revisit areas of the curriculum and reinforce various concepts and beliefs, as well as introducing new religions. Pupils in Year 4 have recently started to learn about the Islamic prayer rituals. This has been taught well because when the teacher challenges the pupils to 'brainstorm' what they know, they put across their knowledge well, using key vocabulary correctly. To give the pupils experience of the prayer ritual, they work with their teacher in the hall and go through the stages, from arriving at the Mosque. The teacher has encouraged a respect for other peoples' beliefs and faiths well and pupils are respectful when discussing prayer.
154. By the end of the key stage pupils in Year 6 can verbalise their thoughts and ideas well because their teacher places a strong emphasis on speaking and listening skills. They are aware that people have personal responsibility for their own behaviour and consider such issues as prejudice. This is evident in the way most pupils behave and the absence of oppressive behaviour. Older pupils have gained and retained sound knowledge of the major faiths, talk with interest and use correct terminology.
155. A lesson was observed in both key stages and teaching was good, however learning is often satisfactory. This is because pupils enter school with very little knowledge of religions and awareness of others and their beliefs. Teaching is pitched at the right level for the pupils but teachers have to work hard and keep reinforcing these concepts. They use a variety of successful strategies; particularly giving pupils' direct experiences upon which to build their knowledge. Teachers sensitively handle religious issues and encourage respect for faiths and beliefs and provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect on spiritual and moral issues.
156. Examination of teachers' plans and pupils' work indicate that pupils have sufficient time to extend their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world faiths. The co-ordinator checks teachers' plans for coverage, but monitoring of teaching and learning is mainly informal. As yet, there is little provision for assessment of individual pupils' progress over time.
157. Collective worship makes a good contribution to the subject and to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. The scene is set well in the hall, with candles alight and music playing. This means that pupils enter the hall with reverence, ready to take part in assembly. There is a good emphasis on celebrating and reflecting on successes and valuing individuals. The promotion of moral development strongly pervades much of the work of the school. This was evident when talking to Year 6 pupils, as they have a good understanding of the differences between people and their values and beliefs. The good use that is made of the local church means pupils understand various celebrations in Christianity, by actually taking part. The school successfully promotes other religions through good displays of artefacts, which help pupils to make comparisons between religions, as was evident when discussing world religions with Year 6 pupils. For example, a festival of light display successfully reinforces such events as Hanukkah in Judaism and Diwali in Hinduism with photographs of their own experiences of a Christingle service.