

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **RODFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Yate

LEA area: South Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 131702

Headteacher: Ms R L Rowe

Reporting inspector: Mr J G Quinn  
15676

Dates of inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> February 2001

Inspection number: 230345

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 -11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Barnwood Road Yate South Gloucestershire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr B Gregg
Date of previous inspection:	N/A

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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15676	J G Quinn	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught?
11392	T Heppenstall	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?
24342	D J Franklin	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English	
3942	K Sanderson	Team inspector	Science Physical education	How well the school is led and managed?
18393	J Donovan	Team inspector	Art and design Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities available to pupils?
26514	A J Tapsfield	Team inspector	Mathematics History Music	
30810	A E Kounnou	Team inspector	Religious education Geography	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Rodford Primary School is situated in Yate, a large modern housing development on the northern outskirts of Bristol. The school opened as a new primary in September 1999 as the result of the amalgamation of the separate Rodford infant and Rodford junior schools which shared the same site. It is a large primary school with 378 pupils on roll. There are few pupils from families of ethnic minorities. Six speak English as an additional language. Languages spoken in addition to English are Arabic, Chinese and Punjabi. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above average at 29 per cent. The proportion of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs is well above average at 4.2 per cent. Half of these pupils are taught in the units for pupils with hearing impairment. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average at nine per cent.

Children are admitted to the reception classes at the beginning of the school year in which they become five years of age. Attainment on entry is below average.

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

This is an improving school which has taken effective steps towards establishing itself as a newly amalgamated primary school. It provides a satisfactory education for its pupils through good teaching and purposeful leadership. Taking into account pupils' attainment on entry, the sound progress that many pupils make in their learning, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- There is a significant proportion of good teaching, which contributes well to the quality of pupils' learning.
- The headteacher and senior management team have provided strong leadership through a period of significant change.
- Provision for pupils in reception classes is good.
- The literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented successfully.
- Provides well for hearing impaired pupils in their specialist units and within classes.
- Provision for pupils' social and moral development is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, they behave well and the quality of relationships is good.
- Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good.
- The school makes good use of its learning support staff.
- The school has made a positive attempt to build stronger links with parents.

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

- Standards are below average in several subjects.
- The curriculum is not planned well enough to ensure that all pupils build on their knowledge and understanding systematically in all subjects.
- There has been insufficient time for review and consolidation of all recent changes.
- Not all co-ordinators understand and fulfil their roles effectively.
- The management of special educational needs is unsatisfactory.
- The strategic role of the governing body in shaping the school's general direction and monitoring its work is unsatisfactory.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

This is the school's first inspection in its present form and consequently there is no previous report against which to measure its improvement. Over the past 17 months the school has worked industriously to build an effective team and to develop policies and management structures to support its newly amalgamated status. These are now in place but have yet to become firmly embedded in practice throughout the school. Through the strong leadership provided by the senior management team, the school is well placed to make further progress and address all areas for improvement.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	N/A	N/A	C	D
Mathematics	N/A	N/A	D	D
Science	N/A	N/A	C	C

**Key**

well above average      A

above average            B

average                    C

below average            D

well below average      E

Pupils' attainment was in line with the national average in English and science but just below average in mathematics. They performed as well as pupils in similar schools in science but did not do as well in English and mathematics. Results for seven year olds in last year's test and tasks were average in reading but below average in writing, mathematics and science when compared to all schools and to similar schools.

Statutory targets in English and mathematics for pupils in Year 6, at the end of the last school year, were insufficiently challenging and were exceeded by 11 per cent in English and eight per cent in mathematics. Targets for the current Year 6 are more realistic and have been set, in consultation with the local authority, as a result of previous testing.

Inspection evidence shows standards to be in line with the national average in English and science at the end of Key Stage 2 but are below average in all three subjects at the end of Key Stage 1. Standards in mathematics are below average for 11 year olds. In information technology standards meet national expectations, and standards are in line with those found in most schools in art, design and technology, and physical education for pupils aged seven and 11. Pupils aged seven and 11 do not meet the targets identified in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. In geography, history and music standards are below average at both key stages and well below in geography by the age of 11.

Overall pupils make good progress in reception and Key Stage 2 and satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1. Pupils whose first language is not English make sound progress but those with special educational needs in the main school do not make the progress that they should in relation to their individual targets.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school. Most concentrate well in lessons and apply themselves conscientiously to the tasks that are set.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school generally. They display a lively interest in visitors and are courteous and polite.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils respond well to the opportunities offered for them to take responsibility and relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are good.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. Most pupils are punctual and lessons at the start of the school day begin promptly.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	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.*

Teaching is good in reception and Key Stage 2 and the majority of pupils make good progress in their learning as a result. At Key Stage 1 teaching is satisfactory and pupils make sound progress. In 94 per cent of lessons teaching was at least satisfactory and in 17 per cent it was very good. In six per cent of lessons teaching was unsatisfactory and in one lesson teaching was poor.

In the best lessons teachers plan effectively for the different abilities in their classes, have good subject knowledge and introduce a purposeful pace to lessons. Lack of pace and weaknesses in securing and maintaining pupils' attention were features of unsatisfactory lessons. Some teachers lack confidence in teaching religious education and music.

Teachers in the reception classes have very high expectations of the children they teach. They manage the behaviour of children very well and make very effective use of the support staff with whom they work, of the teaching time available, and of the resources for learning. Pupils apply themselves well as a result. They learn effectively and make significant gains in their development of knowledge and skill in all areas of their work.

Teachers at Key Stages 1 and 2 are secure in their understanding of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies. Literacy is taught well and the teaching of numeracy is satisfactory. However, the work planned for highest attaining pupils in mathematics at both key stages is not always difficult enough which means that pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.

The school meets the needs of most of its pupils satisfactorily. Although pupils with impaired hearing make very good progress as a result of the very effective support they receive,

progress of other pupils with special educational needs is inhibited due to shortcomings in the way in which this area is managed.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall due largely to the way in which the national strategies for literacy and numeracy are planned and implemented. The planning of other subjects is unsatisfactory and does not ensure that pupils build on their skills effectively in every subject. The total teaching time for Key Stage 2 pupils falls below the recommended minimum. These are significant contributory factors to low standards in several subjects. The school provides too few extra-curricular activities for pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. Their needs are not well co-ordinated throughout the school. Pupils with hearing impairment are very well supported both within their specialised units and in class lessons. This enables them to take a full part in all activities.
Provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language	The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language, receive appropriate support and so are able to take part in all lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory, with particular strengths in pupils' moral and social development. There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of the cultural diversity of Britain today.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of its pupils. All staff are vigilant in matters of safety. Procedures for recording and monitoring attendance are very good.

Several parents help in school regularly but overall parents are insufficiently involved directly, in the work of the school.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership is sound overall. The headteacher gives clear educational direction and has worked energetically to ensure that the newly amalgamated school is effective. Together with other members of the senior management team she provides strong leadership. Most co-ordinators are fairly new to their roles and so the part some of them play in supporting their areas of responsibility is underdeveloped. A minority are insufficiently clear about what they are expected to do.

How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	All governors are committed to supporting the school and do so well individually. However, the corporate role of the governing body is insufficiently developed and is currently unsatisfactory. It has no clear strategic vision for school improvement and is insufficiently involved in monitoring important aspects of the school's work. It meets all statutory requirements except for certain information which is missing from the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its performance satisfactorily in national tests and the senior management team monitors teaching. There has been insufficient opportunity for the review of recent changes.
The strategic use of resources	The school deploys its resources satisfactorily. Particularly effective use is made of support staff to assist pupils in their learning. Money for specific purposes is used appropriately. The school development plan contains appropriate targets for improvement and raising pupils' standards of attainment, but the costs of each initiative are not included.

There is a good number of teaching and support staff who are appropriately trained and experienced. Resources are good overall and accommodation is generous with many good features. The school has sought best value in a number of areas related to establishing a new school.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> <li>• The school expects their children to work hard.</li> <li>• Children like school.</li> <li>• The school helps their children to become mature.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities provided.</li> <li>• The amount of work pupils are given to do at home.</li> <li>• The information which they receive about how well their children are getting on.</li> <li>• The way in which the school is led and managed.</li> </ul>

The inspection team supports the positive views expressed by parents. However, apart from the range of activities provided it does not agree with the areas which parents would like to see improved. There are currently no extra-curricular activities available to pupils outside lessons. Pupils are given a satisfactory amount of homework. Parents are provided with appropriate reports on how well their children are progressing and staff are very approachable to discuss problems. The way in which the school is led and managed is satisfactory overall with a clear and appropriate focus on developing the ethos of a new primary school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. In the most recent statutory tests pupils at age seven achieved results that were in line with the national average in reading but below average in writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments in science showed standards to be well below the national average.
2. In reading the proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 3 was less than that found in most schools. Compared with similar schools standards were below average. In writing, results were below average with no pupils attaining Level 3 and twice as many pupils working below the expected levels than in all schools nationally. Standards were well below those in similar schools. In mathematics results were below average with fewer pupils attaining Level 3 than was found in most schools. Compared to similar schools results were below average. Teachers assessed pupils as being well below average in science but with an average proportion that attained Level 3.
3. Boys performed better than girls in reading but girls outperformed boys in writing and mathematics.
4. Results at age 11 were better than at age seven in English and science but were similar in mathematics. Results were in line with the national average in English and science but slightly below average in mathematics.
5. In English the proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 5 was slightly below that found nationally. Results were below those for similar schools. Similarly in mathematics the number of pupils reaching the higher level was below the national average. Here again, pupils did not do as well as those in similar schools. In science the proportion of pupils achieving Level 5 was slightly higher than average but overall results were lower than those in similar schools.
6. Girls performed better than boys in all three tests. The school has noted this and action to improve the performance of boys has been identified in the school development plan.
7. As this is the school's first inspection since amalgamation, trends in attainment over time cannot be determined. Statutory targets in literacy and numeracy for Year 6 pupils at the end of the last school year were insufficiently challenging and were exceeded by 11 per cent in English and by eight per cent in mathematics. Those for this year are more realistic now that the school is more settled and teachers have had greater opportunity to assess pupils' attainment. These targets are reflected in the standards of work seen during the inspection.
8. Inspection findings indicate that standards are in line with the national average in English and science at age 11. Pupils attain similarly to those in all schools in information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology and physical education, by the ages of seven and 11. In mathematics pupils' attainment is just below average at the end of both key stages. In English and science pupils do not do as well as those in the majority of schools by the time they are seven years of age and are below average. Also in history, geography and music

standards are below those normally found. In religious education pupils' knowledge and understanding at age seven fall well below the targets identified in the locally agreed syllabus for the subject. Pupils make better progress at Key Stage 2 but by the age of 11 standards in religious education are still below those expected as they are in history and music. Pupils achieve well below those in most schools in geography at age 11. There was no obvious difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

9. Due to a high proportion of good and very good teaching in reception and Key Stage 2 most pupils learn effectively. The quality of pupils' learning at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. The progress that pupils make, considering the disruption caused by the changes the school has experienced recently, is satisfactory overall and is better at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1. Occasionally, not enough is expected of more able pupils in mathematics lessons at both key stages with the result that they do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
10. Children in the two reception classes achieve well and make good progress in all areas of their learning compared to their below average attainment when they begin school. Consequently it is anticipated that most will achieve the standards expected by the time they enter Key Stage 1 except for the areas of communication, language and literacy where standards are below those normally found.
11. Pupils whose hearing is impaired are integrated well into lessons. They take an enthusiastic part in lessons and learn effectively whether taught individually, within small groups or as part of a whole class. Pupils with special educational needs do not make the progress that they should due to the fact that planning does not always relate closely to the targets identified in their individual education plans.
12. In English pupils in reception speak clearly and confidently in their imaginative play but with a very limited vocabulary. They listen attentively to stories and begin to enjoy the pleasure of sharing books. Many begin to use their knowledge of letter sounds to work out unfamiliar words and some higher attaining children read repeated phrases accurately. Children begin to develop their writing well and use a combination of letters and pictures to convey their ideas. By the age of seven pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to other pupils and anticipate what might happen next in a familiar story. Pupils in Year 6 talk confidently in a range of situations, for example, where they discuss the use of formal language to be used in a letter. Reading is below average by the age of seven but in line with the national average at age 11. Pupils at Key Stage 1 begin to use a range of strategies to work out the meaning of words and some have a good understanding of letter sounds. Many read simple text accurately but relatively few can talk about what they have read to express a preference or opinion, or predict what is to come in a story. Pupils at Key Stage 2 and many pupils in Year 6 read fluently from a range of books. They understand how to use the library to find information. Although standards in writing are just below average at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils make sound progress and good progress in their learning throughout Key Stage 2. As a result they attain in line with all schools by Year 6. Pupils at Key Stage 1 begin to write for a range of purposes and are beginning to demonstrate an awareness of full stops and capital letters to indicate sentences in their writing. Some key words are spelt correctly but the quality of letter formation and handwriting is inconsistent between classes and is sometimes untidy. By the age of 11 pupils have progressed well in their learning. They write imaginatively for a range of purposes such as autobiographies, diaries and newspaper articles. They are aware of correct punctuation and spelling is satisfactory. Handwriting is also satisfactory but there are inconsistencies in style

- and presentation across the classes. The school is aware of this and has introduced measures to improve the quality of pupils' writing.
13. In the reception class children make good progress in their mathematical development. Most count to ten accurately and many count beyond this to 20. The children join in counting rhymes with their teachers enthusiastically and create repeating patterns using beads and handprints. Pupils at Key Stage 1 begin to sequence numbers to 100 and are developing an understanding of the value of different digits. Pupils learn the properties of simple two and three-dimensional shapes and begin to use equipment for measuring. At Key Stage 2 pupils understand the value of digits in a given number and apply their knowledge well to practical situations. However, their understanding of the relationship between different mathematical forms - such as fractions and decimals - is underdeveloped. They measure accurately and analyse graphs and charts, but their ability to interpret data and to work on areas such as probability is limited. Lower and average attaining pupils achieve appropriately and make satisfactory progress. However higher attaining pupils at both key stages are not always set work that demands enough of them and this restricts their progress.
  14. In science pupils at Key Stage 1 do not achieve the standards that they should. By age seven they are able to sort and classify objects according to certain characteristics. They describe changes that occur when materials are heated and create simple electrical circuits. However, the way in which they record their work is unsatisfactory and this contributes to low standards in the subject.
  15. In religious education pupils in Year 2 cannot talk confidently or enthusiastically about any aspect of the locally agreed syllabus. They name the Bible as a special book after careful prompting, but have no awareness of the importance of religious objects, practices and festivals. They cannot talk about religious places or people. By Year 6 pupils' knowledge has not improved sufficiently. Their books show that they have considered prayer in different religions, and some philosophical questions, for example, what is religion? However, the range of recorded work is limited, mainly due to the long gaps between each piece of work. In discussion pupils confuse aspects of the history topic on ancient Greece, with knowledge about religion.
  16. In geography, history and music standards are lower than they should be principally due to the way in which the curriculum is planned. Geography does not occur frequently enough for pupils to develop skills systematically. School planning does not support teaching well enough which results in some lessons having inappropriate content. This means that pupils learn at a level that is too easy for them and do not make the progress that they should. In history and music there is insufficient time given to both subjects and as a result pupils' knowledge and understanding are superficial.

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

17. Pupils' attitudes to the school and to learning are good and this makes a significant contribution to their progress. They like coming to school and they are well motivated in lessons. Pupils engage fully in lesson activities by showing interest, listening well and persevering to complete tasks. Many pupils are capable of working well without direct supervision. For example, unsupervised groups in literacy and numeracy lessons work well on their own and without disrupting others. Often this involves sensible co-operation over the use of resources. Pupils display a pride in their work and are keen to talk about what they have done and to demonstrate to others. Good examples of this occurred in dance lessons at Key Stage 1 where small groups were

happy to demonstrate their interpretations of stories and poems to the rest of the class. Pupils are also keen to participate in lessons and assemblies and there is no shortage of volunteers to answer questions or to contribute to discussions.

18. Pupils' behaviour is good both in lessons and around school. For example, behaviour at lunchtime is restrained and noise is at a socially acceptable level in the dining hall even though many pupils are present. In addition, the pupils are courteous, which is appreciated by the administration staff and lunchtime supervisors. Pupils are trustworthy; for example they handle money and carry out various responsibilities such as helping with the first-aid provisions. Both parents and pupils are happy with the standards of behaviour. There is no oppressive behaviour and there have been no exclusions in the past year.
19. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are good. The pupils like and respect their teachers and are confident in their support. They are also sensitive to the feelings of others. For example, pupils contribute well to discussions about the break up of friendships in 'circle time' in which they have opportunity to discuss issues which concern them. Also, the few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and those with disabilities are fully integrated into the life of the school.
20. The school gives a high priority to the development of pupils' social skills and their personal development is good. They show confidence in dealing with adults. For example, they were happy and able to have wide ranging discussions with inspectors. They also respond well to the range of opportunities to take responsibility and to show initiative. All age groups have tasks ranging from simple errands to participation in 'buddy' groups in which older pupils take responsibility for younger children.
21. Attendance is satisfactory. Unauthorised absence occurs but it is below the national average. There are some absences for holidays in term time but the practice is strongly discouraged. Registration periods start promptly and proceed efficiently. There is little disruption from latecomers as punctuality is good. Consequently, the first lessons of the school day are able to start on time.

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

22. The quality of teaching is good overall. In 94 per cent lessons it was at least satisfactory and in 17 per cent teaching was very good. In six per cent of lessons teaching was unsatisfactory and occasionally poor. It was best in reception and at Key Stage 2 where there were fewer unsatisfactory lessons and a higher proportion of effective teaching than at Key Stage 1. There were no unsatisfactory lessons in reception where most of the teaching was good. The quality of teaching throughout the school has a positive impact on how well pupils build on previous learning in lessons, in order to develop their knowledge and understanding further
23. The skills of literacy are taught well and those for numeracy are satisfactorily taught in the majority of lessons. Both subjects were taught best at Key Stage 2 where there was a high proportion of good and very good teaching, more evident in literacy than in numeracy. Teachers have a good understanding of both strategies, but that for literacy is more securely established and contributes more positively to the standards that pupils attain. The school's arrangements for grouping pupils by ability within year groups in literacy and numeracy at Key Stage 2 are effective. They ensure that pupils' needs are met more specifically in these subjects and this is enhanced further when teachers plan for different ability groups within these grouped classes.

However, occasionally the highest attaining pupils within the different mathematics groups at both key stages are presented with work that is insufficiently challenging.

24. Teaching meets the needs of most pupils effectively and for those pupils with hearing impairment teaching is good both within their specialist units and within classes generally. The few pupils whose first language is other than English are fully included in all lessons as none is at an early stage of English acquisition.
25. Pupils with special educational needs are generally taught well. Pupils at Key Stage 2 are separated into different classes by ability, within their year groups for literacy and numeracy and in many cases a high proportion of pupils in the lower groups have special educational needs. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that tasks are adapted so that the pupils find them challenging but achievable. Support teachers and learning support assistants are used well to help pupils with special educational needs and make a significant contribution to their progress. When pupils are withdrawn for teaching, their needs are usually very well met. However the teaching in one such lesson was poor, with inconsistent management of behaviour and a very slow pace to the work. As a result pupils made no progress during the lesson.
26. Teachers in reception have high expectations of the children they teach and provide activities that will engage and challenge them. For example in a numeracy session based on subtraction and the development of an appropriate vocabulary, the teacher planned the lesson very effectively with a clear indication of practical tasks for different abilities and how different groups of children would be supported in their learning. She made good use of additional adults to assist those groups who needed most support, whilst others worked independently. The result was that all children concentrated well over a fairly prolonged period. They were absorbed in what they were doing and made significant gains in their understanding which the teacher consolidated, through questioning, at the end of the morning session.
27. Features of the best lessons at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are teachers' good subject knowledge which contributes to clear planning and incisive questioning, high expectations of pupils, good use of resources, a brisk and purposeful pace to learning and positive management of pupils' behaviour through praise and encouragement. The small number of unsatisfactory lessons were characterised by ineffective methods for managing pupils' behaviour and gaining and maintaining pupils' attention, which slowed the pace of learning unacceptably.
28. In many lessons teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach and have appropriate expectations of pupils which contribute effectively to the confidence with which they explain lessons to pupils, to the tasks they set and to the guidance they provide. This was apparent for example in three information and communication technology lessons in Years 4 and 5 and two design and technology lessons in Year 4. In these lessons teachers clearly understood the subject matter. They planned precise learning objectives and gave clear instruction to ensure that pupils learned at an appropriate rate. Teachers used correct technical terminology throughout the information technology lessons which reflected their high expectations of pupils' understanding and in one lesson, the class teacher was adept at turning pupils' mistakes into learning points for others. Similarly in a very successful literacy lesson in Year 6 the teacher demonstrated high expectations of pupils through the way in which she developed specific vocabulary. In a very good music lesson, again in Year 4, the teacher had high expectations of pupils' behaviour and made effective use of resources to capture and maintain pupils' interest. In religious education and music some teachers lack sufficient subject knowledge and confidence to teach the

subjects effectively and are occasionally unable to answer pupils' questions. Also in a small minority of geography lessons at Key Stage 2 teachers' expectations are too low because they are teaching an inappropriately planned curriculum. As a result pupils do not work at a high enough level and make insufficient gains in their knowledge and understanding.

29. In many lessons teachers question pupils skilfully to get pupils to think carefully about what they are doing. In numeracy lessons, for example, most teachers use the introductory session well for mental computation. They direct questions to specific pupils based on their knowledge of individual abilities. This engages pupils' thinking effectively and contributes to a good pace of learning.
30. Teachers plan lessons well overall and in the best lessons they share the objectives with pupils at the outset which gives pupils a clear understanding of what it is that they are to learn. They then, at the end of the lessons, check whether objectives have been achieved. In a minority of lessons the objectives are too broad which prevents teachers from assessing accurately whether they have been met, throughout lessons, or within the whole-class sessions at the end of lessons.
31. In almost all classes teachers manage the behaviour of pupils well. They use praise and encouragement to good effect, in keeping with class rules which appear in all classrooms and which have been negotiated with pupils. In the minority of lessons that were unsatisfactory the ineffective management of pupils' behaviour was a common feature, as it was to a lesser degree in some otherwise satisfactory lessons. Here teachers kept pupils sitting still for too long and interrupted the lessons frequently to remonstrate with individuals. This slowed the pace of the lesson, disrupted the concentration of the majority and was an impediment to learning. In another situation, where the content of the lesson was insufficiently demanding, the class teacher, who was working with a small group failed to notice that other pupils were not concentrating sufficiently and that some were wasting a significant amount of time.
32. Teachers use resources well in most lessons and make good use of learning support assistants to help pupils with their learning. The quality of support provided by these assistants as they work with individuals or small groups of pupils, makes a significant contribution to the progress that pupils make in their learning.

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

33. The school has worked hard to produce policies and schemes of work for all curriculum subjects since the amalgamation. These are now in place but have yet to become firmly embedded in practice throughout the school, or to be evaluated to find how well they are being implemented. The current arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are unsatisfactory. The way in which their learning is planned throughout the school does not focus clearly enough on the specific targets in their individual education plans which limits the progress that they make.
34. The quality and range of the curriculum overall are satisfactory largely due to the effective way in which the national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been introduced. Other subjects contribute to a broad and balanced curriculum, but some subjects are covered in insufficient depth and this has an adverse effect on the standards that pupils attain. The total teaching time for pupils at Key Stage 2 falls below the recommended minimum by 35 minutes a week and this is detrimental to

standards in several subjects. The school has produced an overall plan for the curriculum that is unsatisfactory due to the long gaps of time between blocks of work in subjects such as geography, history, music and religious education. This does not allow pupils to revisit, consolidate and extend their learning and has an adverse effect on standards. The time allocated to these subjects is not made clear in the planning and there is no clear indication of how pupils will make progress in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding. In some lesson plans, learning intentions for pupils relate to long-term objectives and do not state specifically what pupils will learn in the lesson.

35. The school's provision for personal, social and health education is good although again there is no clear indication in the planning of how much time will be allocated to it. There is a sound policy and the co-ordinator is working on a written scheme of work. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are offered appropriate sex education through the science curriculum and parents are involved through a 'mums and daughters/dads and lads' evening. Provision for awareness of the misuse of drugs is good. Personal and social education is well developed through collective worship, religious education, and 'circle time' when pupils are given the opportunity to discuss things important to them with their teacher and with their classmates.
36. Provision for extra-curricular activities is unsatisfactory and currently only one after school club is offered to selected pupils, although others are planned for next term. This reflects parental concern about the shortage of such activities. Some use is made of resources outside school to enhance curricular provision, for example pupils in Key Stage 2 visit the museum and art gallery, and there are occasional visitors to school, such as an animator and a local minister of religion. Older pupils also take part in residential visits which contribute well to their personal and social development.
37. The caring ethos of the school stresses the importance of equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. In most classes these pupils follow the full curriculum for their age groups. Teachers either adapt tasks or offer additional support to meet their needs. When pupils are withdrawn by specialist teachers or learning support teachers they are generally supported well with an appropriate and challenging curriculum. The school has identified a number of more able pupils and has plans to provide them with opportunities to extend and develop their abilities in the future. A specific time has been allocated on the school timetable to provide these pupils with more challenging activities.
38. The school has a satisfactory range of links with the community and those with neighbouring schools are good. Community links include public concerts given by pupils, sporting connections with a major local rugby club and various visitors, including Members of Parliament and local councillors. There are also satisfactory links with local pre-school groups within the local area. These help to raise the school's profile, enhance the curriculum and provide some opportunities for personal development. A supportive association with neighbouring schools provides cost effective in-service teacher training and ensures continuity in the curriculum as pupils move from the primary to the secondary phase. The school is also involved in an education project which provides a basis for common goal setting by a group of local schools.
39. Provision for personal development including spiritual, moral, social and cultural is satisfactory overall and makes a sound contribution to pupils' development.

40. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. The pupils have a clear understanding of the values and beliefs that the school promotes. Daily acts of collective worship are provided and these are well planned. A lighted candle often acts as a focal point for the pupils during quiet moments of reflection and prayer. The school has satisfactory links with the local church and the minister visits approximately twice a term to take collective worship. Other visitors are also welcome to lead assemblies. However there are limited opportunities for pupils to reflect on the wonders of the world around them during lessons.
41. The school provides good opportunities for moral development. The school operates a positive behaviour policy, which was written in consultation with the pupils and contributes positively to pupils' understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable. At the beginning of each year the teachers negotiate a set of classroom rules with their pupils and these are clearly displayed in the rooms. Most pupils have a good understanding of the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. Opportunities to celebrate good behaviour as well as academic work are provided during the weekly celebration assemblies. Moral issues are appropriately discussed during 'circle-time'.
42. Provision for pupils' personal and social development is good and has a high priority in the school. Pupils of all ages join in a range of activities together and develop their understanding of the benefits of teamwork. For example two teams often join together for school productions and harvest festival celebrations. There is also a 'buddy system' in operation whereby pupils in older classes are paired with pupils in younger classes. They join together to share books, play mathematics games and at the summer fair they organise stalls together. This contributes well to pupils' self esteem and both younger and older pupils benefit. Many pupils in the school have the opportunity to take responsibilities within their classes as monitors and older pupils are given additional responsibilities of helping the younger pupils at lunchtime and organising the distribution of milk.
43. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory overall. Cultural awareness is appropriately promoted through the curriculum, for example in art, music and history and also during collective worship. Visits from theatre groups and visits to museums and art galleries are also effective in developing pupils' cultural awareness. Provision for multicultural development is unsatisfactory and there are limited opportunities for pupils to celebrate the ethnic and cultural diversity of our society.

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

44. The overall provision for pupils' welfare is very good. There are effective procedures to ensure high health and safety standards. Arrangements for child protection are very good. Arrangements for supervision at lunchtime are very good. There is a relatively high number of supervisors who are formally trained and confident about their roles. The supervisors are well integrated into the life of the school and they have regular meetings with the headteacher to identify and resolve any difficulties. The arrangements for behaviour management are good. The good behaviour policy emphasises reinforcing good behaviour through a system of rewards and sanctions. Noteworthy examples of good conduct are acknowledged in weekly celebration assemblies. The pupils understand these arrangements and respond well as a result. They are aware of the concepts of good and bad behaviour and they contribute to the formulation of classroom rules. There is an anti-bullying policy and staff act quickly when behaviour is unsatisfactory. Arrangements to monitor and

record attendance are very good and they have been commended to the local authority as an example of model practice.

45. There is no formal procedure to monitor personal development. However, informal arrangements, which rely heavily on the class teacher's personal knowledge of their pupils, are good. They are enhanced by the caring ethos of the school and the good relationships which exist between pupils and the staff. The procedures enable useful comments to be made about personal development on pupils' annual progress reports and, for example, to identify pupils who would benefit from membership of the Pyramid Club which aids personal and social development.
46. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in English and mathematics are comprehensive and effective. The information gathered is used well to determine the school's targets for attainment in national testing, and to group pupils for mathematics and English at Key Stage 2. Pupils with particular needs are also identified, such as those in need of additional support in English and mathematics. Pupils have also been identified for the 'very able' teaching groups, but these classes have not yet begun. In addition the school has satisfactory procedures for evaluating pupils' progress in other subjects of the curriculum through informal teachers' and pupils' evaluation at the end of a unit of study.
47. The school has recently started to create portfolios of examples of work to give staff useful guidance in evaluating the characteristics of the National Curriculum levels of attainment. Teachers have discussed in depth samples of pupils' work to agree their judgements of standards achieved in English and mathematics.
48. The school gains all the information it needs through its extensive assessment programme. Suitable procedures are in place to evaluate these results, but at present these are not applied consistently to show clearly the progress of individual pupils over time. Additionally, the school has recently adopted 'key objectives' record sheets in mathematics and English to monitor the progress of each pupil. The use made of these is also inconsistent at present, with some staff completing them more frequently and in greater detail than others.
49. Teachers use assessment findings effectively to evaluate how much knowledge and understanding pupils have retained at the end of period of work. For example in mathematics, 'assessment days' each half term focus on a particular aspect of numeracy. Satisfactory use is made of this data to guide curriculum planning and to assist in setting targets each term, both for classes and for individuals, in mathematics and English. However, insufficient use is made of assessment information to guide curriculum planning in other subjects, both for a class and for different levels of ability within a class.
50. Provision for the monitoring and assessment of the progress of pupils with special educational needs in the main school is unsatisfactory. Systems for reviewing progress made by the systems and the setting of individual targets are underdeveloped. Some teachers set clear achievable targets linked to the needs identified, plan appropriate strategies and review systematically against them. However this practice is not consistent and in some classes targets for learning are unclear and do not relate closely to the needs of the child. The quality of record keeping is unsatisfactory. Statements of special educational need are not used effectively to plan provision for pupils.

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

51. The results of the parents' survey and comment at the meeting for parents prior to the inspection, indicated that parents were satisfied with teaching and the way the school deals with their children. However, there is clear evidence of dissatisfaction from parents with the information provided about their children's progress, with the way the school works with them and with the way the school is managed. Dissatisfaction is also expressed about the amount of homework and many parents believe that there are too few after-school activities provided for pupils. A survey of parents carried out by the school last year had a low response but revealed a broadly similar picture.
52. With one exception, evidence obtained during the inspection, does not confirm the concerns of parents. It indicates that there was significant parental opposition to the amalgamation but the new school is now considered to be much more satisfactory than had been anticipated. The inspection team also has concerns but evidence indicates that the school is making good progress towards establishing a whole-school identity. Inspection evidence supports parental concerns about the range of out-of-lesson activities, which are unsatisfactory.
53. The school has tried hard to develop stronger links with parents and has initiated good arrangements which have the potential to be productive in time. For example, a governors' committee has been established specifically to liaise with parents and a crèche is available at parents' consultation evenings.
54. Information provided for parents is good. Newsletters are informative; parents receive information about the forthcoming work of their children, there are meetings about the curriculum and there are open days. There is a useful booklet for the parents of new pupils and the prospectus and governors' annual report are well presented.
55. Parents are very comfortable about coming to school and the teaching staff are considered to be very approachable. Parents greatly appreciate this and welcome the many opportunities that are presented to discuss matters of concern.
56. Information about pupils' progress is satisfactory. Reports to parents on how well their children are performing are reasonably detailed and include thoughtful remarks about personal development, targets for improvement and opportunity for pupils' comments. However, they tend to be repetitious, they avoid critical comment and give little indication of what pupils might do to improve. Reading diaries are also used to communicate between home and school. In addition to written information, there are two, well-attended parents' consultation evenings. Some teachers involve pupils well in reviewing their work and parents are invited to contribute to reviews and individual education plans at parents' evenings. These evenings are the only formal opportunities for the parents of children on stages one to three of the special educational needs register to discuss progress and future plans which is not a satisfactory arrangement.
57. The part that parents play in their children's education is satisfactory overall. Many parents attend consultation evenings and other events such as concerts. The parent teacher association is successful. It organises social events and raises about £1000 a year for school funds. However, the number of parents who provide direct help in school is small. Evidence from reading diaries and discussions with pupils suggests that some parents do provide some help with learning at home, but this is variable.

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

58. The school is soundly led and managed by a conscientious, hardworking headteacher. She provides positive direction and is well supported by a senior management team comprising two deputy headteachers and the co-ordinator for the hearing impaired unit. Since re-opening the school in September 1999, after the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools, they have moved the school forward considerably in many areas. Their priorities to underpin the work of a new school and to build an effective team have been entirely appropriate. They have developed policies for most aspects of the school's work, established effective systems to ensure that all staff are able to contribute to school development, allocated appropriate co-ordinating roles and have worked energetically to support the many new teachers. The raising of pupils' attainment is clearly indicated as the next priority in the school development plan. However, the senior management team has yet to assess how well changes so far have been implemented and to what extent they are firmly embedded in practice. The school's aims, in terms of providing a caring community, characterised by positive relationships and attitudes, are well on the way to being met.
59. The headteacher, deputies and literacy and numeracy co-ordinators monitor and evaluate teaching and there are well-planned opportunities for teachers to develop their range of skills through in-service training and for newly qualified staff to observe examples of good teaching provided by more experienced colleagues. Teachers undertake a full range of management responsibilities for all curriculum areas and other aspects of school life. Many co-ordinators are new to their roles, some are new to the school and a small minority are insufficiently clear about what they are expected to do. Consequently the part they currently play in supporting, monitoring and evaluating their subjects is unsatisfactory. Others fulfil their roles well, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
60. The management of special educational needs in the main school is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator does not have a clear understanding of her role and responsibilities. The majority of her time is spent teaching small groups of pupils and she does not allocate regular times to meeting with teachers to plan and review pupils' progress.
61. The governing body is well led by an enthusiastic, experienced chairperson. Governors have established an appropriate committee structure which is efficient in enabling governors to concentrate on particular aspects and so develop their expertise in order to best support the school. The governing body is not currently fulfilling all of its statutory requirements. Statutory information relating to the arrangements made for pupils to be withdrawn from collective worship and national results in statutory tests at Key Stage 1, is missing from the prospectus. Statutory information missing from the governors' annual report to parents includes the name and address of the chair of governors, and clerk to the governors, details related to the admission of pupils with disabilities and details of the school's policy for pupils with special educational needs.
62. Although many governors are inexperienced in their roles they are keen and committed and much has been achieved already. Those that are well established have been proactive in managing the transition from two schools to one school. However, the corporate role of the governing body is unsatisfactory in terms of its collective view for further school improvement. As a result the contribution the governing body makes to shaping the general direction of school is unsatisfactory. They are currently insufficiently involved in planning the school's further development and in checking important aspects of the school's work such as the way in which the

school's budget is spent.

63. The school has an above average number of teachers and learning support staff who are all appropriately qualified and experienced. They contribute well to the quality of teaching and learning in the school. Many teachers are new to the school since the amalgamation and approximately half are from either the original Rodford Infant or Rodford Junior Schools. The large majority of teachers are trained for the phase in which they work and the teachers in the hearing impaired units have additional qualifications related to their specialist area. This contributes well to their effectiveness.
64. The school has a good policy for the induction of new staff, which is implemented well. Although the school has yet to establish itself fully it has the potential to be an effective provider of initial teacher training.
65. Accommodation is generous with many outstanding features that have arisen as a result of the amalgamation. These have a positive impact on pupils' learning. For example there are two halls, which allows large class activities such as physical education to take place simultaneously. This has a beneficial effect on pupils' progress and on the standards they attain. There are a number of small rooms, which are used regularly for group activities. Some of these are specifically equipped to facilitate the teaching of subjects such as design and technology. There is a very impressive new library area, which is used for class library lessons and for some information and communications technology lessons. The separate play area for children in the reception classes is too small for all pupils to use in order that they develop their physical skills fully.
66. Resources are good overall. They are satisfactory for pupils under five, in science, geography and music. In information technology there are sufficient computers but insufficient additional equipment such as scanners. Resources are good in all other subjects - including for pupils with special educational needs. Resources for pupils with hearing impairment are very good but for religious education there are too few books and artefacts.
67. At the time of the inspection, the school had not completed a full financial year since the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools. Sound financial procedures have been established and capital allocations have been used well to improve the working environment. For example, bright new furniture has enhanced the classrooms in Key Stage 1 and the school library has been well furnished to make it an attractive and effective resource for the school. Specific grants have been used wisely to provide extensive staff development. This has been essential following the merger of the infant and junior schools, as many staff have taken on new management responsibilities. The benefits of this spending will be realised fully over time, when staff have become used to their new roles and have gained further experience teaching in the same year group. Nevertheless, it is already clear that staff development is having a positive impact on standards in the reception classes, where staff are developing a particularly strong team. The current school development plan contains well thought out areas for improvement that are appropriate for a new school in terms of raising standards, but is unsatisfactory in that it does not include the cost of these initiatives. Consequently, as a result the school is unable to measure accurately how well spending decisions influence pupils' standards of attainment. The school intends to draw up a fully costed plan, to begin at the start of the next financial year.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

68. In order to develop the school further the governing body, headteacher and staff should address the following:

- Raise standards in those subjects where they are below average by:
  - improving all pupils' attainment in every aspect of mathematics and ensure that more able pupils are consistently provided with sufficiently challenging work at both key stages; improving pupils' reading, and quality of handwriting and presentation at Key Stage 1 ; improving the way in which pupils record the results of experiments in science at Key Stage 1. *(see paragraphs 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16)*
  - reviewing the length of the taught week at Key Stage 2 in the light of the recommended minimum, to ensure that all subjects are taught for sufficient amounts of time. *(see paragraph 34)*
  - reviewing the way in which the curriculum is planned to ensure that pupils build on their knowledge and skills regularly and systematically in all subjects. *(see paragraphs 34)*
  - raising teachers' confidence and subject knowledge in religious education and music in order that these subjects may be taught consistently well throughout the school. *(see paragraph 28)*
- Evaluate and consolidate all recent changes, and ensure that they are embedded in practice, prior to the school moving forward on the next stage of its development. *(see paragraphs 33 and 58)*
- Improve provision for pupils with special educational needs and the way in which arrangements are co-ordinated to ensure that all pupils make appropriate progress towards the targets that are set for them in their individual education plans. *(see paragraphs 11, 33, 50 and 60)*
- Develop a shared commitment to further improvement where all co-ordinators are clear about their responsibilities and are effective in supporting, monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. *(see paragraph 59)*
- Further develop the role of the governing body in shaping the general direction of the school and incorporating this strategic view into a closely costed school development plan. *(see paragraphs 62 and 67)*

**Together with the main areas for improvement indicated above, the following less important issues should also be considered for inclusion in the action plan.**

- Consider ways to increase the number of extra-curricular activities available to pupils. *(see paragraph 36)*
- Ensure that all statutory information is included in the school prospectus and in the governors' annual report to parents. *(see paragraph 61)*
- Plan opportunities to raise pupils' awareness of the cultural diversity of Britain today. *(see paragraph 43)*

## THE WORK OF THE UNIT FOR PUPILS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT

69. Provision in the hearing-impaired resource bases is a strong aspect of the school's work. The resource base is well staffed with qualified teachers and learning support assistants who work extremely well together. This enables pupils' learning to be effectively supported in the mainstream classes and in withdrawal groups. There are two classrooms in the base, each equipped for either Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2 pupils, and a sound-proofed room that doubles as an office. The resources for learning are excellent.
70. The resource base is well managed and led by an experienced and knowledgeable co-ordinator who has a clear understanding of her role, the needs of the base, and a wider whole-school view.
71. The school currently provides for up to 12 pupils with a hearing impairment. They are supported in mainstream classes and receive specialist teaching in some lessons in the resource base classrooms.
72. The pupils in this group enter school with attainment below that expected for their age, particularly in the areas of language development and literacy. They make good progress as they move through the school and achieve levels close to those of their peers by the end of Year 6.
73. The pupils respond well to the opportunities offered to them both in their class lessons and when they are withdrawn to the resource base. They behave well and are willing and enthusiastic. The bustle of the classroom environment is sometimes difficult for those with a hearing impairment, and from a young age, the pupils understand the advantages of withdrawing to the base. One pupil explained "It is much quieter here, we can concentrate better."
74. Teaching in the resource base is very good and specialist staff plan with class teachers to ensure that tasks carried out in withdrawal groups are linked to those done by all pupils. The teachers in the unit are skilled in meeting the special educational needs of the pupils and have a very good level of knowledge and understanding of their specialism. They use sensitive questioning to enable pupils to understand and carry out their tasks and, where necessary adapt tasks to make this clearer. The teachers are supportive of the pupils and encourage them to talk freely together. An important aspect of all the teaching in the hearing impaired unit is the emphasis given to the development of language and the speaking and listening skills of the pupils.
75. Pupils are also well supported in their classes by class teachers, resource base teachers, and learning support assistants. Class teachers ask these pupils questions directly in whole-class sessions and other pupils wait patiently for them to reply using any planned support that is available to them. The use of radio microphones helps the pupils to contribute to discussions and collaborative work, and they are confident and willing to do so.
76. Pupils supported by the resource base are offered a full curriculum as well as the special support they need to access it. They also enjoy the additional activities available to all pupils, such as visits to museums and visitors to school. There are well written, clear policy and planning documents which indicate precisely how pupils will be supported in their learning.

77. Arrangements for assessing and monitoring the progress of pupils in the base are very good. Teachers set clear targets for learning for each pupil and keep careful records of progress. Targets are reviewed regularly and updated. Parents are fully involved in the review process and the pupils themselves contribute to the discussion. The files kept for each pupil are well organised and provide a clear overview of progress and provision.
78. The personal development of the pupils is very well supported, both within the base and in the general life of the school. Teachers in the base have very good knowledge and understanding of the pupils' backgrounds and needs which facilitates the provision of high quality support and guidance. They spend time listening to pupils and helping them to understand the world around them.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	88
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	17	36	41	5	1	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	378
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	35

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	16
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	110

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	35

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

### ***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1***

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	25	26	51

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	19	20
	Girls	23	23	23
	Total	42	42	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82	82	84
	National	83	84	90

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	20	16
	Girls	23	23	22
	Total	41	43	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80	84	75
	National	84	88	88

### ***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2***

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	24	24	48

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	18	20
	Girls	19	16	21
	Total	35	34	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73	71	85
	National	75	72	85

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	17	16
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	33	35	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69	73	71
	National	70	72	79

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	6

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***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	0	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.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	19.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.5
Average class size	27

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

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	238

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	445,056
Total expenditure	463,510
Expenditure per pupil	1,233
Balance brought forward from previous year	19,989
Balance carried forward to next year	1,535

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	380
Number of questionnaires returned	119

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	39	3	3	1
My child is making good progress in school.	42	54	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	54	10	2	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	44	16	8	2
The teaching is good.	54	45	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	24	50	20	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	36	10	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	41	55	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	22	55	16	5	2
The school is well led and managed.	27	48	18	5	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	54	5	3	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	11	29	29	20	12

### Other issues raised by parents

A minority of parents are still concerned about the amalgamation of the two schools and feel that standards were better previously.

## **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**

79. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the reception classes are good. Children enter school with attainment below and occasionally well below that expected for their age, particularly in the important areas of language skills, mathematical development and social skills. This is confirmed by the initial assessments made when the children first start school. By the time they enter Key Stage 1 the majority achieve well and are set to achieve the Early Learning Goals - the expected national standards for all children starting in Year 1- in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. Attainment is just below the expected levels in communication, language and literacy. Children achieve these standards because of good teaching and the wide range of activities provided for them which have a positive impact on the way in which they develop knowledge, skills and understanding. All children, including those with special educational needs make good progress in their learning.

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

80. Most children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and the majority are on target to achieve the expected standards in this area by the time they enter Key Stage 1. Their achievement reflects how well these skills are taught in both classes. Teachers sensitively develop social skills such as taking turns with materials and equipment and have high expectations of appropriate manners at all times. This has a positive impact on the children's personal and social development. For example, during a session when children sit in a circle and discuss issues or concerns, the teacher used a poem about school very well to enable the children to discuss how they feel about being at school and away from home. Children soon learn to take turns to speak and only to speak when they are holding 'Bertie' during this time. The teacher gives very positive responses to their thoughts and feelings and at the end of the session the children thank each other for listening. Good opportunities are also provided for children to make decisions and plan their own work each afternoon when they put their own name on a board to indicate what they have chosen to do. This contributes well to children's social skills. They know that they have to choose a different activity if there are already too many working there and understand that they may have to wait to take their turn. The children work together and concentrate well for the duration of an activity regardless of adult support as was observed during a mathematics session. Here they were resourceful in selecting materials such as glue and scissors for making the baskets into which they would sort vegetables. The children are interested and keen to learn because of the stimulating learning environments provided for them. Teachers use praise effectively to establish expectations of appropriate behaviour.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

81. Children begin in the reception classes with skills which are below those normally found. Most children make good progress in their acquisition of skills but are unlikely to achieve the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. Children speak clearly and confidently but many still use a limited vocabulary, speaking in short phrases rather than complete sentences. Children are encouraged to talk about their activities

and to take part in imaginative play. For example in that related to a café where children adopted different roles and adults intervened skilfully to develop the children's language further.

82. Teachers act as good role models when reading stories. They demonstrate their own enjoyment of reading books well to the children. The children listen attentively. They can identify some of Oliver's Vegetables' and help the teacher read their names. Children develop their reading and spelling skills well through the use of letter sounds. All children know that print is read from left to right and how to turn pages appropriately when sharing books. Most children read unfamiliar words by sounding out the letters and talked confidently about the pictures in the book. Some read repeated phrases accurately and recognise key words.
83. In writing children develop their writing skills well and use a series of letters and pictures to communicate which vegetables they like. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to spell simple key words accurately with support. Others convey their meaning through a series of familiar letters and pictures. They are beginning to form their letters correctly.
84. The quality of teaching, which contributes to children's development of communication, language and literacy skills, is good overall. Staff question children skilfully. This challenges the children's thinking and extends their knowledge well. The teachers give clear explanations, ensuring that each child will think carefully about their work and are continually extending their vocabulary effectively. Staff use praise sensitively to raise children's self-esteem. Where teaching is very good, effective methods are used to capture the children's interest, for example the ingredients for a cake for the toys' party were shared with the children and added together to produce a disgusting mixture which provoked a range of spontaneous reactions and comments from the children. Very good questioning helps pupils to learn well and increases children's confidence in identifying letter sounds very well.

### **Mathematical development**

85. In mathematics children are on target to achieve the standards expected by the time they are ready to begin in Year 1 and they make good progress in their learning. Most children count to ten and many beyond to 20. They join in singing number rhymes enthusiastically sharing in the actions as the teacher tells them a story. Children make repeated patterns using leaves, handprints and by threading beads. Most begin to understand elementary mathematical language associated with subtraction through an activity base on the book 'The Shopping Basket'. They respond correctly to questions such as "How many did the little boy take away?" and "How many are left?" In another class children decide how they wish to record information about the fruit they like to eat. One group decides to do this by using a simple tally chart and another by sorting into similar groups of vegetables. They explain to the rest of the class what they have done.
86. The quality of teaching is very good overall and this enables children to learn very effectively. Teachers use a wide range of strategies and resources to good effect. They question skilfully to promote discussions and to encourage children to make suggestions about different methods of working. Sessions at the end of lessons are used very well to reinforce the objectives of the lessons and to assess children's understanding.

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

87. Most of the children make good progress in their learning and are set to attain the standards expected by the time they leave the reception classes. They recognise and name a range of different fruits and vegetables, including carrots, cabbage, peppers and sweet corn. The children plant some potatoes and flowers in the garden outside the classroom and know that they will need water and sun for them to grow. Some children know that the roots will grow down in the soil. They name some of the main parts of their body and label them correctly with support. Above average children use initial letter sounds correctly to label the parts of the body independently. Although no direct teaching in this area of learning was observed during the inspection, evidence from planning and samples of children's work indicates that teaching is good. Learning support assistants and voluntary helpers provide good support to children's to first-hand experiences of growing plants and vegetables. They question effectively to enable the children to make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

## **Physical development**

88. By the time they enter Year 1 most children are likely to achieve the expected levels in physical development. Staff provide many valuable opportunities for children to handle small tools such as spades, pencils, paintbrushes and scissors, and as a result children develop their skills well. In the small outdoor area they ride their bikes and push carts confidently showing a good awareness of the limited space available. Children have access to the school playground for using equipment such as the traffic lights and zebra crossings but this has to be carefully planned because of the level of adult supervision required. There is no climbing apparatus outside, to help children develop their skills of balancing, climbing and sliding. The children have regular physical education sessions in the school hall but most of the apparatus is too large and unsuitable for their use. The children use the small apparatus, such as beanbags, well. They throw them in the air, concentrate well and catch them with increasing skill. Most slide the beanbag accurately along the floor to their partners. They move around the room satisfactorily with a sound awareness of space and of each other. They are beginning to understand the need for exercise and the effect that it has on their bodies.
89. Teaching is satisfactory and teachers use support staff effectively during lessons to help individuals and groups. Teachers manage the children well and give clear instructions. The child from the hearing impaired unit is very well integrated into the lessons and takes a full part in activities.

## **Creative development**

90. The children's creative development is set to be line with standards expected when they join Year 1 and they make good progress in their learning. They explore colour in painting, for example they mix colours to make brown and shades of green for the attractive display of 'Oliver's Vegetables' and for the colours of their faces on their self-portraits. They experience a range of techniques and use media with increasing skill and confidence. For example they have created patterns of handprints and decorated cut out hands with sequins and glitter. Some children make very attractive pictures using fruit prints. They talk about the pictures confidently to their teacher. Children improvise in their play effectively. For example, they use the sand and bury the vegetables pretending the sand tray is their back garden.

91. The quality of teaching is good, which enables the children to make good progress in learning. Teachers plan activities well to provide the children with good opportunities to develop their creative skills. Teaching and support staff ensure that this happens through skilful questioning and by continually discussing with the children what they are doing.
92. Learning in the reception classes is well managed. The two teachers work closely as a team and are very well supported by very good learning support assistants who make a valuable contribution to the way in which children learn. In addition teachers are well supported by voluntary helpers such as parents. Teachers plan thoroughly together to ensure that all children have the same access to a well organised and stimulating curriculum. The quality of teaching is good overall with some very good features. The teachers manage the children very well, and have high expectations of the children they teach. They make very effective use of time, resources and support staff, which has a positive impact on the children's learning. Teachers assess children on entry into the reception classes and keep full records of assessments and observations, which are used effectively to track individual children's progress. There is a good induction programme for parents and children before they start school. This includes meetings and several booklets for parents to help them to support their child with their learning. Children also receive a booklet made by the current reception children telling them about the activities they do in school. Details of activities with their learning objectives are clearly displayed for parents around the classroom. Parents also support their children well by sharing books with them at home. All this provision has a very positive impact on the children's learning at this important stage of their education and sets a firm foundation for future learning.

## **ENGLISH**

93. Standards in English are in line with the national average by the age of 11 and are just below average when pupils are seven. Results of national tests in 2000 show that the school's performance of pupils at age 11 was broadly in line with the national average. At the age of seven their performance in the national tests in reading was close to that found nationally. There was a higher percentage of pupils who did not meet the required standard and the proportion who achieved the higher level was less than that found in most schools. In writing results were below the national average and no pupils attained the higher level. The school has appropriately identified spelling at Key Stage 1 and comprehension at Key Stage 2 as priorities for development. Additional literacy support for pupils who need it most and the system of grouping pupils by ability are having a positive impact on standards.
94. The targets for pupils to achieve a Level 4 or better in the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum English test were insufficiently challenging and were achieved easily. Targets for this current year are more realistic and are reflected in inspection findings. They are based on previous testing and teachers' better understanding of the different abilities of the pupils in their classes.
95. By the age of seven pupils attain average standards in speaking and listening. They listen carefully to stories and talk about what they think will happen next. They answer questions sensibly and contribute satisfactorily to discussions. For example pupils in Year 2 discuss the character of Rumpelstiltskin and other characters using information from a book. In Year 1 they successfully discuss similarities and differences in two traditional tales. Most pupils listen carefully to adults and to each other and this enables them to respond appropriately to questions and comments made.

96. The 11 year olds' attainment in speaking and listening is as expected and they can satisfactorily give opinions in a range of situations. For example in Year 6 they identify the purpose of a letter and highlight, through discussions, the formal vocabulary used. Younger pupils can retell stories confidently using appropriate vocabulary. Most pupils listen well with concentration and question each other's ideas and opinions responsively. By the end of the key stage most pupils can talk in detail about their experiences using vocabulary that engages the listener.
97. Standards in reading by seven year olds are just below the national average; too few pupils are reading sufficiently widely or fluently. Most readers read simple text reasonably accurately and use a range of strategies to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words, but this is not consistent throughout the key stage. Few are able to talk confidently about what they read or predict what might happen next. Teaching is sound and as a result pupils make satisfactory progress. Higher attaining pupils read confidently with expression and at a good pace. Lower attaining pupils can read most of an elementary piece of text accurately and are beginning to use initial letter sounds appropriately to read unfamiliar words, although many still need support.
98. By the age of 11 pupils' attainment in reading is in line with the national average, although there is limited evidence of pupils reading beyond that expected for their age. Most read reasonably fluently and accurately in a range of situations. For example younger pupils confidently join in reading the text during shared reading sessions and pupils in Year 6 take turns to read formal letters accurately. In Year 5 most pupils in the higher ability group understand the purpose of the 'blurb' at the back of a book and the way in which words are used to persuade the reader. However too few pupils are enthusiastic about reading and only a few suggest a range of authors, whose books they enjoy reading. Although the school has regular sessions, which concentrate on developing reading skills, in some classes only those pupils working with their teacher have a clear focus for the session. By the end of the key stage most pupils understand how the library is organised and can access books for pleasure and for research.
99. By the age of seven standards in writing are just below the national average. Letter formation is satisfactory overall but there are inconsistent expectations from teachers in the presentation of work, which is often untidy. Pupils gain a satisfactory understanding of writing for a range of different purposes including retelling stories, writing instructions, and describing settings. Above average and average attaining pupils write in sufficient detail to engage the reader and are beginning to show appropriate awareness of correct punctuation in their writing. For example in Year 2 some pupils write a sentence to describe Rumpelstiltskin's character and others write a sentence to describe what he looks like. Most read their sentence to an adult. Lower attaining pupils, working with a learning support assistant try to use the sounds of letters to suggest words to describe Rumpelstiltskin. Some simple key words are spelt correctly and many are using their knowledge of letter sounds to try to spell unfamiliar words.
100. Standards by the time the pupils are 11 are in line with the national average and they make good progress in their learning because of the high proportion of good and very good teaching particularly in Years 5 and 6. Many pupils write for a satisfactory range of purposes using increasingly adventurous language that engages the reader. This includes autobiographies, diary writing, newspaper extracts, instructions and work on classical literature such as 'Macbeth'. In Year 6 some pupils answer questions about the text in complete sentences showing an appropriate awareness of correct

punctuation and others use dictionaries to find the meaning of unfamiliar words. Others extract useful vocabulary from a letter, which they can use in writing their own letters. In Year 3 pupils begin to write stories, satisfactorily using a story plan. They use interesting adjectives in their writing. Pupils in Year 5 write their own sections of a play script and in Year 4 as a group write interesting settings for stories. Handwriting is satisfactory overall but presentation is inconsistent. The school has appropriately highlighted the need to have a common style of handwriting across all classes.

101. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. This reflects the satisfactory progress made by pupils in Key Stage 1 and the good progress in Key Stage 2. In the best lessons teachers plan lessons well and objectives are clear. Most teachers are skilled at questioning and often target questions well to meet the individual needs of the pupils. Teachers' expectations and the quality and use of on-going assessment are satisfactory. They explain tasks clearly and use additional support staff well, which enable pupils to access the curriculum fully. This has a positive impact on learning. Where teaching is at its best in Years 5 and 6 the teachers have very good subject knowledge and the pace of lessons is very good. Teachers use praise very well to raise self-esteem and to promote acceptable behaviour. Where teaching is poor, as in a Key Stage 1 special educational needs session, the behaviour management strategies are ineffective and not used consistently. Few of the activities planned are carried through effectively or completed. As a result pupils make little, if any, progress.
102. Teachers use a good range of record sheets to track individual pupil's progress. These assessments are beginning to be used effectively to guide teachers in planning and to set targets to improve standards. Marking is mainly positive and detailed. Teachers provide adequate suggestions to help pupils improve their work. Management of English is good and the two co-ordinators have a clear view of what the school needs to do next in order to raise standards. The priorities for improvements to reading and the quality of pupils' writing are clearly indicated in the school development plan. Co-ordinators have monitored teaching effectively, which has enabled them to give appropriate support to colleagues. Resources are good and are being used effectively to support learning. The new library has a good range of books and is beginning to be used by pupils independently. The school also benefits from visits by theatre groups, which successfully enhance learning opportunities for pupils.

## **MATHEMATICS**

103. Pupils at ages seven and 11 years attain just below average standards in all areas of mathematics. This reflects the results of the most recent National Curriculum tests. In the national test for seven year olds the percentage of pupils reaching the national average and above, was similar to that found in most schools, but the proportion that attained the higher Level 3 was below average. Similarly at age 11 the percentage of pupils which attained the national average and above was in line with all schools but the proportion attaining at the higher level was below, as it was in comparison with similar schools.
104. The targets for pupils to achieve at least Level 4 in the most recent National Curriculum mathematics tests were not challenging enough and were achieved easily. Targets for this current year are more realistic and are based on previous testing and teachers' better understanding of the individual abilities of the pupils they teach.

105. There are no marked differences between the performances of boys and girls, although of pupils aged 11, more girls attained at the higher Level 5 in the most recent national tests. Children with special educational needs are supported well and teachers are careful to ensure that these pupils are fully involved in mathematics lessons. They make sound progress towards the learning objectives in lessons due to the additional support they receive.
106. By the age of seven, many pupils know place value up to 100. They identify simple two and three-dimensional shapes and use measuring instruments carefully, estimating before they measure. By the age of 11, pupils work out calculations in their heads quickly and use their understanding of the value of numbers to help them. Pupils measure accurately and use and interpret a range of diagrams and charts. They use their mathematics skills to solve problems expressed in words and regular practice is making them more confident. Younger pupils regularly undertake mathematics investigations such as finding ways to make a given total. Older pupils use their mathematics skills to create formulae for calculating the quantity of fencing required for different sized and shaped fields. However, they have limited experience of working with probability or of analysing data.
107. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is satisfactory. In nearly half the lessons observed, the teaching was good, with some examples of very good teaching but also some unsatisfactory practice. In good lessons, teachers question pupils well to check their understanding and to develop their thinking. Teachers present lessons in a variety of ways which capture pupils' interest. They encourage pupils to solve problems in their own way as well as to describe and explain their thinking processes to each other. In the less successful lessons, the teacher guides the children along too slowly, and tasks fail to challenge pupils appropriately. The pace of learning is pedestrian in these lessons and fails to engage pupils sufficiently in their tasks. In a very small number of unsatisfactory lessons pupils do not concentrate well and frequent interruptions to learning while staff deal with minor misdemeanours slows the pace of learning unacceptably.
108. The National Numeracy Strategy has been adopted successfully overall and this is having a positive effect on pupils' ability to calculate mentally. The teachers are familiar and secure with the three-part lesson structure and planning is satisfactory. Teachers clearly identify what is to be learnt in their planning and display this on the whiteboard, to be shared with pupils. In the best lessons these lesson objectives are reviewed at the end of the lesson with the whole class and recorded as individual notes by teachers as they mark pupils' books. Teachers teach the oral and mental sessions carefully making good use of such apparatus as counting sticks and number fans to assess the understanding of the whole class. In response, pupils think and answer quickly and learn effectively.
109. Teachers manage pupils and resources well. A particular feature of the school's provision for mathematics is the extensive use of games to extend pupils' understanding of mathematics concepts in an inviting and non-threatening way. This proved particularly effective in a lesson on percentages where pupils used number lines and a dice to add interest. Teachers plan work for children with differing levels of understanding in each lesson, for example a set of word problems had been adapted in several small ways to match the abilities of pupils. Pupils are interested in mathematics and consequently most are prepared to work hard. However, in some lessons teachers do not expect enough of more able pupils, and provide extension activities giving further practice of what pupils already clearly understand, rather than

challenging them to extend their thinking further.

110. Insufficient use is made use of information and communications technology to support pupils' work in mathematics, although data-handling programs have been used effectively in several classes which has had a positive effect on pupils' learning. Pupils use mathematics to help learning in other subjects. For example, children use accurate measuring skills in realising their designs in design and technology projects, practise weighing skills in food technology lessons and tabulate findings of their experiments in science.
111. Teachers use a range of strategies to assess children' attainment in mathematics. The results from the annual tests are used to guide the school's target setting and are beginning to be used to track children's progress from year to year. Each term assessment findings are used by teachers to inform the grouping of pupils by ability at Key Stage 2 and the setting of individual and group targets, although the use of assessment procedures are not yet consistent across the school.
112. The co-ordinator is effective in supporting and advising colleagues and in managing resources. She takes an active role in monitoring teaching, using her findings to support colleagues, evaluate and improve the standards of attainment in the school and to identify ways in which to improve teaching and learning further. She has a clear vision for the future development of the school's provision for mathematics over the next few years. Strategies to raise pupils' attainment in mathematics, with the help of the local authority, are clearly indicated in the school development plan.

## **SCIENCE**

113. Pupils aged seven years old achieve standards that are below average. Standards are better at age 11 and are in line with those found in most schools. These findings reflect the results of the most recent formal teacher assessments for seven year olds and national test results at age 11.
114. The progress that pupils make in their learning is good at Key Stage 2 and at Key Stage 1 progress is satisfactory. This is due to better teaching at Key Stage 2 and a better planned curriculum. At Key Stage 1 the subject is not planned discretely and forms part of topic work. As such it does not enjoy sufficient prominence within the curriculum as a whole in all classes and is occasionally omitted from weekly timetables. This is a major contributory factor to low standards. The school has identified the need to raise the profile of science at Key Stage 1 and has included this in its school development plan.
115. Teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and as a result pupils learn appropriately. By the age of seven, pupils sort and classify materials using such terms as 'natural', 'man made' and 'changed by man'. They make observations and describe the changes that can occur when materials are heated. Pupils make a simple electrical circuit and light a bulb. They are learning to handle basic scientific equipment carefully and safely. However, there are weaknesses in the ways pupils record their work. Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and their responses in lessons are good particularly where teachers provide stimulating activities which capture and sustain their attention. They show curiosity and interest when involved in practical activities. For example pupils in Year 1 were very interested and eager to experiment with different toys in lessons on pushing and pulling. Their enthusiasm for what they were doing had a positive effect on the quality of their learning.

116. Pupils learn effectively throughout Key Stage 2 as a result of good teaching and progress well in their development of scientific knowledge and skills. By the age of 11 pupils' understanding of electricity has improved significantly. They know the reasons why a bulb will not light up and are able to incorporate a switch into a circuit. They carry out tests to examine the effect the use of different wires has on the components in the circuit and become familiar with terms such as 'resistance'. Teachers do much to capture the interest of pupils in practical tasks and as a result most pupils concentrate well, apply themselves willingly and show a great deal of enjoyment. This was evident, for example, in an experiment to find out which type of soil retains the most moisture. Similarly in a lesson where Year 4 pupils were studying water resistance, they were engrossed in what they were doing. Pupils prepared a controlled test by using lumps of plasticene, of identical weight, but of different shapes, dropped them into a cylinder full of water, from exactly the same starting point and recorded the time taken for each shape to reach the bottom. At one point, a pupil observed that the last piece of plasticene to be dropped in did not have as far to go because a small pile of plasticene had already accumulated at the bottom. Another pupil observed that the water level had risen and that this affected the distance travelled. The teacher had planned the activity well and this produced a flow of ideas, which the teacher skilfully extended to develop pupils' understanding. Pupils consider food safety, recognise how to handle food carefully, and come to understand how micro-organisms cause mould and decay. By the end of the key stage pupils' skills in collecting, recording, presenting and interpreting information have developed well.
117. In many science lessons pupils develop their literacy skills effectively. In lessons where the oldest pupils learn about dental care, for example, the teachers encouraged pupils to use bullet points, headings and sub-headings to make the materials more visually appealing. Technical vocabulary is developed well as when pupils confidently use terms such as 'soluble', 'saturated' and 'solute' when investigating the properties of solids, liquids and gases. Numeracy skills are incorporated well into measurement and recording in a variety of ways. Pupils use block graphs to show the temperature at which a substance dissolves and use line graphs to indicate the boiling point of water, milk and soup. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported within lessons and make similar progress to other pupils in relation to achieving the lesson objectives.
118. The co-ordinator manages the subject well and resources are satisfactory. The school has recently adopted as its scheme of work the national programme of units devised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, which provides good guidance to teachers. Appropriate procedures for checking what pupils have learned are in place. Regular teacher assessments are carried out alongside national tests and the school analyses the results. Use of this information to inform planning is at an early stage of development.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

119. Standards throughout the school meet expectations and much of the work on display is of a good standard. From work on walls around the school it is apparent that pupils in all classes use a range of techniques including drawing, painting, collage, printing, wax resist and sketching. Older learn more specialist techniques such as batik. They use pencils, pastels, paint, clay, fabric and ink carefully and with increasing skill. They study the work of other artists, for example Suerat and Leger, and also look at the work of living artists. The quality of the work varies but many pupils achieve creditable standards and show pride in their work. By Year 6 pupils produce careful

observational drawings, make choices about colour, design and materials and show a developing understanding of form, line and tone.

120. No lessons were seen in Key Stage 1. Three lessons were observed in Key Stage 2 and the quality of teaching was never less than satisfactory, and good in two lessons. Teachers provide suitable challenges and a good balance of direct teaching and opportunities for independent interpretation using different media. Teachers increase pupils' understanding and appreciation well by telling them what is good about their work and how it could be improved. As a result pupils have positive attitudes to the subject. They enjoy art lessons and are prepared to collaborate well and to persevere in order to overcome difficulties. In the best lessons teachers support pupils effectively and intervene with skilful questions and suggestions when necessary to enable pupils to develop their skills and experience success in what they are able to do. Pupils in a Year 5 lesson sketched cylinders which showed a developing understanding of perspective, while Year 3 pupils selected and used a range of skills and materials well as they built three-dimensional structures.
121. Art contributes to pupils' understanding of multicultural issues through the study of art from around the world. Other areas of the curriculum are well supported by art work and pupils have drawn Greek urns and Tudor portraits in history, rotational patterns in mathematics, illustrations to match text in literacy and used information technology to create pictures and patterns. The time allocated to art is limited but last year it was supplemented by a whole day devoted to art, which was both successful and enjoyable. Key Stage 2 pupils visit an art gallery and museum and there are occasional visitors to enrich the provision, for example last year an animator visited school for a day. Pupils learn in a visually stimulating environment, with many well-presented displays, which have a positive impact on their attitudes to learning.
122. Some classrooms are a little small for artwork but teachers make the best use of the space available. Resources for art are good and are used to good effect.
123. The subject is well led by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. There is a helpful policy and scheme of work for art and the co-ordinator has identified the need to develop the way in which skills are taught to ensure progression as pupils move through the school. She has a clear idea of the future direction for the subject and monitors planning and pupils' work. She is currently making a collection of work to produce a school portfolio which will demonstrate how pupils are expected to develop their skills as they pass through the school.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

124. Pupils at the ages of seven and 11 attain average standards. It was only possible to see two design and technology lessons during the period of the inspection, both of which were in Year 4 and so no judgement can be made on the quality of teaching overall. Examination of planning, analysis of pupils' past work and incidental discussions with pupils confirms that an appropriate curriculum is followed and that pupils' attainment is as expected for their age.
125. By the age of seven pupils have built on their skills and knowledge satisfactorily as they pass through Key Stage 1. It was not possible to judge the quality of teaching. Year 2 pupils design items such as hand puppets. They draw their designs and list what materials they will use. Pupils then make their puppets from fabric and evaluate simply using phrases such as '...it was hard to cut the material' and '...it was easy to glue the bits together'. They use different types of fruit to design patterns in

connection with work on food. Pupils in Year 2 design playground equipment and select from a range of tools and materials such as cardboard container, lollipop sticks and plastic bottles provided by the class teacher to make what they have planned. When set the task of how to get 'Incey Wincey Spider' out of the drainpipe pupils are resourceful in providing solutions. They use a range of reclaimed materials creatively to construct pulley systems and windlasses to a satisfactory standard.

126. Standards by the age of 11 are satisfactory. For example, pupils in Year 6 study the moving parts of toys and design cams of their own which they construct with care using card and wood, and then evaluate what they have done. Pupils in Year 3 design and construct carefully, photograph frames from wood. There is particularly good work in Year 4. In the two lessons observed teaching was good in one lesson and very good in the other. On these occasions pupils benefited from well-planned lessons and the good subject knowledge of their teachers. Teachers make appropriate use of the good resources available to present the pupils with challenging tasks which engage their interest fully and inspire them to work innovatively, with interest and enthusiasm. Pupils think hard about what they have to do and employ considerable mental and creative effort to the task they are given. Teachers link the work skilfully to other subject areas. They ask pupils to design an alarm system to protect the tomb of an Egyptian pharaoh thereby drawing upon pupils' understanding of both history and electrical circuits in science. Pupils work industriously and with evident delight when their alarms work. They evaluate their successes and failures as they proceed with comments such as 'the battery doesn't have enough power' and '...a wire must have disconnected somewhere'. Setting the circuit into the tombs they have constructed from reclaimed materials is particularly challenging, and leads to frustration for a minority when their devices fail to work. Teachers support the pupils well through their disappointments and provide good guidance and practical support where they are needed.
127. There is a scheme of work that satisfactorily supports teaching, and ensures that pupils build on their practical knowledge and understanding progressively. The co-ordinator gives satisfactory guidance but has yet to check regularly on standards or evaluate how well the subject is taught.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

128. By the age of seven pupils' knowledge and skills in geography are below what is expected and at 11 they are well below. This is mainly due to the way in which geography is planned and to the current arrangements for teaching geography in a very short but intensive block. The effect of this organisation is that children study geography for about three weeks in one half term and may not work at any geography skills for two more terms. As a result, they are not successfully building up skills and understanding in geography. A similar format is used in Key Stage 2 where standards are well below those that are expected. In addition, planning for geography is not sufficiently linked to the level of skills and understanding that are expected at the end of each key stage. For example, pupils in Year 5 studying a topic on water were not working at a high enough level. The work is more suitable for much younger pupils, consequently they are unable to achieve the standards expected.
129. Older children, in Year 6, talk enthusiastically about their visit to Weston-Super-Mare where they used maps and carried out a traffic survey. Nevertheless, most of the teaching of geography seen in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory due mainly to an inappropriate curriculum. This is reflected in pupils' past work at Key Stage 2, which shows that they are generally not expected to work at challenging enough activities.

In contrast, pupils in one of the Year 3 classes are involved in productive activities that develop group and independent work skills. For example, they use the results of a survey they carried out previously in the local shopping centre to draw up a database of local employment features. The lively lesson in which pupils worked in small groups ensured that most children made good progress. Pupils in Year 2 engaged in a comparative study of St Lucia use a range of resources, from a suitcase full of holiday paraphernalia to photographs of the island in order to establish an elementary view on climate and geographical features. Teaching is satisfactory and the work that takes place is interesting and exciting for the children. However pupils have few previous skills to bring to the work as the interval between units of learning is too long and this hampers their progress.

130. The knowledgeable co-ordinator has worked hard to develop her new role. A good system of assessment is being tried under her guidance and planning is being developed further. The co-ordinator recognises that too few opportunities are planned using primary and secondary sources and that as a result pupils are unable to achieve the standards that are expected.

## **HISTORY**

131. By the ages of seven and 11 pupils' standards of attainment are below those expected, as a result of the way in which the subject is planned. The history units selected address a good balance across historical periods and different civilisations to be studied but at Key Stage 2 they are not distributed effectively between the year groups nor do they ensure that arrangements build successively upon the skills pupils have acquired in previous years.
132. Insufficient teaching was seen during the inspection to make an overall judgement as to the quality of teaching overall but in the lessons seen at Key Stage 2 teaching was satisfactory and occasionally very good. Judgements on standards of attainment are based largely on analysis of pupils' past work and on conversations with pupils and staff. Pupils enjoy history and are keen to talk about the projects they have studied.
133. By the age of seven pupils begin to develop a sense of time as they learn to sequence events in their own lives and consider the differences between themselves now, and when they were babies. They develop their knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past, through learning about such events as the Great Fire of London and the life of Florence Nightingale. Pupils' historical knowledge and understanding are further developed through making comparisons between toys from the past and their own toys. However, few of these topics are covered in sufficient depth to develop pupils' historical skills to the expected levels for their age.
134. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 pupils begin to develop research skills where they identify similarities and differences between Celtic and Roman society. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to develop skills in the interpretation of historical evidence; for example where pupils consider how invading civilisations such as Romans and Vikings influenced life in Britain. Teachers make good use of a range of resources, including pictures, transcripts of accounts from the time, newspapers and artefacts, to enliven teaching. As a result pupils work hard and show considerable interest in their work. For example, in their study of Tudor society pupils in Year 4 review and compare the lives of rich and poor people from picture evidence, and draw distinctions between their own lives and the lives of the children of the time. Also in a lesson about ancient Egypt, pupils were very keen to research and write captions about 'exhibits' for a class museum. Plans for a visit to a local museum, where they

are to have the opportunity to handle genuine artefacts, add to pupils' enthusiasm. Older pupils consider the huge changes in British society since the 1930s and carry out good research on a range of aspects such as 'How the role of women changed during wartime' and 'Life for immigrants during the 1950s'. Teachers question pupils effectively to involve everyone in discussions and to probe pupils' understanding. For instance when pupils consider the reliability of different sources of evidence from the time of the Second World War. Teachers are careful to plan activities in such a way as to promote the full involvement of pupils with special educational needs, either through working with more able pupils, by providing assistance from a supporting adult or by simplifying tasks. Pupils use their literacy skills well in the guided research undertaken and some teachers also make good use of computers for pupils to research information stored on compact disks. When teaching is less successful undemanding tasks are set that do not fire pupils' imagination nor extend their use of historical skills. For example in the study of ancient Greece undertaken by the oldest pupils in the school, opportunities to evaluate and compare a variety of sources of evidence and to link information from different sources, are limited. Pupils do not have a satisfactory understanding of how historical evidence is gathered other than from books and do not remember sufficiently the main points from previous topics.

135. Pupils undertake either a history or a geography study each term, and the scheme of work is planned to ensure an appropriate balance of these throughout a child's time in the school.
136. Resources are good with a range of books, pictures and artefacts available. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for her subject. She has monitored teachers' planning and examined pupils' work. She has not yet had the opportunity to observe colleagues teaching nor to talk with pupils to evaluate their understanding of work covered.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

137. Standards in information and communication technology meet national expectations for pupils aged seven and 11 although the progress that pupils make throughout the school is inconsistent due to teachers' varying levels of confidence and arrangements for pupils to consolidate practically, that which they have learnt. Pupils use computers on a rota basis, over a period of time working in small groups to practise that which they have learnt as a class. There is considerable variation in the numbers of pupils in each class and where classes are large pupils' opportunities to use the computers occur less frequently. Many pupils build effectively on the experience they gain from having computers at home, this compensates and contributes significantly to their understanding and knowledge in the subject.
138. The oldest pupils at Key Stage 1 know how to represent their ideas in the form of pictures and text. They save their work and understand what they must do to print it out. For example they draw patterns by using the 'mouse' and understand how to select different colours from the menus available. They then print out what they have created and are pleased at what they have done. Pupils create simple block graphs in mathematics with the help of an adult and use programmable toys to follow directions. Too little direct teaching was observed to enable a judgement to be made on teaching overall but that which was seen was good. For example in finding information from the Internet, in relation to geography, staff have good understanding of the subject. This enables them to guide pupils effectively through the process of selecting a web page, loading by clicking the pointing device button twice, quickly. Teachers question pupils well and their high expectations are reflected in the way in

which they consistently use the correct terminology such as 'icon' and 'menu' thereby building pupils' vocabulary in the subject effectively. Pupils respond positively to this. They are evidently interested in what is happening and are keen to learn, which has a sound impact on the gains they make in their knowledge and understanding

139. Pupils in Year 6 understand databases and spreadsheets. They know how to enter information into a formula using the program Excel and use this knowledge in relation to multiplication in mathematics. They talk with sound understanding about how they use computers in connection with different subjects such as English and mathematics. Pupils use the Internet to find information, for example in relation to work related to ancient Greeks in history, and understand some of the advantages and disadvantages of sending messages by e-mail.
140. The detailed scheme of work provides appropriate guidance for staff throughout the school and supports their understanding of the subject well. This makes a good contribution to the way in which the subject is taught. It is reflected in teachers' planning and has a positive impact on the progress that pupils make in the subject. Most teachers have sufficient understanding of the subject to enable them to teach it satisfactorily and some have a good understanding. This leads to effective questioning to build on pupils' previous knowledge and good, confident guidance to pupils as a class or as a small group. This was particularly noticeable in two lessons in Year 4, with different teachers where pupils were using a scanner to reproduce their designs for stained glass windows. Teachers explained the task clearly and developed pupils' answers well. They made good use of the pupils' previous learning in school to decide which programs to use in order to colour the images they produce, but did not capitalise fully on some pupils' previous experiences in terms of the procedures and operations to be followed. Also in an effective lesson in Year 5 where pupils were entering formulae into a spreadsheet in mathematics, the teachers' good subject knowledge and incisive questioning such as 'What would happen if...' encouraged pupils to think carefully about what they were doing. The teacher was skilful in letting individual pupils make mistakes when demonstrating to others and turning these mistakes into teaching points that would benefit the whole class.
141. The school has sufficient resources to teach the subject with one and sometimes two computers in every class. However some of the peripheral equipment such as scanners are too few in number for all pupils to become proficient in their use. The subject is satisfactorily led by the co-ordinator who has produced a clear plan of how the subject is to develop further.

## **MUSIC**

142. Pupils throughout the school attain below the standards expected for their age due mainly to the way the music curriculum is organised. The practice by some staff of teaching music in blocks rather than in a regular period each week has led to pupils making sporadic progress in their skills and understanding and has contributed to low standards.
143. Pupils at Key Stage 1 sing well in assemblies. In music lessons they experiment with creating pieces using simple percussion instruments and 'body music' such as clapping and clicking fingers. However, they have limited experience of using tuned instruments and of using symbols to represent sounds. Pupils at Key Stage 2 compose successfully in small groups and listen carefully to each other's ideas, making well-reasoned judgements and offering suggestions for improving

composition and performance. They create and record rhythms using their own notation. For example pupils in Year 4 have created visual scores for pieces using percussion instruments around the theme of Chinese New Year.

144. Nearly all teaching observed was at least good, with examples of very good lessons. Teachers plan imaginative and captivating opportunities for pupils to make music and as a result nearly all pupils behave well during music lessons. This contributes effectively to the quality of their learning, since good concentration levels are maintained throughout. For example in a Year 6 lessons pupils were excited by the chance to create a sound picture and worked hard to compose and perform their pieces alongside their classmates. Pupils rise to the challenges set and work enthusiastically and effectively in groups. They pay close attention to the teacher and follow her directions, listening carefully to constructive suggestions which they subsequently act upon to improve their performance.
145. However, teachers are less confident when teaching musical knowledge or music appreciation. As a result, older pupils have a very superficial knowledge of music either from western or other cultures and find it difficult to discuss their own musical preferences or experiences. For instance, pupils could state their current favourite popular group but could neither explain why they liked the music nor compare it to other music they had heard.
146. The school does not have a specialist musician on the staff at present, but the co-ordinators give helpful and enthusiastic support for colleagues who feel less confident in their abilities. They have chosen a new scheme of work for music, which is more helpful to non-specialist colleagues than that previously used. Extra-curricular music gives pupils the opportunity to learn the violin or a range of brass instruments.
147. There is a simple system for assessing or recording pupils' progress in music from one year to the next, that will help teachers in their planning once it is used by all staff. The co-ordinators have monitored some teachers' planning but their role as curriculum leaders does not focus sufficiently on improving teaching and learning or raising standards.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

148. Standards are average at the ages of seven and 11. During the period of the inspection it was not possible to observe all aspects of the physical education programme. Evidence is drawn from observations of games, dance and gymnastic lessons, from discussions with pupils and staff and from scrutiny of teachers' planning.
149. By the age of seven pupils improve have improved their performance through practice. For example in a dance lesson, pupils moved rhythmically to the music, and use linking movements to make a more continuous sequence.
150. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress throughout Key Stage 2 where they develop their games skills effectively. They work with large balls developing throwing and passing skills for games such as rugby and with smaller balls they learn to throw, catch and field as for cricket. They throw and catch over increasing distances with satisfactory co-ordination. They practise the skills of 'attacking' and 'defending', demonstrating balance and an ability to change direction quickly. In gymnastics, pupils develop sequences well showing a variety of shapes, balances and linking movements. They think carefully about what they are doing and respond well to the

timely guidance provide by the class teacher. However, pupils wait for a fairly long period whilst items of apparatus are distributed, and this leaves less time for pupils to practise and improve the quality of their movements. The school provides an effective swimming programme, and by the time they leave school, almost all the pupils are able to swim 25 metres. A number exceed this distance and go on to learn a greater range of swimming strokes and to develop their personal survival skills.

151. Teaching was at least satisfactory, with a high proportion that was good. Teachers make the lessons stimulating and as a result pupils enjoy the subject and work with enthusiasm co-operating sensibly and safely when required to do so. Teachers' planning indicates clear learning objectives teachers encourage a healthy lifestyle by emphasising the value both of regular exercise, and of warming up prior to exercise. They provide effective guidance to pupils on how they might improve and encourage pupils to think carefully about, and evaluate, their own performance, and that of others. Consequently pupils make appropriate gains in their knowledge and understanding in the subject as well as in their physical performance.
152. The school's facilities for physical education are good, including two good sized halls, outdoor hard play areas and a good sized school field. Equipment is varied, plentiful and in good condition. This enables all aspects of physical education to be taught effectively and contributes well to pupils' standards of attainment. The school has plans to re-introduce opportunities for extra-curricular sporting activities, and involvement in inter-school competitions, which have been postponed during the recent amalgamation.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

153. At the age of seven children's knowledge and understanding of religious education are well below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Whilst progress is a little better at Key Stage 2, nevertheless by the time pupils are aged 11 their attainment is still below what it should be. Pupils underachieve at both key stages because they have too few opportunities to work regularly at suitably challenging activities which will enable them to achieve the statutory requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
154. Aspects of religious education related to the spiritual dimension of the syllabus are given greater attention at Key Stage 2 and this is why attainment is slightly better. However, pupils' knowledge and understanding of religion is poor at Key Stage 1 and unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 2 cannot talk confidently or enthusiastically about any aspect of the locally agreed syllabus. They name the Bible as a special book after careful prompting, but are not aware of the importance of religious objects, practices and festivals. They cannot talk about religious places or people. Pupils have recently been read some stories to illustrate Jewish traditions and ceremonies, and talk about these with a little more confidence, however they do not know any of the basic beliefs that religious people hold. Whilst all the pupils have some knowledge of the Christmas story, they cannot recall any other religious stories and do not know the names of any key religious figures. By Year 6 pupils' knowledge has not improved sufficiently. Their books show that they have considered prayer in different religions, and some philosophical questions, for example, what is religion? However, the range of recorded work is limited, mainly due to the long gaps between each piece of work. In discussion pupils confuse aspects of the history topic, ancient Greece, with knowledge about religion. All can name different religions but they know very little of the stories and festivals of major religions, although all can talk about aspects of Christianity. Pupils cannot explain how religious beliefs can affect the actions people take, or talk with any knowledge about the holy places and objects that

are linked to major world faiths.

155. Although teaching was mainly satisfactory at both key stages, there was also some unsatisfactory practice. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and the care and sensitivity used in gently guiding all discussions helps pupils to develop some confidence in discussing religious questions. This was a feature of all the lessons seen. Staff at Key Stage 2 are skilled at asking questions which encourage most pupils to take part in discussions. A large portion of each of the lessons seen at Key Stage 2 was given to oral work, at Key Stage 1 all of the work seen was oral. In one lesson pupils in Year 1 asked the headteacher questions about being a leader, they thoroughly enjoyed the novelty of this activity and responded with lively questions. Lessons generally lack a clear sense of purpose and as a result pupils' recorded work is unsatisfactory. Some teachers lack confidence in teaching religious education and their subject knowledge is not strong enough to enable them to extend pupils' thinking sufficiently. For example staff are occasionally unable to answer questions about religion that the pupils ask, as when one pupil wanted to know why only Jewish males wear skull caps and why females do not wear any kind of headcovering? This lack of subject knowledge is reflected in teachers' planning, which does not show how pupils are going to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding over a unit of work. Even though most of the work is oral, opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills are not rigorously planned. There are too many missed opportunities to develop literacy skills through religious education.
156. The co-ordinator for religious education is knowledgeable and has worked hard to support staff who lack confidence. She has drawn up an extensive planning grid which now needs to be used as the basis for staff to plan challenging and exciting lessons for all pupils which provide them with good opportunities to achieve the statutory requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.