

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOHN FISHER RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

West Heath

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique Reference Number: 103452

Headteacher: Mr John McElwee

Reporting inspector: Ms Bogusia Matusiak-Varley
19938

Dates of inspection: 27th – 30th September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706679

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

Type of control: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Alvechurch Road
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of Chair of Governors: Fr Cyril Barlow

Date of previous inspection: March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Bogusia Matusiak-Varley Registered Inspector	Science Art Music Equal opportunities	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnerships with parents and the community Curriculum and assessment Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Piers Bilston	Under-fives Mathematics Design and technology Information technology Special educational needs	
Trudy Cotton	English History Geography Physical education	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Efficiency

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REPORT CONTENTS

Paragraph

MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well
Where the school has weaknesses
How the school has improved since the last inspection
Standards in subjects
Quality of teaching
Other aspects of the school
The parents' views of the school

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school 1 - 3
Key indicators

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

Attainment and progress 4 - 24
Attitudes, behaviour and personal development 25 - 30
Attendance 31 - 32

Quality of education provided

Teaching 33 - 45
The curriculum and assessment 46 - 54
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development 55 - 60
Support, guidance and pupils' welfare 61 - 67
Partnership with parents and the community 68 - 74

The management and efficiency of the school

Leadership and management 75 - 81
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources 82 - 85
The efficiency of the school 86 - 89

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

Areas of learning for children under five 90 - 99

English, mathematics and science 100 - 125

Other subjects or courses 126 - 169

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence 170 - 171

Data and indicators

MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Pupils attain high standards in reading, writing, science and mathematics in Key Stage 1 and above average standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2. Progress in art is very good in both key stages.
- All pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, make good progress.
- Pupils' attitudes to work are very good.
- Behaviour is very good.
- Relationships are very good.
- Pupils' personal development is good.
- Attendance is good.
- Teaching is good throughout the school.
- Assessment procedures are very good and use of assessment to inform planning is good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good.
- Support, guidance and pupils' welfare are very good. All pupils are very well looked after.
- The leadership of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and Key Stage 1 coordinator is very good.
- Subject coordinators provide good leadership.
- Governors execute their duties well.
- Partnerships with parents and the community are good.
- Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good.
- The efficiency of the school is very good.
- Provision for extra-curricular activities is good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

Where the school has weaknesses

- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in information technology is below national expectations and rates of pupils' progress are unsatisfactory. Opportunities for developing control and modelling in information technology at Key Stage 2 are limited.
- Opportunities for physical development in the under-fives are limited.
- Child-chosen activities in the under-fives are not always rigorously structured.
- Planning for design and technology is still a weakness and progress in designing, making and evaluating is inconsistent at Key Stage 2.
- Whilst cultural development remains sound, the school could make better use of the richness of other cultures in order to prepare pupils more fully for life in a multi-cultural society.

The weaknesses are outweighed by what the school does well, but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection in 1996. With the new senior management team, staff changes and further improved systems of assessment, plus a well-documented school development plan, the school's capacity for improvement is judged as very good and the school is well placed to make further improvements. The school has raised attainment in English, mathematics and science in both key stages. Above-average attaining pupils are appropriately targeted. The quality of teaching has improved and pupils generally take responsibility for their own learning. The role of the governing body has been further developed and their involvement in the school has improved. Accommodation has improved and the standard of cleanliness throughout the school is excellent. Standards in art have improved in both key

stages. All educational aims following the last inspection report are now met as all pupils are effectively challenged and are given more independence in their learning. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare have improved since the previous inspection. Other improvements include provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, and links with the community. However, standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in information technology and design and technology have not been maintained.

Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools		Key
			<i>well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
			<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
English	C	D	<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
Mathematics	D	E	<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
Science	B	B	<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>

The information shows that in 1998, standards in English were average in comparison with all schools and below average in mathematics, but above average in science. In comparison with similar schools, standards in 1998 were below average in English, well below in mathematics, but above in science. This year's results and inspection findings show that standards have improved in English and mathematics and that all pupils make good progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Inspection findings show that standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 are now above national averages. Satisfactory progress is made in information technology in Key Stage 1 and attainment meets national expectations, but unsatisfactory progress is made in Key Stage 2, and results in attainment being below average. Unsatisfactory progress is made in Key Stage 2 in design and technology in the elements of designing, making and evaluating. In both key stages, pupils make very good progress in art. Religious education was inspected under Section 23 of the School Inspections Act 1996.

By the age of five, the majority of children achieve standards that exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in all areas of learning, with the exception of physical development where standards are similar to those expected nationally of children of a similar age. Children make good progress in all areas of learning, with the exception of physical development, where progress is satisfactory.

In Key Stage 1, the 1998 national test results show that standards were well above the national average in reading, very high in writing and well above national averages in mathematics. Inspection findings reflect a similar picture, with standards in speaking and listening judged as being above average and well above average in reading and writing. In mathematics and in science, by the end of Key Stage 1, standards are well above national averages. All pupils make good progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science	Not applicable	Good	Good
Information technology	Not applicable	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

Teaching is good throughout the school. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the week of inspection. Twenty-five per cent of teaching seen was satisfactory in both key stages; 61 per cent of teaching seen was good; 12 per cent of teaching seen was very good and two per cent of teaching seen was excellent. The best teaching was seen in Years 2 and 6. The teaching of the under-fives is good. The good quality of teaching contributes to the good rates of progress that all pupils make. The previous inspection finding that pupils were not given sufficient opportunities to develop their independence skills has been fully addressed. On occasions, when teaching is no more than satisfactory, pupils' rates of progress are slower because tasks set in these lessons consolidate their knowledge, rather than extend it. Marking is inconsistent and the school's policy on marking is not always implemented.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Consistently very good throughout the school. All pupils are courteous and polite and any quarrels or misunderstandings are dealt with quickly and effectively.
Attendance	Good.
Ethos*	Very good. The school has been successful in establishing an effective learning environment within which all individuals are valued. Staff are committed to the achievement of high standards, very good relationships, equality of opportunity and the provision of a stimulating educational environment. Pupils are very happy in school.
Leadership and management	Very good overall. The headteacher provides clear educational direction for the school. Staff with management responsibilities and the governing body make a very positive contribution to the standards and quality of education provided. The school's aims are successfully met.
Curriculum	Satisfactory. The pupils receive a generally broad and balanced curriculum. However, opportunities for information technology control and modelling and designing, making and evaluating in design and technology are underdeveloped. Appropriate and successful emphasis is placed upon literacy and numeracy. Extra-curricular activities are good. Assessment procedures are very good and good use is made of the information gathered.
Provision for special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils are well supported and make good progress. All staff have the best interests of these pupils at heart and every effort is made to include them in all classroom activities.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is very good for spiritual, moral and social development. However, cultural development is no more than satisfactory – insufficient use is made across the curriculum of the diversity of cultural life in the city.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good overall. All staff are well trained and work effectively as a team. The standards of cleanliness regarding the accommodation are excellent. The library is used appropriately and there is adequate storage space for the generally good resources.

Value for money

The school provides good value for money. This is because attainment of pupils on entry to the school is just above average, but rises to above average at the end of Key Stage 2. All pupils make good progress. Teaching is good and pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.

**Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

- Standards of attainment throughout the school.
- The school keeps them well informed about their child's progress.
- The values and attitudes that the school promotes.
- Parents say that their children like school.
- Parents are happy with the high standard of behaviour.
- The school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school.

What some parents are not happy about

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views, but reassure parents that the school does have sound procedures for dealing with complaints. A small number of parents are unhappy with the way complaints are handled by the school. Inspectors were satisfied that the procedures are sound and effective. However, inspectors felt that procedures could be improved by recording details of all complaints made and action taken to address them. Inspectors interviewed pupils who all said that teachers take pupils' concerns seriously and deal with them fairly. Inspection findings show that the school has a good range of extra-curricular activities and pupils are given encouragement to participate.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

The headteacher, governing body and staff, in conjunction with the local education authority, should:

- Raise attainment in Key Stage 2 in information technology and ensure that control and modelling are addressed. * (Refer to paragraphs: 21, 46, 37, 126, 128)
- Provide further opportunities for pupils to develop their information technology skills across the curriculum. (Refer to paragraphs: 45, 113, 117, 121, 131)
- Further develop opportunities for physical development in the under-fives. (Refer to paragraphs: 84, 85, 91, 99)
- Ensure that teachers' planning for child-chosen activities for the under fives has clearly defined learning objectives. (Refer to paragraphs: 35, 47, 93, 98)
- Further raise rates of progress in design and technology in Key Stage 2 and ensure that the Programmes of Study relating to the skills of designing, making and evaluating are consistently taught. * (Refer to paragraphs: 23, 37, 46, 139, 140)
- Ensure that the diversity of cultures is reflected across the curriculum. (Refer to paragraph 59)

* The school is at present addressing these issues in the school development plan.

In addition to the above key issues, the headteacher, governing body and staff also need to consider the fact that a minority of parents are unhappy with the way complaints are handled. The school should consider ways in which parents can be better informed of the way in which the school handles complaints and reassure parents that matters have been resolved in the child's best interests. (Refer to paragraph 68)

The senior management should consider ways in which to:

- Further implement the marking policy. (Refer to paragraphs 43, 53, 116)
- Improve the range of multicultural resources. (Refer to paragraph 85)
- Further develop consistency in handwriting and presentation skills throughout the school. (Refer to paragraphs 17, 104)
- Ensure that the governors' annual report to parents includes information of the special educational needs Code of Practice, disability access and recent changes made to the prospectus. (Refer to paragraph 77)

§ **INTRODUCTION**

§ **Characteristics of the school**

1.St John Fisher RC Primary School is an average sized school with 206 pupils on roll. The number on roll at the time of this inspection is similar to that of the previous inspection. There is broadly the same number of boys and girls, but there are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school is situated in West Heath in Birmingham, but draws its pupils from a larger catchment area due to the Catholic nature of the school. The housing in the area is very mixed, ranging from private housing to rented accommodation, and since the previous inspection, the levels of unemployment and one-parent families have risen.

2.In the region of 12 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is broadly average for a school of this size. Children enter the school with a wide range of attainment, but overall their attainment is just above that expected of four year olds in language and literacy and mathematics. In all other areas of learning, children's attainment is average. Seven per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs; this is low for a school of this size. Three pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Pupils start school in the term in which they are five. During the week of inspection, 23 out of 28 children in reception were under five years of age. Pupils are taught in seven single-age classes by seven full-time teachers and two part-time teachers.

3.The school's main aims and priorities are to:

- Implement the mission statement based upon the fundamental teachings of the Catholic faith.
- Further raise standards in all subjects and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of literacy and numeracy.
- Further develop the partnership with parents.
- Ensure that the national grid for learning is effectively implemented.

· **Key indicators**

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1998(97	14	17	31
)	(17)	(14)	(31)

National Curriculum Test/Task		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Results				
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	29	29	29
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	94 (83)	94 (90)	94 (87)
	National	80 (80)	81 (80)	84 (84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	29	29	29
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	97 (94)	97 (97)	97 (97)
	National	81 (80)	85 (84)	86 (85)

Attainment at Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:				
Year	Boys	Girls	Total	
1998	17	12	29	
(97)	(14)	(17)	(31)	

National Curriculum Test		English	Mathematics	Science
Results				
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	8	7	11
	Girls	10	7	11
	Total	18	14	22
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	62 (77)	48 (74)	76 (77)
	National	65 (63)	59 (62)	69 (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	8	11	12
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	20	23	24
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	69 (74)	79 (71)	83 (84)
	National	65 (63)	65 (63)	72 (69)

.....
_{1,2} Percentages in parenthesis refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:	Authorised	School	%
	Absence	National comparative data	4.5
	Unauthorised	School	5.7
	Absence	National comparative data	0
			0.5

• **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	0
	Permanent	0

• **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	14
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

1. The 1998 results of the National Curriculum tests taken by seven-year-olds were well above the national average in reading, very high in writing and well above in mathematics, in comparison with all schools. In comparison with similar schools, standards in reading and writing were very high and standards in mathematics were well above average.
2. By the age of 11, in comparison with all schools, standards in English were in line with national averages, standards in mathematics were below the national average and standards in science were above national averages. In comparison with similar schools, standards in English were below the national average, standards in mathematics were well below the national averages and standards in science were above the national averages. The particular year group taking the tests at the age of 11 had a spread of ability which was variable and which veered towards the lower levels of attainment in all core subjects. There was a high percentage of pupils on the register for special educational needs, and a group of pupils were of below-average attainment. During the pupils' time spent in Year 5, this cohort of pupils had experienced four different teachers due to staff changes, there was a gender imbalance in favour of boys when the tests were taken and two pupils had Statements of Special Educational Need. Instability due to staff changes is a contributory factors to the levels of attainment being low in English and mathematics in comparison with similar schools nationally.
3. The percentage of pupils in Key Stage 1 reaching the higher levels in reading was well above the national average, in writing it was very high and in mathematics it was above the national average.
4. In Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels was close to the national average in English, well below the national average in mathematics and above the national average in science.
5. Taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together, the figures show that, in Key Stage 1, the pupils' performance in the statutory assessments was very high in comparison with the national averages. Pupils' performance in reading and writing was very high in comparison with the national averages and their performance in mathematics was well above the national averages. Over time, there was no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls. In Key Stage 2, over the same three years, the performance of pupils in English, mathematics and science was above the national averages. Taking all the core subjects together, the performance of pupils was well above the national average. During this three year period, the performance of girls was better than that of boys. However, this situation is not reflected in present inspection findings and there is no difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
6. There is an improvement in standards achieved in 1999. The results of the 1999 national tests, for which there are as yet no national averages, indicate that standards have remained high in reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1, and at Key Stage 2, standards have improved by seven per cent in English, and 24 per cent in mathematics, but have dropped slightly in science by seven per cent.
7. Appropriately high targets have been set in literacy and numeracy, which the school is well on the way to meeting. Inspection findings show that standards in both literacy and numeracy are very high in Key Stage 1 and are above national averages in Key Stage 2.
8. Pupils enter school with standards of attainment that are varied, but baseline assessments show that they are just above what is expected of pupils of this age in language and literacy and numeracy. In personal and social development, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world,

standards of attainment on entry to the reception class are broadly in line with those expected of children of this age. By the time that they are five, children achieve standards which exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in all areas of learning and make good progress due to the good teaching. They make very good progress in reading because of the implementation of aspects of the Literacy Hour, especially in relation to text-level work.

9. The judgement of the inspection team is that standards by the end of Key Stage 1 in English, mathematics and, are well above national averages, and all pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the key stage. An example of accelerated, very good progress was seen in Year 2 in science because of the excellent quality of teaching in the lesson observed.

10. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science are above national averages, and all pupils generally continue to make good progress. Progress is accelerated in Year 6 because of the consistently good or better teaching. Teachers' records of progress, based upon optional test results, denote that good rates of progress are being maintained and pupils' prior attainment is effectively built upon. Whilst progress is never less than satisfactory, rates of progress are occasionally inconsistent in Years 3 and 4, because tasks set for groups are not always sufficiently challenging and pupils are engaged in work which consolidates rather than extends their knowledge; this was seen in science in Year 3 and in mathematics in Year 4. Where examples of very good teaching were seen in English in Year 5, and in mathematics and science in Year 6, all pupils make at least good, and often very good, short-term progress.

11. The school's policy for identification of higher attainers, which is well implemented in lessons, ensures that these pupils are effectively challenged and this contributes to the good rates of progress. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and these pupils are well supported in class; this contributes to their good rates of progress. Inspection findings on attainment are better than the 1998 test results in English and mathematics, where standards were judged as being in line with national averages in English and below in mathematics. This is because the present cohort of pupils inspected, varies significantly in the spread of above-average and average attainment from the previous year. There have been numerous staff changes in Key Stage 2 resulting in there now being a more stable staff and this has ensured better teaching being delivered throughout the key stage, which is a contributory factor to the good rates of progress. The school has identified appropriate targets for raising standards and is well placed to achieve them.

12. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in English are well above national averages. In speaking and listening, standards are above average and standards in reading and writing are well above national averages. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils speak clearly and audibly. They can sequence ideas in the correct order and they can explain preferences. In reading, standards are high, this is a strength of the school. All pupils read well and above-average attainers use a range of phonic cues to decipher words that they are not familiar with. Pupils' writing is clear and imaginative, letters are correctly formed and appropriate vocabulary is used. Homework contributes well to the good rates of progress that pupils make, especially in their spelling and reading. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This is because teachers effectively challenge their pupils to improve on their previous best performance by asking open-ended questions, in an attempt to motivate their pupils to want to learn.

13. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in English is above national averages and good rates of progress are maintained by all pupils, including those with special educational needs. In speaking and listening, standards are high; pupils can describe characters accurately and can argue reasons for cause and effect. By the end of Year 6, pupils have above-average skills in reading. They can read extracts from posters with good expression and intonation. They read with understanding and are able to discuss words from Latin origin. Standards in writing are above national averages; pupils can write for a range of different audiences, and both simple and complex sentences are organised into paragraphs. Spelling is normally correct in words of complex and regular patterns.

14. Throughout the school, most pupils read with fluency to support work in other subjects. They develop good research skills and understand the difference between skimming and scanning. They can talk about favourite authors and compare and contrast books that they have read. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils develop ideas logically in well-punctuated sentences, structured paragraphs and include appropriate use of tenses and personal pronouns. The standard of spelling is good. Pupils develop a legible, consistent handwriting style and their presentation of work is good in handwriting lessons, but is not always consistent in other subjects. Throughout the school, pupils gain experience and expertise in a wide range of types of writing. Pupils' attainment in both key stages, in all aspects of English, has improved since the previous inspection. Throughout both key stages, the teaching of the Literacy Hour is having a positive effect on both pupils' attainment and rates of progress because learning objectives are challenging and the range of reading and writing undertaken is varied. This results in pupils having access to a full range of literary experiences.
15. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in mathematics are well above the national average and above national averages at the end of Key Stage 2. All pupils, including higher attainers and pupils with special educational needs, make good progress. The best progress is made in Years 2 and 6, due to the high quality of teaching. Through the implementation of the Numeracy Hour, pupils make significant gains in all aspects of mathematics. The emphasis placed by the school on mental arithmetic ensures that, by the time they leave the school, the pupils are able to use the four rules of number competently. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use a growing mathematical vocabulary with increasing precision. However, progress in shape and space and data handling in both key stages is mostly satisfactory rather than good, although examples of good, short-term, progress were seen in Year 6.
16. Pupils in both key stages learn to apply their mathematics in practical contexts in other subjects, for example in science in Year 2 to analyse the results of plants growing in different conditions, and to interpret results of the effect of the heating of solutions in Year 6. Since the previous inspection, standards in mathematics have improved at the end of both key stages.
17. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in science are well above national averages and all pupils make good progress. These good rates of progress are maintained in Key Stage 2, and by the end of the key stage, standards are above national averages. All pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, make good progress in both key stages because of the good quality of teaching. However, rates of short-term progress in Years 3 and 4 are, on occasions, satisfactory rather than good due to the occasional lack of challenge in tasks set for pupils. Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages in experimental science is above average and has improved significantly since the last inspection, when it was highlighted as a weakness. In Year 2, pupils can interpret data appropriately when studying information on how plants survive in various conditions. In Year 6, pupils can make accurate measurements with a high degree of precision. They use correct terminology, such as 'newtons' to describe forces. They know the difference between reversible and irreversible reactions and the vast majority of pupils are able to develop their own test.
18. In information technology at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is in line with national averages and all pupils make satisfactory progress. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is below national expectations and progress is unsatisfactory. Since the previous inspection, standards have deteriorated at Key Stage 2 although they remain similar at Key Stage 1. The school has recently installed new computers and plans are underway to ensure that attainment and progress at Key Stage 2 are raised. However, insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to use their information technology skills across the curriculum and there is insufficient emphasis on teaching skills of control and modelling.
19. No judgements are made in connection with religious education, as this subject was inspected under Section 23 of the Schools Inspections Act 1966.
20. Throughout both key stages, pupils make very good progress in art and the work that is produced at the end of both key stages is of a very high quality. Progress in music is satisfactory overall in both key

stages, with examples of good attainment by the recorder group. An example of good progress was seen in Year 2 in composition, when pupils composed a musical piece in relation to a stimulus of an autumn poem. Progress in design and technology is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2, due to lack of progression of skills in designing, making and evaluating. Since the previous inspection, standards have deteriorated in design and technology but have improved significantly in art, and remained the same in music and physical education. Progress in history and geography throughout both key stages is good. In geography by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have good knowledge on a range of ecological issues, map reading skills are well developed and pupils know about the disadvantages of different types of land use. In history in both key stages, pupils are developing their skills of chronology appropriately. They know about ancient civilisations and how famous people have influenced events in the past. Progress is satisfactory throughout both key stages in physical education and pupils develop their coordination skills appropriately. By the time they leave school, over three-quarters of Year 6 pupils can swim 25 metres. Since the previous report, attainment in history in both key stages has improved and has remained the same in geography.

21. The contributory factors to the overall good rates of progress are: the good quality of teaching, good attendance rates, pupils' very good attitudes, the very good assessment procedures, and the very good ethos where all staff are committed to raising standards.

24. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

22. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They cooperate very well with teachers, show high levels of interest in their work and apply themselves diligently to tasks. They show great pride in their work. Most pupils are keen to answer questions and participate fully in their lessons. A good example of this was seen in mathematics, where Year 6 pupils answered questions enthusiastically about square roots and prime numbers. Pupils listen very well and are able to concentrate for sustained periods. The under-fives in reception are developing positive habits in their learning. For example, they share role-play areas and equipment with good consideration for each other and generally play and work well together. They are developing good personal and social skills. They are well on course to exceed the expectations of Desirable Learning Outcomes in personal and social development by the time they reach five years of age.

23. Behaviour is very good. The previous inspection report judged behaviour to be excellent, and the school has maintained very good standards of behaviour, both in and out of classrooms. Behaviour in the playground has improved since the last inspection. This makes a considerable contribution to pupils' progress in lessons. The school is a happy, friendly and orderly community. The pupils at this school are courteous and show respect for staff and visiting adults. They respond well to the high expectations set by staff. Pupils are well aware of the school's rules and code of conduct and they believe the system of rewards and sanctions to be fairly applied. There were no exclusions in the last school year.

24. Relationships are very good. Pupils relate very well to each other, showing respect for others' feelings, values and contributions in lessons. The school positively encourages pupils to think of and care for others. Pupils work well collaboratively when required. For example, during a mathematics lesson, Year 3 pupils were seen to organise themselves effectively in groups to discuss and come to group decisions on estimation exercises. Relationships between staff and pupils are also very good. There is mutual respect and pupils have confidence in staff to talk to and confide in them about their worries and concerns.

25. The pupils at this school are polite and trustworthy and care for property. Inspectors were impressed by the litter-free buildings and play areas throughout the period of the inspection. Pupils clearly respect their own property and that of others. They share equipment and resources sensibly.

26. Personal development is good. Most pupils are able to express themselves clearly and confidently. Inspectors saw on many instances that pupils can contribute their ideas and views effectively to peers and adults. Circle time allows pupils to develop their ability to reason and explain. It also allows them to develop self-confidence effectively as they take part in serious discussions. All pupils accept responsibility well, and show pride when they act as monitors and prefects. Pupils show a high level of independence in their learning. The previous inspection report identified a lack of independent learning. This issue has been addressed successfully. Pupils are regularly set research tasks for homework, and this makes a good contribution to their personal development. Pupils are also using computers effectively for researching areas of the curriculum. They stay on task and are keen to learn. Whilst, as yet, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is below national averages, pupils are, nevertheless, motivated in learning. The recently improved information and communications technology facilities are already showing good signs of increasing pupils' independence in their learning. Pupils use their initiative well, for example one pupil suggested recently that the school should produce a school magazine on a regular basis, and several articles are now planned for the first edition.

27. Pupils make a good contribution to the community. For example, they distribute harvest parcels for the elderly each year. They also raise high sums of money for a number of charities and good causes. Clearly, pupils care for their community and show concern for those less fortunate than themselves.

30. **Attendance**

28. Attendance is good. The rate was 95.6 per cent in the last school year, and this is appreciably above the national average. There is no unauthorised absence. The level of authorised absence is below the national average. There are firmly established and rigorous procedures in place to follow up absences. The educational welfare officer is appropriately involved when this is necessary. Regular attendance and improved punctuality are having a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress.

29. Registers are taken promptly at the start of each session and are conscientiously and accurately completed. Registration periods are efficient. A high proportion of parents report that their children enjoy attending the school. Punctuality is very good and lessons run to the published timetable. Punctuality has improved from the good level observed at the last inspection.

32. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

32. **Teaching**

30. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the week of inspection. Twenty-five per cent was satisfactory, 61 per cent was good, 12 per cent very good and two per cent of teaching seen was excellent. The best teaching was seen in Years 2 and 6, and this was a contributory factor to the good or better rates of short-term progress at the end of both key stages seen during the week of inspection.

31. The teaching of the under-fives is good. An example of very good teaching was seen in language and literacy, and this contributed to children's very good rates of short-term progress. The lesson had a brisk pace, the teacher built upon children's previous knowledge of spelling, and pointed the words out in the text in order to reinforce their knowledge. Teaching is generally good in language and literacy, creative development, mathematics, physical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in personal and social development. The teaching of reading is very good.

32. Teachers' planning in all areas of learning does not, however, make specific reference to learning objectives associated with child-chosen activities, and on occasions, this limits children's rates of progress. This was seen in the role-play area of the 'Medical Centre', where there was a lack of teacher intervention in upgrading children's vocabulary because the learning objective had not been clearly identified.

33. The quality of teaching in both key stages is good. In Key Stage 1, an excellent example of teaching was seen in a Year 2 science lesson, and very good lessons were seen in Year 2 in information technology and mathematics, and in language and literacy in the reception class. Good examples of teaching were seen in literacy and numeracy, science, physical education and history in Year 1 and in the reception class. In Key Stage 2, very good teaching was seen in Year 6 in science and mathematics and in Year 5 in literacy. Examples of good teaching were seen in Year 6 in geography, in Years 4 and 6 in art, in Years 5 and 6 in history and in Years 3 and 4 physical education. The good quality of teaching is a strong feature of the school and makes a major contribution to both pupils' attainment and rates of progress. There was no significant difference in the quality of teaching in different subjects.

34. Although aspects of information technology (control and modelling) and design and technology (designing and making) are less secure, these areas have been identified in the school development plan as needing development.

35. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection, when it was judged as

being sound with good features. In the previous inspection, 10 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. There has been no unsatisfactory teaching in this inspection. Both literacy and numeracy are well taught. Teachers set appropriate tasks, use resources well, and structure the Literacy and Numeracy Hours appropriately, allocating appropriate time to each aspect of the content of the hour.

36. In good or better examples of teaching seen in literacy and numeracy, lessons are well structured, lesson objectives are clear and short-term planning is focused. Class support assistants are well informed of what is expected of them when they are working with groups. All teachers use a good mixture of teaching methods, including whole-class teaching, individual and collaborative group work. All methods used by teachers match curricular objectives. For example, in the Literacy Hour in Year 1, pupils were encouraged to work both independently and in groups in order to practise the appropriate use of capital letters and full stops. In a Year 5 Literacy Hour, pupils were encouraged to give examples of skimming and scanning and their uses when retrieving information. In Year 2 in numeracy, the teacher enabled pupils to apply the skills and knowledge taught during the week to practical contexts of measuring and estimating.
37. In both key stages, teachers have secure subject knowledge. They use their personal skills well to inspire pupils; this is demonstrated by the use of humour. In Year 1, pupils burst into spontaneous laughter when 'Pig in the Pond', a character in text level work, splashed into the puddle. In Year 4, pupils were encouraged to think about the effect of imagery when listening to a poem about the sea; one pupil remarked that the illustration of the wave reminded him of the countenance of his grandfather when he gets angry.
38. The management of pupils is good throughout the school, pupils are ready to learn in lessons. Teachers set consistent and clear expectations of behaviour and the amount of work to be covered. Time is used effectively. There is good use of praise and encouragement. Pupils respond very well to having clear boundaries set for them. This contributes to an orderly learning environment and has a subsequent effect on the very good relationships between teachers and pupils. In discussion with the inspectors, all pupils showed both liking and respect for teachers and confirmed that they are all treated fairly and that they can rely on their teachers to help them sort out any academic or social difficulties. Teachers' planning is good. All teachers set clear learning objectives and evaluate the progress that pupils make in achieving them.
39. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and encourage them to do well. They make reference to work previously covered, and reminding pupils of how well they did previously and that the same skills are required of them to understand and apply new knowledge covered. The school aims to raise each pupil's attainment to the highest possible level, and this ethos is evident in the majority of lessons. There are isolated instances in Years 3 and 4, where there is a lack of extension activities provided and work is too easy for the pupils. This was seen in science in Year 3 and in mathematics in Year 4. Generally the work set is well matched to pupils' abilities and most lessons proceed at a rapid pace. Teachers always make reference to the aims of the lesson, which are clearly displayed in class, to check that these have been achieved. They use these objectives to make clear and useful evaluations both of the overall effectiveness of the lesson, and of successes and difficulties experienced by individual pupils. These evaluations and assessments are well used in planning new work. All teachers write up evaluations of their lessons and reflect upon the effect of their teaching on the progress that pupils make.
40. Teachers use resources well and generally make good use of all available support staff. Assessments are used well by teachers to plan future lessons. Homework is used effectively and supports pupils' learning. Some parents expressed concern over the inconsistency of homework. Inspection findings show that, at present, homework is being given consistently and that the senior management team is monitoring the amount of homework that is given. Parents' opinions regarding the adequacy or otherwise of homework were equally divided. Evidence from talking to the pupils and from the teachers' planning indicates that good use is made of homework to consolidate and extend the work that the pupils do in school. The marking of work is inconsistent and varies throughout the school.

It is best when it involves pupils in dialogue with the teacher, and informs pupils on how to improve the quality of their work.

41. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught. The provision is generally within classrooms and concepts are explained clearly; appropriate follow-up work is also given to them. The good quality of teaching that these pupils receive is reflected in their good rates of progress. The individual needs of these pupils are always considered by teaching and non-teaching staff, and every effort is made by the staff to include these pupils in the activities of the whole class. All staff are successful in implementing the Code of Practice for special educational needs.

42. Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching has improved; there is now no unsatisfactory teaching throughout the school.

45. **The curriculum and assessment**

43. The school provides a broad and generally balanced curriculum. It is adequately planned to provide continuity and progression in learning with the exception of information technology, where control and modelling are not systematically developed at Key Stage 2, and in design and technology where a scheme of work has yet to be developed. In music there is insufficient attention in planning to notation and listening and appraising. This has been identified on the school development plan as an issue to be addressed. This judgement is based on a scrutiny of last year's work, discussions with pupils and inspecting current planning. The curriculum complies with the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum, including the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies. The quality of the curriculum is similar to the previous inspection in 1996 where it was judged to be in general, broad and balanced. The teaching to support the development of information technology skills and design and technology remains under developed, particularly in Key Stage 2. From last year's evidence and scrutiny of work there is only very limited evidence to demonstrate coverage of history and geography. The curriculum effectively promotes pupils' intellectual and physical and personal development and prepares pupils appropriately for the next stage of education.

44. The curriculum for children under five is well planned to cover all areas of learning, but there is insufficient planning and provision for defining learning objectives for child-chosen activities. The curriculum for these young children places due regard to their personal, social and emotional needs.

45. There is good planning in both key stages to cover the requirements in literacy and numeracy and number is well emphasised throughout the mathematics curriculum. However, there is insufficient attention given to shape and space and data handling, but with the onset of the Numeracy Hour this will be rectified. In science investigation and experimental work is planned satisfactorily. The curriculum for art is good and in physical education there is good coverage overall including swimming for pupils in Years 1 to 6. Older Key Stage 2 pupils go on a week's residential visit for outdoor and adventurous activities.

46. Health education is mainly taught through the science curriculum and pupils receive useful guidance about the harmful effects of smoking. Sex education is planned using a policy which encourages the teaching of the subject through the importance of Christian relationships. Although there is no policy for drugs education, drugs awareness is developed through the Life Skills caravan project, which provides pupils with clear information. Personal and social education is adequately taught and the school is in the process of further developing specific and detailed schemes of work regarding personal, social, cultural and moral education.

47. The curriculum satisfactorily provides equality of access and opportunity. Test results are also closely analysed by gender. This thorough analysis of national testing is used very effectively to note any differences and give appropriate support. The policy for supporting pupils with special educational need and its implementation fully complies with the Code of Practice.

48. There is a clear policy to support higher attaining pupils, with key areas for development carefully built into curriculum planning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported through targets in their individual educational programmes.

49. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These include traditional sports and are well attended by Key Stage 2 pupils. There are very good links with local sports clubs, including county cricket players and national basketball players who come into school and give regular sports coaching. There are good recorder and singing groups. Homework is used effectively and supports high standards in both key stages.

50. Overall the school has very good systems and procedures for assessing pupils' attainment, which are used well in both key stages. For children under five there are sound procedures which are used satisfactorily to inform curriculum planning. However, during physical education sessions very good use of assessment is made to assess colour and number. The headteacher and deputy headteacher undertake very thorough analysis of the results of both national and school tests. The results of this analysis are used very effectively to target support and improve individual pupils' test results. The quality and use of assessment are clear improvements since the previous inspection, although the quality of teachers' marking remains inconsistent and many teachers are not following the school's agreed marking policy. Reports meet statutory requirements and parents find them useful and informative.

51. The very good range of effective systems for assessing pupils' attainment includes reading tests, number tests and systems for assessing pupils' personal and social development and the development of independence. However, some of these tests are less successful in giving teachers information on precisely where pupils need to improve. The school uses much of the test data in order to highlight where individual pupils might need support in order to achieve national expectations in Key Stage tests. Data is used well to provide more challenge for higher attaining pupils.

54. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

52. The school's provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good; provision for cultural development is sound.

53. Provision for the pupils' spiritual development is very good. The school is committed to teaching the principles of the Catholic faith based upon the Gospels. The school has clear aims in its Mission Statement that are firmly linked to the church and its teachings. Acts of collective worship are spiritually uplifting experiences which provide time for prayer and reflection. Pupils are asked to consider the part they play in the family life of the school and to reflect on the deeper meaning of being part of God's family. Opportunities are provided for pupils to consider wider issues and develop greater knowledge and understanding of their place in the world. For instance, in role-play of different occupations, pupils explore the importance of using their talents and being of service to others. Often, music in assemblies and hymn practice sets the mood for reflection. Time to think about the words in hymns such as 'Jesus, we love you', and to enjoy singing with others, add to spiritual awareness. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect upon the beauty of God's creation through literature, songs, dance and art. The work of famous artists contributes positively to pupils' spiritual development as pupils engage in meaningful personal interpretations of beauty.

54. The school's provision for moral development is very good. It is based upon clear and consistent practice which supports good behaviour throughout the school. Pupils know right from wrong and have helped to write the school rules, which are clearly displayed and adhered to. Adults set good examples within the school and promote a sense of fair play. There are clear policies for behaviour and bullying and support and guidance are offered if needed. Any incidents are dealt with promptly. A system of rewards and house points is in place, which motivates pupils to do their best. In lessons and assemblies pupils are taught to respect themselves and others, to be responsible and to

make informed choices about their actions.

55.The provision for social development is also very good. The school has built up a tradition of serving local families and so has fostered very good links with the parish and its community. It provides a set of values which promote living and working in harmony. Within school, pupils have the opportunity to work together in different groups: for instance, sharing whole-school assemblies or working in pairs on projects, where they learn to collaborate and listen to different points of view. There is a system for monitors which promotes a sense of responsibility. Visits to local places of interest, and visitors to the school, such as the Careers, Education and Business Partnership, provide insight into life in the wider community. Pupils are encouraged to think of others less fortunate than themselves and donate to a number of charities as well as helping out themselves. Pupils develop appropriate skills of citizenship in relation to caring about their environment and their social responsibility to others.

56.The provision for pupils' cultural development is sound. Although pupils learn about their local heritage and culture, opportunities are missed to draw from the diverse multicultural nature of Birmingham and its communities. For example, pupils visit local churches and places of interest, but there is limited opportunity to visit temples and mosques. The musical talents of the pupils are well used to enhance cultural development; for instance, singing of a high quality and recorder groups add to the richness of school assemblies and hymn practice, and music from other cultures is used to broaden pupils' experiences. The use of art and literature also promotes cultural development. The study of African art and famous western artists acts as a stimulus for the pupils' own imaginative images.

57.Since the previous inspection, provision for spiritual, moral and social education has improved, but there has not been any significant improvement in pupils' cultural development, although this remains sound.

60. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

58.Provisions for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils are very good. The caring ethos makes a significant contribution to the school community. The school has maintained the high level of pastoral care given to pupils and also considerably improved provisions to support and guide pupils, since the last inspection. There are good arrangements for induction to the school. Prospective pupils have the opportunity to attend well-organised sessions in reception so that they can experience class routines. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported to enable them to participate in most school activities. They receive a good level of specialist support from outside agencies where this is necessary. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are of good quality, providing a firm basis for pupils' progress. The school clearly values all pupils within its care.

59.There are very good procedures for monitoring pupils' academic achievements and personal development. The school maintains pupils' portfolios in good order, and there are many tests and assessments undertaken at appropriate intervals. Assessments are very well detailed and are effectively used to inform and guide pupils in their work. Teachers liaise effectively with parents, outside agencies and each other about the needs and progress of individual pupils.

60.There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour. The behaviour of individual pupils is carefully monitored where necessary, and appropriate support is provided. Appropriately detailed records are kept of any significant behavioural problems. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on their behaviour when it falls below expectations. The school has a good quality and effective behaviour policy. The 'Golden Rules' are prominently displayed around the school, and this serves as a constant reminder for pupils. A very good variety of rewards are effectively used to recognise and value pupils' achievements, including good behaviour. Weekly assemblies celebrate pupils' good behaviour and help to maintain the high standards of the school. House points are highly sought after, with the House Trophy creating a healthy spirit of

competition amongst pupils. The school has effective strategies to eliminate oppressive behaviour. Pastoral education includes guidance on how to deal with bullying. The anti-bullying policy is of sound quality.

61.Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are very good. There is a close and effective partnership with the education welfare service. Attendance and punctuality are very closely monitored with good use made of a computer-based system of information. Certificates for attendance are awarded to pupils at the end of each term. Attendance awards and gift vouchers are given each year to all pupils with a 100 per cent attendance over the school year. The school works effectively with parents and provides frequent reminders about the benefits of good attendance to children.

62.Child protection procedures are good. The school complies with legal requirements. There is a designated member of staff who has received appropriate training and liaises effectively with outside agencies. The school has a good quality policy for child protection. All staff are aware of the school practices and procedures.

63.The school has good procedures to promote pupils' health, safety, hygiene and well-being. The science curriculum is well used to encourage healthy lifestyles. Topic work includes activities and work about healthy eating, good habits and the need for regular exercise. The school is in the process of developing specific and detailed schemes of work regarding personal, health and social education. This follows the recent implementation of the school's personal, social, cultural and moral education policy. The school nurse and other medical practitioners carry out a programme of health screening in line with the local education authority's policy. Although the school does not have a written drugs education policy, it provides good quality guidance for pupils. The 'Life Education' caravan is effectively used each year to support drugs education. The community police officer attends the school regularly, and talks to pupils about 'stranger danger' and road safety. Accident and emergency procedures are sound. There is one member of staff trained and qualified in first aid. Risk assessments and fire drills are carried out periodically. Sex education meets legal requirements. The school has fully addressed the accommodation related health and safety issues identified at the last inspection. The school has also fully effected its health and safety policy.

64.Since the previous inspection, there has been an improvement in the support, guidance and welfare offered to pupils.

67. **Partnership with parents and the community**

65.Partnerships with parents and the community are good overall, although a minority of parents at the pre-inspection meeting expressed concern in the handling of complaints. The school has recognised that there is a need to improve communication further, but stresses that parents are asked to follow the school's reasonable procedures for the handling of complaints. In the main, these partnerships make a significant and positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. The school has maintained a good partnership with parents since the last inspection.

66.Parental involvement in the life of the school and in pupils' learning is good. The school positively encourages and welcomes parents to become involved in school life. The Parents and Friends Association provides valuable support for the school in organising fund-raising and social events. Considerable funds are raised at events, such as the summer fair and sponsored activities. Children's discos and children's bingo events are also successful and popular. Money raised by the group has gone towards buying useful resources for the school, including computer equipment and books. A considerable number of parents help in school regularly. They assist in classrooms, help in the library, listen to pupils read and accompany school trips. Parents work effectively with staff. Homework records show a good level of parental involvement in their children's learning. The school regularly organises workshops for parents so that they can learn more about the curriculum and become more effectively involved in their children's learning at home. For example, the

'INSPIRE' and literacy sessions have been popular and effective in this regard. A small number of parents with expertise in certain areas, support the school through giving talks for pupils or arranging visits to places of interest. For example, a medical consultant recently made a presentation to pupils.

67.Information to parents is good. The staff spend a considerable amount of time with new parents to the school. The school routines and religious context are very carefully explained, and they are provided with a good quality information pack. Curriculum information sheets are available for parents so that they know in advance, and in detail, the work to be undertaken in particular year groups. 'Friday Letters' are sent home to parents each week. These keep parents well informed about events in the school and developments in education generally. Various policies and notices are displayed in the reception area. The school provides annual reports, of good quality for pupils. Their strengths, weaknesses and future learning objectives are clearly stated. The school regularly organises information evenings for parents. For example, evenings have been held about the National Literacy Strategy. This included a 'Reading is Fun' workshop, which gave parents good quality information about strategies they can use at home with their children.

68.Links with the community are very good. Partnerships have improved from the high quality reported at the last inspection. School trips are very well planned to support and enrich the curriculum. For example, Year 3 pupils recently visited Barston Water Treatment Centre, and Year 5 visited Ironbridge Power Station. Other venues have included the Symphony Hall, museums and environmental areas. There are good links with the emergency and welfare services, for example with the community police officer. The school has very good links with sports clubs, a good example of which is the Birmingham Bullets Basketball Club. Older pupils are taking part in a series of training sessions in school led by a professional player, and this is making a very good contribution to physical education. The school has very strong links with in the wider Catholic community. There is a very close and effective partnership with the parish church. The parish priest is a frequent visitor and works closely with the school in providing the sacramental programme for pupils. Pupils take part in many services at school and at church. This makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and religious education. Visitors to the school have included a Christian band which provided performances of modern spiritual music.

69.There are very good links with local businesses. The school has developed good links with the coordinator from the Education Business Partnership. All pupils thoroughly enjoyed a presentation about different occupations in working life during an assembly observed by inspectors. Pupils also visit a good number of different environments as part of the 'world of work' topic, with a high number of local businesses supporting this as hosts. Several businesses support the school by making regular financial contributions each year.

70.The school has effective links with local high schools. Year 6 pupils are able to spend a full day at the school of their choice, so that they can meet staff and experience the new routines of work. Staff liaise effectively regarding the transfer of pupils' records and this ensures a smooth transition to the next stage of education.

71.The school has maintained its strong links with the parish and the parents since the previous inspection.

74. **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

74. **Leadership and management**

72.The leadership and management of the school are very good. There is a clear educational direction for the school, which is leading to improvement in standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science. The school has undergone a detailed analysis of systems and procedures

and the effect these have on standards; this has proved to be very effective. The headteacher is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher and the Key Stage 1 coordinator. The senior management team has played a leading role in the very successful implementation of the school's aims and values.

73. The headteacher monitors the curriculum planning and the quality of teaching, in conjunction with the school advisor. This has been effective and has had a positive impact on standards, especially in the core subjects at the end of Key Stage 2. The headteacher has been instrumental in devising effective assessment procedures for targeting pupils to ensure that they achieve their full potential. His strategic planning of staff deployment has ensured that all pupils are appropriately supported and, at present, plans are underway to review subject responsibilities amongst staff, due to recent staff changes. Teachers with subject responsibilities execute their duties very well. The previous inspection report identified that the role of the senior management team was not sufficiently developed to make a significant impact on standards and the overall management of the school. Present inspection findings show that there has been very good improvement in the management of the school by the headteacher, senior management team and governing body. All are working together in a concerted effort to raise standards of attainment and improve on previous best performance. Their work has a direct impact on the high and improving standards in the school. The strategic placement of teachers within year groups, in order to effectively utilize experience, is particularly productive. All staff work as a team and the newly qualified teacher is well supported, having effective role models to relate to. The support staff are well monitored and their expertise is used appropriately in raising both academic and behaviour standards.
74. The governors execute their duties well and are both knowledgeable and supportive of the school. They monitor expenditure and are fully involved in all aspects of school life. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met, with the exception of several omissions in the annual report to parents relating to the special educational needs Code of Practice, disability access and changes to the prospectus. Governors with responsibility for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs execute their duties well. An effective system of committees has been established. Individual committees meet regularly and monitor, in detail, the school's action plan and implementation of new developments. Governors have attended a wide range of courses to enable them to carry out their roles as effectively as possible, they are regular visitors to the school and are very supportive of staff.
75. Good structures have been established to manage the provision for special educational needs. The coordinator for special educational needs provides very effective management. She is able to oversee standards throughout the school and is fully aware of both the academic and social needs of the pupils. Due regard is given to the Code of Practice for the identification and assessment of special educational needs.
76. The arrangements for the management of literacy and numeracy are good. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced to complement and build upon the existing good practice in the school.
77. The routine administration of the school development plan is meticulously documented by the headteacher and is monitored by the school's senior management team and by the various committees of the governing body. Governors are actively involved in the compilation and evaluation of the school development plan and good improvement has been made since the previous inspection. It provides good guidance for improvements in all areas, it is costed appropriately and defines responsibilities and time-scales for improvement. It is regularly updated in relation to completion of tasks.
78. All the significant weaknesses identified in the previous report have been addressed by the headteacher, staff and governors and there have been notable improvements overall. Working relationships within the school are very good and parents have been actively involved in preparing the school's mission statement. Generally the school is popular with parents. A very small percentage of parents at the parents' meeting, complained about difficulties in communication with the headteacher. No

evidence was found of this having a detrimental effect on standards. The headteacher's stringent policies in relation to ensuring that the mission statement is implemented in all aspects of school life for the benefit of the child, are fully endorsed by the inspection team. Inspection findings show that all pupils are treated fairly and that all staff work in the best interest of the pupils. The headteacher has taken on board parental comments and plans are under way to consider a parents' room in an attempt to further improve the existing very good relationships within the school.

81. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

79. There are sufficient teaching staff to match the demands of the curriculum. There are also two part-time teachers who enable subject coordinators to be released to conduct monitoring and support roles, and they also give good support in class during literacy and numeracy sessions. All staff are appropriately qualified, including one member of staff with First Aid qualifications. Staff are supported well by a good range of in-service training and they have all recently attended literacy and numeracy training. All education support staff are suitably trained and experienced and they also support the needs of early years children and those with special educational needs well. The effective deployment of staff is similar to the previous inspection in 1996.

80. There are clear arrangements for the induction and support of new staff. Newly qualified staff have a mentor, who helps set appropriate targets to enable the teacher to improve practice. There is a good range of professional development and the deputy headteacher also gives some informal in-service support to teachers. However, with the recent purchase of new computer hardware, there is a clear need to further support teachers' knowledge and understanding in information technology. The numeracy training has clearly benefited increased standards in number. The appraisal of staff has occurred, although currently procedures are on hold, awaiting further government guidelines. All support staff, including the secretary, caretaker, midday supervisory assistants and classroom assistants, contribute extremely effectively to the smooth running of the school. The caretaker undertakes regular and thorough risk assessments.

81. The quality of the accommodation is good and the standard of cleanliness provided by the caretaker is excellent. All classrooms have sufficient space. There is a good playground hard area, although no grassed area for sport. Although there is no separate play area for children under five, they share a hard area with Year 1 pupils. There is no outdoor play equipment for children under five. There is an adequate hall and separate library. Around the school, there are clearly marked fire exits. Library provision is good and has improved since the previous inspection; the hard standing area also has improved and been increased.

82. There are good resources to support the curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2. In English there is a good range of books in classrooms and in the library. In mathematics and science, there is a good range of practical apparatus. In information technology, although there are sufficient new computers and a good range of software, there is insufficient hardware to support the teaching of control technology. Resources for design and technology, history, geography and music are satisfactory, and for other areas of the curriculum there is a good range of equipment. Resources for children under five are satisfactory overall, although there is no provision of large outdoor toys, nor a separate outdoor play area. There are also insufficient resources and artefacts to reflect multi-cultural issues. The school has generally maintained its good level of resources identified in the previous inspection report.

85. The efficiency of the school

83. The overall efficiency of the school is very good. The cost-effectiveness of decision-making was an issue raised in the previous inspection. The school now has established a clear structure for informing and monitoring financial planning. This includes providing greater opportunities for the governing body, along with the headteacher and senior management, to identify key priorities in the school development plan and target funding and development. The school has established committees for building and finance, personnel and for the curriculum. All committees have clear terms of

reference and these provide a secure framework in which to operate. The school recognises that pupils benefit from a high adult to pupil ratio and good resources for learning, and has spent much of the previous underspend on initiatives linked to this. This has had a positive effect on standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2. Grants to the school for specific projects are used effectively to support educational developments. Of particular benefit are the additional funds and resources provided by parents and friends of the school. The school is closely supported by a local authority finance officer, and appropriate checks and balances are in place for all school accounts.

84.The most recent audit in 1995 identified a number of recommendations that have been implemented. There is a commitment to maintaining staffing levels and to continued staff development. Office procedures and practices are very well documented and efficiently carried out by the school secretary. Day-to-day running of the school is effective and adds to the smooth running of the school.

85.The support for pupils with special educational needs gives good value for money. Funds for statemented pupils are used effectively and extra support for pupils attaining just below average is beneficial to their progress. There are good links with outside experts and good liaison between primary and secondary school to ensure efficient transfer of information. Teaching is good, teachers are well deployed and pupils make good progress. Support staff, including the additional learning support initiative, are well deployed across the school. The school makes good use of accommodation and resources, including the new library.

86.The cost of educating each pupil is above average. However, when this is set against the inspection findings of raised standards of attainment and good rates of progress, improved leadership and management, good reorganisation of staff, improved schemes of work and improved quality of teaching, including the good use of assessment to inform planning, then value for money is good.

89. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

89. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

87. Provision for children under five is organised within the reception year. The school follows the agreed local education authority guidelines for admissions and children are admitted to school in the term in which they are five. The children are settled in well and make a confident and happy start to school life. Most children have had pre-school experience in play groups and nurseries and this provision is built upon successfully by the school. At the time of the inspection 23 out of 28 children were under five.

88. Provision for younger children in five out of the six areas of learning is good. In particular, work in language and literacy and mathematics enables many children capable of doing so to work towards the National Curriculum. However, provision for the children's physical development, especially in outside activities, does not offer appropriate experiences for younger children. There is a lack of regular, planned activities and large play equipment; this slows down children's rates of progress and results in their making satisfactory, rather than good, progress overall.

89. Attainment on entry is just above average, with some children reaching higher levels with their reading and number skills. By the end of the year, most are expected to achieve above the national guidelines for five-year-olds in all areas of learning with the exception of physical development, where children attain standards which are in line for their age and make satisfactory progress. Children make very good progress in reading and progress in mathematics, creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and personal and social development.

90. Teaching is good in language and literacy, creative development, mathematics, physical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in personal and social development. The teaching of reading is very good. The staff understand how young children develop and learn. This is evident in their good relationships with the children and the confident way in which the children experiment and talk about their learning. Planning for teacher-directed activities is good and shows clearly what is to be taught and learned. For instance, in language and literacy, activities and games are linked to learning letters and sounds of the alphabet. However, tracking children's visits when they choose to work in different areas of experience, and planning for the knowledge and skills they are to learn are not sufficiently clear, and, on occasions, rates of short-term progress are only satisfactory because there is insufficient guidance on what is expected. Good use is made of early assessment to guide the next step in learning when the teacher is teaching the whole class or an individual group. The teacher and nursery nurse work well together and relationships are very good. In all areas of learning, teachers manage their children well, they have high expectations of behaviour and ensure that all children are secure in the daily routines. Homework is used effectively and all children take reading books home on a regular basis; this contributes to the very good rates of progress. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, lessons are generally well planned, humour is used effectively and the pace of lessons is brisk. Teachers use assessments appropriately to move children on in their learning. Teachers praise children's efforts and this enables children to sustain motivation and make good progress.

93. **Personal and social development**

91. The children make good progress in this area of learning and by the age of five reach above the expected national levels. They are very keen to learn and are learning to share resources, take turns and listen to the teacher and to others. Behaviour is very good and the children know right from wrong. Most can collaborate in larger social groups: for instance, in assemblies they share prayers and songs and join in confidently when visitors talk about people who work in the local community. Children are encouraged to develop their self-help skills, such as being monitors, tidying away and finding coats at home time. Children are eager to explore new learning and show the ability to initiate ideas and solve simple practical problems, such as picking up their friend's coat and hanging it up. They

express their feelings and behave in an appropriate way, developing an increasing understanding of right and wrong.

Language and literacy

92. By the age of five, children achieve above the expected levels in language and literacy and make good progress; very good progress is made in reading. Speaking and listening skills are good. Most children listen carefully and ask and answer questions confidently, for instance when recalling the story of 'The Tiger Who Came To Tea' or acting in role play at the 'Medical Centre'. Skills with recognising words and letters and in reading and writing their own names are well developed. When sharing 'Big Books' with the whole class, the children use a range of strategies to help with their reading: they may memorise part of the story, use picture clues and recall words from sight. Many attempt to use their early, emergent writing skills to link letters with sounds and to develop greater control over the shape and size of letters. Children listen attentively and respond to stories, songs, nursery rhymes and poems.

Mathematics

93. Children exceed the expectations in the mathematical area of learning by the time that they are five, and progress is good. The children can match, sort and count numbers according to different criteria such as colour and size. Most can count to five and above and order numbers to nine on a number line. They talk about 'more' and 'less' and begin to answer questions related to 'how many more?' They can count the number in their group, and, with help, record information on simple bar charts. Many can name simple two-dimensional shapes and make repeating patterns of shapes and colours.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

94. By the age of five the children achieve above the national guidelines. They make good progress as they study their own environment and recall buildings and places of interest near to the school. They can make simple bar charts depicting the number and colour of their doors. They find out more about the wider world as they share photographs of different buildings, such as thatched cottages and bungalows, and compare similarities and differences. They study the changes in the year and passing of time. They can handle 'baby clothes' from different generations and then classify them as 'now' and 'then'. Experimenting with their senses and describing objects through their sense of touch enable children to identify different materials and their properties. The children have opportunity to use and listen to tapes and to develop skills with the mouse on the computer.

Creative development

95. By the age of five children exceed the expectations required for children of this age. They make good progress as they express their ideas and feelings in paint and collage. For instance, producing 'plate' collages of themselves or printing using different textures and colours. Although the children sing tunefully and recall well-known songs and rhymes, opportunity to experiment with musical instruments and tapes of favourite songs is not part of everyday child-chosen activities. Good use is made of imaginative play in the home corner, where themes are changed regularly, but, on occasions, learning intentions are not clearly defined for child-chosen activities.

Physical development

96. Children achieve the national guidelines by the age of five and progress is satisfactory. At present, an appropriate range of outside experiences is not in place to enable children to practise and develop their gross motor skills and coordination effectively. The school hall is used for one weekly session of physical education. However, children do have easy access to the playground if required. Skills with cutting and gluing and the development of fine skills for writing and colouring are developed with increasing competency. Children can walk, run, skip, hop, climb and engage in rough-and-tumble activities in the confidence that their bodies will respond as they require. Children are aware of others and avoid bumping into each other. They can take their clothes off competently for

physical education and they can use Playdoh to press objects into moulded shapes.

99. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

99. **English**

97. At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in English in the national assessment results for 1998 was well above the national average. These good standards in reading and writing have been maintained steadily over a period of time. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment was broadly average in comparison with national averages. In comparison with similar schools, attainment was very high in reading and writing in Key Stage 1, but it was below national averages for similar schools at Key Stage 2. Over the last three years, the pupils' attainment in English, at the age of 11, was above the national average. Present inspection findings show that by the age of seven, pupils still attain well above the national average. However, there has been an improvement in attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 on the results of the 1998 national tests, and pupils now reach above the expected national levels with their reading and writing and speaking and listening according to inspection findings. The cohort of pupils in 1998 had a lower academic profile than this year's cohort of Year 6 pupils. Since the previous inspection, there has been both an improvement in standards, which were judged as sound at both key stages, and in teaching, which is now good overall where it was previously judged as sound. The 1999 test results show that a slight improvement has been made on the 1998 results at the end of Key Stage 2, and high standards have been maintained at the end of Key Stage 1.

98. The school has a successful strategy for improving standards in literacy, which is consistently applied in all year groups. Teachers are confident in their use of whole-class and group work in the Literacy Hour and plan clearly for the different levels of ability found in their classes. This good match of work to pupils' needs is helping to improve standards and progress, particularly in Key Stage 2. Reading is a strength within the school. The pupils' skills and enthusiasm are well developed through a wide range of reading resources, which add challenge and depth to reading. The school has provided extra time for pupils to write at greater length and to improve the amount and quality of their extended writing. This strategy is working well, with evidence of more work of a higher quality being produced in the present Year 5 and Year 6 than was found in a scrutiny of work by last Year's Year 6 pupils. There is a conscious approach to improve literacy through other subjects. For instance, in history, where purposeful reading and writing in the study of Victorian schools develop skills in English as well as in history. Work in school is strengthened by parents' help with spelling, reading and researching topics of study at home.

99. At the end of both key stages, attainment in speaking and listening is above average and all pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, make good progress. Younger pupils listen carefully and ask and answer questions clearly. They speak confidently to different audiences: for instance, when reading prayers they have written in assemblies, or recalling favourite stories to adults. Older pupils can explain in greater depth and express their ideas and feelings freely in well-constructed sentences. An example is when pupils discuss Katie in 'The Suitcase Kid', and put forward their own point of view about her character and behaviour.

100. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading are well above national averages and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This is because the firm foundations started in the reception class are effectively built upon. Reading is a strength within the school. Pupils are keen readers who enjoy exploring and sharing books. Younger pupils develop good reading skills and can read accurately and fluently. They recall story lines and can predict what might happen next. Most use a range of reading strategies to find out unknown words, such as recalling words by sight and sounding out letters in words. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read with greater depth of meaning and standards are above average. All pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, contrive to make good progress in their reading and they are offered challenging texts to read. They show a growing interest in different types of books and begin to compare the styles of authors such as Jacqueline Wilson and W Garner. One Year 6 pupil informed the inspector that: "You just want to read them and feel part of it, but the other author uses longer words and more complicated language". By the age of 11, most pupils can

retrieve information from non-fiction books in the new school library, but during the inspection the computer was less well used as a learning resource in reading.

101. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in writing is well above the national average; at the end of Key Stage 2 it is above national averages. All pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, make good progress. In all year groups, pupils write competently for different purposes, including poems, letters and reports. Plenary sessions at the end of the Literacy Hour are well used for sharing work. By the age of seven, pupils can shape their ideas in writing and begin to use spelling and punctuation more consistently in their written work. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils spell accurately and they make good progress in their spelling, this is because spelling patterns are taught regularly and are reinforced through homework. Pupils are aware of a setting, middle and end to their work with narrative. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils draft and edit their work. They make wider choices of vocabulary and use description and imagery more readily. Work is well punctuated and grammatically correct. Spelling is taught rigorously and results in pupils being able to spell correctly many polysyllabic words. Good rates of progress in spelling are maintained in Key Stage 2. The stimulus and model of good writing in children's literature enhance their work. Although skills with handwriting are taught, the standard of presentation and handwriting varies and is not always as consistent in English and in other subjects as it is in handwriting sessions.

102. Progress in English is good in both key stages due to the good quality of the teaching. It is supported by the successful implementation of the Literacy Hour, which ensures that skills are built up progressively year-upon-year. In addition, teachers' planning for pupils to write at length has accelerated progress with writing at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress as they work from targets set to meet their individual needs,

103. Pupils' attitudes in both key stages are very good. During class and group activities pupils concentrate well, very few work off task. They are well behaved and collaborate well in different social groups. Older pupils show initiative and can undertake personal study at home. Throughout the school, pupils are confident to try out new tasks. All pupils are well motivated to learn.

104. Teaching is good in both key stages and has a direct influence on the good standards achieved and progress pupils make. The very good relationships between teachers and pupils are having a positive effect on the working atmosphere in class. Teachers have clear expectations of what is to be taught and learned. The level of work planned and the quality of texts used in class and group work challenge all pupils' needs in literacy time. Assessment of everyday attainment is well used in marking and in feedback in lessons. Very good records are kept of pupils' progress, and assessment information is used well to set individuals targets for improvement. Teachers teach the Literacy Hour well. They have high expectations of their pupils. In Year 5 pupils were challenged to give clear explanations of their understanding of characterisation. In this very good lesson, the teacher used very effective questioning to elicit pupils' responses.

105. The coordinator manages the subject well and has both expertise and commitment. There is a clear plan for the way forward in the subject. Monitoring of the progress pupils make has led to extra support being given in areas of need. Resources are very effective in their support of learning, and the new library and Key Stage 1 library are well stocked and used.

108. **Mathematics**

106. Test results in 1998 at Key Stage 1 were well above the national average for those pupils achieving Level 2 and above and were above average at Level 3. The 1999 National Curriculum tests are a clear improvement on these with all pupils attaining Level 2 and above, of which over half attained Level 3. Over time since 1996, there has been a noticeable increase in standards at Key Stage 1.

107. Test results in 1998 at Key Stage 2 were below the national average for those pupils achieving Level 4

and above and were well below for those achieving Level 5. There had been a sharp fall in standards from 1996 to 1998, but there was a noticeable and significant rise in the National Curriculum tests at this key stage. They represent a dramatic improvement with three-quarters of pupils achieving Level 4 and above, of which one quarter achieved the higher Level 5. The difference in test results is due to different cohorts of pupils, permanent teaching staff and strategic targeting for raising standards, such as the high priority that the school has placed on teaching mental arithmetic.

108. Attainment in mathematics is well above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and is above the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection in 1996, when standards in mathematics were judged 'sound throughout'. The use of numeracy across the curriculum in both key stages is good. This was seen in both key stages in science, history, geography and topic work in mathematics.

109. In Key Stage 1, standards in number are well above average for most pupils by the end of Year 2. In Key Stage 2, standards in number are high. The school's involvement in the national numeracy strategy is also clearly having very beneficial effects on pupils' attainment and progress in using and applying number skills and the pupils' ability in mental calculations. In Year 1 pupils have good recall of numbers to 20, can count in twos and can add and subtract single digits. From scrutiny of work pupils have good awareness of shape and money, although they are less secure on measuring. In Year 2, pupils have good mental arithmetic skills to 20 and can add lists of numbers. All pupils, other than some below average pupils, are secure in number bonds to 10. From scrutiny of work, pupils have good knowledge of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, have satisfactory knowledge of time and have good knowledge of using money. They have a good awareness of fractions.

110. In Key Stage 2, by the end of Year 6 pupils have a very thorough grasp of numeracy and understand differences between square and prime numbers and are competent in multiplication and division. They also know and understand about the properties of a wide variety of three-dimensional shapes. From scrutiny of work, pupils have used their mathematical knowledge well in applying it to problem solving involving rocket launches and distances travelled. In most areas of the mathematics curriculum, pupils have a thorough knowledge, although data handling is under represented and there is only limited evidence of pupils using information technology skills to plot and interpret data. Pupils in Year 3 have good recall of number in simple problem-solving situations and can estimate with reasonable accuracy. In Year 4, pupils know how to add lists of prices accurately and in Year 5 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of decimal notation. From scrutiny of work pupils' knowledge of number is very secure.

111. In both key stages all pupils, including those who are higher attainers and those with special educational needs, make good progress, particularly in number. However, pupils clearly make best progress in Years 2 and 6, where the very good quality of teaching is clearly beneficial in promoting pupils' knowledge and understanding. In Years 3 to 5, progress is inconsistent and is often linked to teachers' expectations, particularly in the over use of whole-class lessons which do not sufficiently cater for the needs of all pupils. Throughout the school, progress in shape and space and data handling is mostly satisfactory rather than good, although pupils in Year 6 are beginning to make good progress.

112. All pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They are most attentive and their attitudes towards learning are consistently very good. Pupils settle to their work well after listening to teachers' introductions and are always most cooperative when working together or sharing equipment. Their personal skills are developed very effectively through the problem solving tasks and they respond very well to these opportunities. Pupils are well motivated; they try to improve upon their previous best performance.

113. The quality of teaching is good overall at both key stages and examples of very good teaching were seen in Years 2 and 6. In Key Stage 1, one third of teaching is very good and two thirds is good.

Teachers give very clear explanations during the numeracy session and have very thorough subject knowledge. There is very good use of effective questioning to determine pupils' understanding. The classroom assistants are used well to record pupil responses, although less effectively in assessing pupils' understanding. These and teachers' regular assessments have a beneficial effect on informing teaching and curriculum planning. The quality of daily planning is good and teachers have very good and encouraging relationships with pupils. In Key Stage 2, all teaching in Years 3 to 5, is satisfactory but in Year 6 teaching is very good. Teachers explain the tasks and objectives for the lessons clearly. The quality of planning is good in Years 3 to 5 but in Year 6 it is excellent and the thorough assessment of pupils is used very effectively to group them appropriately. In the younger years in Key Stage 2, there is over emphasis on giving the whole class the same tasks and this trend is very evident from scrutiny of work. The quality of marking is inconsistent and is not effective in teaching pupils how to learn from their mistakes. However, in Year 6, the teacher regularly checks understanding and uses the assessments very effectively to take pupils' learning forward. During the numeracy sessions some classes have an extra support teacher who make notes on pupils' responses during the introduction to lessons, this has a positive effect on standards as pupils' attitudes are monitored. In Year 6, there is good support for pupils with special educational needs from the learning support assistant. Teachers give clear instructions, they know their pupils well and they use humour effectively in lessons. Teachers manage pupils well and use time and resources effectively. Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching has improved.

114. Assessment is good and all teachers use assessment data to inform future planning. The school has made an effective start to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, particularly in basic number work and encouraging mental calculations. The subject is well led by the coordinator who has a thorough knowledge of the subject and monitors teaching and learning well. There are good quality learning resources to support the subject, although information technology is under utilised.

117. **Science**

115. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in the 1998 teachers' assessments, show that the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels is well above average in experimental and investigative science and in life and living processes and materials and their properties, but below the national average in physical processes. Overall, in 1998, standards of attainment were above the national average, according to teacher assessments. By the end of Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels was above the national average. Taking three years' data into account for the period 1996 to 1998, pupils' attainment in science was judged to be above the national average. Pupils' attainment is high when compared with similar schools. Standards have risen since the previous inspection, as present inspection findings show standards to be well above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Overall progress is good in both key stages, with examples of very good progress seen in Years 2 and 6. All pupils, including those who are above-average attainers and those with special educational needs, make good gains in developing their scientific skills and knowledge. Although at the time of the inspection there were no comparative data for the 1999 teachers' assessments and test results, inspection findings confirm that there has been an increase in pupils' attainment and standards have improved. The main contributory factors to high standards are the rigorous and supportive scheme of work, which has enabled teachers without a scientific background to teach effectively, the good teaching, the very good attitudes of pupils and the good assessment procedures.

116. By the age of seven, pupils have good knowledge and understanding of scientific facts and processes. Their above-average attainment in speaking and listening ensures that they are able to articulate their findings in experiments and explain, when using their senses, why some materials are different from others. Pupils can predict what will happen when flour is mixed with water, what happens to plants when they are placed in different conditions, and they can present their results with tables and charts. Pupils can measure and observe, and they record their measurements accurately. Pupils recognise differences and similarities between themselves and other pupils, and know that living things are classified according to observable similarities and differences. Pupils know that a number of everyday appliances use electricity and know that electrical devices need a complete circuit to work. They know that forces can cause objects to change direction and speed, and that sounds are

made in many different ways and have many sources.

117. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can plan experiments and change suggestions into a form for investigation, such as how many spoonfuls of salt are needed in order to make a saturated solution. They understand that changing one variable and gauging the effect is a fair test, and they can repeat observations and measurements for checking purposes. They draw conclusions from results, and explain trends and patterns when interpreting them. They know that the skeleton protects organs and that food is required for energy and growth. Pupils can explain how the root and stem are used in anchorage and transportation. They know that not all changes are reversible and they know that some solids dissolve and others do not. They know that only a limited amount of solid can dissolve in a certain amount of liquid, this limit varying with different solids.

118. By the time that they leave school, the majority of the pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of scientific facts and processes. They use correct terminology, such as newtons, to describe forces, and they use their mathematical skills to set out results from their experiments systematically, by using charts, graphs and tables. However, their skills of data handling are insufficiently well developed, the school has recognised this as an area for improvement and plans are already under way to rectify this with the purchase of new computers and staff training.

119. The progress made by all pupils in both key stages is good. Above-average attaining pupils make good progress in recording their experiments quickly and accurately. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are given good support when needed, and they make good progress because tasks are matched to their needs. The best progress is made in Years 2 and 6, where the quality of teaching is never less than good. An example of excellent teaching was seen in Year 2; in this lesson pupils made very good progress in developing their understanding of properties of materials. Significant gains were made in pupils' language development when they used appropriate adjectives to describe coffee granules, salt and sugar crystals, and flour. Rates of short-term progress are, on occasions, inconsistent in Key Stage 2 in Year 3; this is due to the occasional lack of challenge, when tasks are not sufficiently rigorous for all ability levels.

120. Pupils' attitudes to science, in both key stages are very good. They are motivated and challenged, due to the good teaching. Behaviour in lessons is very good. Pupils are courteous, they share resources with one another, take turns, help each other and learn from others' discoveries. In group work, pupils support each other and work effectively as a team. Pupils are enthusiastic and dedicated to their work, they are well motivated and persevere with the task given by their teachers. Pupils' enthusiasm and dedication to the task help them to achieve high standards. Pupils treat resources carefully and are keen on improving the quality of their work.

121. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. Generally, all teachers have high expectations of what pupils should know and understand. Their consistent referral to aims and objectives of the lesson ensures that all pupils make good progress. Teachers' planning is detailed and is appropriately linked to the scheme of work, which aids teachers to identify objectives for the year group. Teachers use questions well to find out what their pupils know and can do, and this helps pupils to make good progress. The very good relationships that teachers establish with the pupils provide a secure learning environment. Teachers use a good range of teaching methods to match curricular objectives, and the use of plenary sessions aids pupils to consolidate their knowledge and understanding of what has been learnt in lessons. Teaching is very good or better in Years 2 and 6. An excellent example of teaching was seen in Year 2. In this lesson, the teacher gave very clear instructions, set very high expectations and developed pupils' vocabulary by enabling them to use adjectives to describe materials. In Year 6, where very good teaching was seen, the teacher consistently made reference to pupils' prior understanding and built upon their previous knowledge by saying: "Do you remember when, last year, we looked at chemical changes?" This enabled pupils to tackle new learning based upon the use of existing knowledge. Teachers' planning is detailed and all teachers evaluate their lessons. Assessment procedures are good.

122. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is supported by an effective scheme of work. The

management of science is good. The coordinator has only recently been appointed and she has already undertaken an audit of what needs to be done in order to further develop the subject. Since the previous inspection, standards have improved in both key stages and pupils' skills in carrying out fair tests have also improved in both key stages. All teachers' planning is monitored effectively, and the information gained is used to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The above-average attainers are appropriately challenged and the quality of teaching has improved. Methods of recording work are consistent, but on very rare occasions there is a lack of challenge for pupils in Years 3 and 4 in extending their knowledge, skills and understanding.

125. OTHER SUBJECTS

125. Information technology

123. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected nationally. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is below national expectations and information technology is under-represented throughout the school curriculum. There is not a consistent policy or practice to teach control and modelling at Key Stage 2. Therefore in comparison to the previous inspection, standards have dropped at Key Stage 2, although they remain similar at Key Stage 1. All pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, but progress in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory overall. However, examples of satisfactory short-term progress were seen in the week of inspection in Years 4 and 6.

124. In Key Stage 1, Year 2 pupils use a paint program competently and are aware of how to move through the program and save their work. Year 1 pupils can program a floor robot to move, stop and turn. From scrutiny of the limited work made available, by the end of the key stage, most have a satisfactory understanding of using a simple word processing package to type, save and print their own work. In Key Stage 2, younger pupils in Year 4 know how to open a file and are aware of the procedures in editing, saving and closing. In Year 6, pupils know how to use a simple database and some recognise how to use the icons within the program. From scrutiny of work, pupils have written their own prayers, poems and short stories and changed fonts and colour. They have used a scanner and know how to record the results of a crisp survey. However, the school retains very little evidence of pupils' experiences in using information technology.

125. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. The rates of progress are, at present, hampered by the fact that the new, recently installed computers are not yet fully operational. However, the unsatisfactory progress is also as a direct result of insufficient training and support for all staff. The school has only very recently introduced a system to record pupils' access to computers. There are no portfolios and no systems of assessment to record pupils' progress. These factors have a detrimental effect on pupils' progress throughout the school. An example of short-term satisfactory progress was seen in Key Stage 2 in Year 6 mathematics, when pupils who were below average ability were well supported by the teacher in using a computer program which enabled them to work out odd and even numbers.

126. All pupils have a positive attitude towards using computers and cooperate very well in pairs. They are also very attentive to the teachers' instructions during whole class sessions when the teachers explain or revise how to use a particular program. However, in these class sessions around one computer, it is not always easy for all pupils to see, and, as a consequence, those at the back sometimes lose concentration.

127. The quality of teaching seen during the week of inspection was good at both key stages, although only two lessons were observed at each key stage. In Key Stage 1, when demonstrating the use of the Roamer (programmable toy) there is clear explanation and satisfactory subject knowledge of the necessary processes. In Year 2, the teacher reminds pupils effectively of previous learning, and

through effective questioning and excellent relationships, explains carefully how to use a paint program. Pupils are used well to demonstrate understanding and the teacher makes clear assessments. In Key Stage 2, good use is made of resources to teach new vocabulary. In Year 4, the teaching is very thorough in demonstrating the management of files. In Year 6, the teacher has excellent subject knowledge and the computer in class is used effectively to demonstrate whole class lessons on using spreadsheets. Teaching to promote information technology skills on the computers outside classrooms is less effective.

128. There is a computer in every classroom, however, although switched on, they are insufficiently used during the day. The coordinator is well aware of the deficiencies in the subject and has just finished preparing a scheme of work to support teaching and learning. There are plans for the networking of the new computers and the introduction of the Internet in the near future.

131. **Religious education**

129. Religious education was inspected separately under Section 23 of the School Inspections Act 1996.

132. **Art**

130. At the end of both key stages, pupils attain standards which are above those expected for their age and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, in both key stages, make very good progress. This was seen in the scrutiny of samples of pupils' work. Examples of very good progress were seen in portfolios of work in observational drawings in Years 2, 4 and 5. Throughout the school, art is valued as an important activity for communicating ideas and feelings in visual form. It is used well in other subjects, notably science, history and design and technology.

131. The art coordinator has worked very hard in supporting teachers and developing their practice. In-service workshops have contributed positively to developing both teachers' confidence in teaching art, and their acquisition of subject knowledge. The standard of art has improved since the previous inspection. Skills and understanding are developed systematically and a full range of media is used, ranging from batik work, mask making and printing, to chalk and pastel work. Pupils make good use of the work of famous artists. For example, in Year 2, pupils could paint sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh and, in Year 6, pupils could explain the different hues of colour used when describing their very detailed observational drawings of leaves, which were linked to their rain forest project. In Year 4, pupils discussed the different colours used in Tudor paintings to represent jewellery. In both key stages, sketchbooks are used appropriately to try out different techniques. All pupils make very good progress in developing their skills of observational drawing.

132. Pupils' attitudes are very good. They take a pride in their work and they are highly energized, well motivated and keen to do well. Pupils know that art is a personal interpretation and that their responses are valued. Pupils use resources effectively and take care in being precise in their undertakings.

133. Only a small number of lessons in art were observed during the inspection. However, evidence from the pupils' past work, teachers' plans and discussion with pupils, indicates that the teaching is good. In the lessons seen, this is reflected in secure subject knowledge, well paced lessons and good modelling by teachers in what is required of the pupils. The good explanations of teaching points help all pupils to make good progress.

134. The subject is well managed with vision and enthusiasm. The high quality scheme of work, clear planning procedures and the coordinator's subject knowledge, plus pupils' participation in a range of projects with other schools, such as the Yoruba project, assist in giving pupils' art work a high profile throughout the school.

135.Resources for art are good. The school has a good range of posters, books and art equipment.

138. **Design and technology**

136.During the week of inspection there was only one lesson of design and technology timetabled, and, from scrutiny of work, discussions with pupils and teachers' planning, it is clear that the subject is under represented in the curriculum and that progress is broadly satisfactory in Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are higher attainers, make sound progress in Key Stage 1 but overall unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 2.

137.From photographic evidence and discussions, pupils are not making consistently satisfactory progress overall in the full designing, making and evaluating requirements of the subject. However, business links to encourage pupils' understanding of the wider world of technology are very good. In Key Stage 1, pupils' skills are satisfactorily developed and by Year 2 pupils achieve in line with that expected of pupils of a similar age. Therefore, in comparison with the previous report in 1996 where pupils' attainment was judged above average in Key Stage 1 and in line at Key Stage 2, standards have not been fully maintained.

138.In Year 2 pupils can use needles to sew Binca using satisfactory running stitches and can draw around and use templates for puppet making. However, their cutting skills are below those expected, although they use resources sensibly and work cooperatively. From scrutiny of work and photographic evidence, pupils have studied windmills after visiting a building museum and are aware of different structures. In Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils have created good three-dimensional playgrounds using recycled materials and their design project on ponds is clearly above that expected. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have visited power stations and factories. They have a good awareness of bearings and gears and know about the importance of design prior to making. However, the school retains little evidence to demonstrate pupils' experiences.

139.The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory but no judgement can be made about Key Stage 2. Teachers have clear planning, although design and evaluation are underemphasised. There is good attention paid to developing pupils' making skills. Satisfactory use is made of information technology, for example to draw a puppet using a paint program.

140.The coordinator has only recently been appointed, but is already aware of weaknesses in the subject and has a clear action plan to produce a policy and scheme of work to support the subject. The quality of resources is satisfactory, although there is an insufficient range of specialist tools. The school is well placed to make improvements in the provision of design and technology a Key Stage 2, due to the coordinator's clear action plan and the development of an appropriate scheme of work with clearly defined progression of knowledge and skills linked to appropriate resources.

143. **Geography**

141.A limited number of lessons were observed in geography and so scrutiny of planning, pupils' previous work and displays, and interviews with pupils in both key stages were used to make judgements. Work seen in both key stages shows that standards are above those expected of pupils at the ages of seven and 11.

142.All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are higher attainers, make good progress. Pupils learn about their local environment and study and make comparisons of settlements and land use. Older pupils begin to relate their learning to wider world issues such as deforestation and pollution, as they study topics such as the Amazon rainforest in greater depth.

143.At Key Stage 1, younger pupils learn more about their own surroundings. They can consider 'plan view' and 'side view' as they prepare simple maps of their school environment. They can recognise which

view is being shown in photographs of everyday objects. Many are beginning to develop a wider knowledge of different places they have visited on holiday and use geographical terminology such as sea, river, and island appropriately. In discussions about buildings, younger pupils can identify photographs of flats, bungalows and cottages and begin to ask questions as they compare construction and size.

144. At Key Stage 2, pupils build successfully on their previous learning, and skills with map reading are well developed across the year groups. Pupils can investigate how land is used and draw out advantages and disadvantages - they use their good reading research skills to study texts and resources to find evidence for this.

145. Pupils' attitudes are good, they concentrate well in geography and their behaviour is good. They are confident communicators who are keen to share their findings, for example when presenting information on farming, mining and cattle ranching as 'experts' to other groups.

146. In the small number of lessons observed, teaching is good at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Overall, teaching is good. Lesson planning shows what is to be taught and learned and there is brisk pace and interest to lessons. Some good use of collaborative group work with older pupils encourages personal research and study. As yet, the use of assessment does not help with guiding the next step in learning, as assessments are in the early stages of development.

147. At present the subject has no coordinator, but the headteacher and deputy headteacher act as caretakers. Resources support learning effectively and are well used and accessible in lessons. Since the previous inspection, the high standards identified have been maintained.

150. **History**

148. By the end of both key stages, standards are appropriate for pupils' ages and all pupils, including those who are higher attainers and those who have special educational needs, make good progress. Their good speaking and reading skills help them to study historical sources and communicate their findings clearly. In both key stages, pupils have good chronology skills, and use both inference and deduction when interpreting historical evidence.

149. Younger pupils learn from firsthand experiences as they find out more about the passing of time. They share photographs of themselves as babies and consider the changes that have taken place. They handle 'old' and 'new' baby clothing and sequence them in order of age. When comparing modern bicycles with photographs and prints of 'hobby horses' and 'bone shakers', pupils begin to identify similarities and differences. Many begin to use historical vocabulary more readily, for instance when stating 'long ago' or in 'Victorian times'. They produce simple timelines as they learn more about chronology. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to consider how famous people have influenced events in the past.

150. At Key Stage 2, pupils are developing a deeper knowledge and understanding of specific periods in time. For instance, opportunity to study the Victorians in greater depth enables pupils to understand the structure of society at that time. This learning is well linked to work in English and brought to life through the study of Dickens, and his portrayal of school life. Topics are well used to focus learning about ancient civilisations, such as the Egyptians and Greeks. However, scrutiny of the pupils' previous work shows that the knowledge and skills gained are not always reflected in the quantity and quality of their written work. On occasions, the use of worksheets takes away the opportunity for pupils to write about their findings in a personal way.

151. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning, they enjoy history lessons and their response is good. Younger pupils share a sense of fun as they imagine fitting into their 'baby clothes' or riding an old-fashioned bicycle. Pupils collaborate well in lessons and share resources amicably, for example

making masks and preparing scripts when acting the story of Romulus and Remus in role-play. By the age of 11, given the opportunity, many can research for relevant historical information using a range of secondary sources and present their findings to a larger audience. Behaviour is good and this promotes a hard working atmosphere in lessons.

152. Teaching is good in history. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject which is evident in their planning for lessons. An interesting range of resources is used well in lessons to make learning meaningful. As yet, using history as a stimulus for purposeful writing is not established in each year group, although good examples were seen in Years 4 and 5.

153. At present the subject has no coordinator, but the headteacher and deputy headteacher oversee the subject. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained sound standards in both key stages.

156. **Music**

154. By the end of both key stages, pupils achieve appropriate standards for their age. Throughout both key stages, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The choir group and recorder groups make good progress in rhythm, control of dynamics and sense of pitch. The recorder groups can follow a steady beat, start on cue and hold the note for a set length of time. They know the difference between a minim and a semibreve. The choir can sing tunelessly in unison, and in hymn practice they contributed positively to keeping the reverence and purpose of harvest hymns. Pupils at the end of both key stages place suitable emphasis on articulating words in hymns. This adds to the sense of unity and purpose that pupils experience in collective singing.

155. Opportunities for pupils in both key stages are provided to develop their literacy skills. In Year 2, pupils can identify sounds that instruments make to accompany a winter poem; they know that the triangle can be associated with a shivery effect. In Year 4, pupils can name instruments appropriately, and know the difference between tuned and untuned instruments. No teaching was seen in Year 6 but interviews with pupils revealed that, by the end of Year 6, they know a range of songs and have regular opportunities to perform and represent the school.

156. Pupils' skills of performing and composing are more developed in both key stages than their skills of listening and appraising. Whilst pupils listen to music in assemblies, and teachers' planning reveals that different kinds of music are presented to pupils, there is, on occasions, a lack of opportunity given to pupils to develop both appreciative and critical skills of music.

157. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work. They are attentive and have good skills of concentration. They collaborate well and listen carefully to each other's contributions. They respect each other's efforts and are keen to learn from their mistakes. They are motivated because they find the tasks challenging. They talk with enthusiasm about the work that they have done. These attitudes contribute positively to pupils' progress in music.

158. During the inspection, only a few lessons of music were seen. Overall the quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan a variety of practical activities, manage pupils well and communicate an enthusiasm for the subject. The school makes good use of opportunities outside the curriculum to enrich the experiences of pupils, such as working with musicians and visits to Symphony Hall. Teachers generally have secure subject knowledge and rely appropriately on the scheme to guide them through the various teaching points. They give clear explanations, use resources effectively and use correct musical terminology when explaining lesson content, such as 'texture', 'dynamics' and 'staccato'.

159. The coordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has identified an appropriate action plan to develop the subject, based upon the present expertise of staff. There is a satisfactory scheme to

identify work to be undertaken in each year group, which enables teachers to build upon pupils' prior knowledge. The subject is adequately resourced.

160. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained sound standards and the quality of teaching has remained good.

163. **Physical education**

161. By the end of both key stages, pupils attain standards which are appropriate for their age. Standards in swimming are high. All pupils in key stage 2, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, in both key stages, make satisfactory progress. This judgement is similar to the inspection findings in the previous report.

162. In Key Stage 1, younger pupils can run and change direction. They move effectively and with good expression when pretending to be Snow White's dwarfs during a dance session. All pupils use space efficiently and sensibly. In gymnastics, pupils travel appropriately over small apparatus, and demonstrate good jumps when dismounting. They have a good awareness of high and low movements. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 can roll and twist on apparatus performing satisfactory simple sequences. Year 4 pupils perform good dance sequences during their imaginary circus lesson on the 'high-wire'. Pupils cooperate very well in pairs and mirror movements effectively. In basketball, Year 6 pupils show satisfactory skills in catching and travelling when taught by a visiting celebrity from the local national league club. By the time they leave school, well over three-quarters of Year 6 pupils can swim 25 metres, which is above average.

163. Pupils' behaviour is consistently good and they have very positive attitudes. They all clearly enjoy the subject and cooperate and work together sensibly. Pupils are particularly mature when putting out and using apparatus.

164. Pupils attempt to improve on their previous best performance, they readily practice skills to improve both speed and fluidity of movement. When passing the ball, children pay particular attention to ensuring that it is passed to an appropriate team member.

165. The quality of teaching in both key stages is satisfactory. Of the four lessons observed, half are good in each key stage. Teachers have good control and management and use resources effectively. The quality of lesson planning is satisfactory, and teachers pay good attention to improving the quality of pupils' movements with good use of praise and encouragement. In Year 4, the teacher encourages pupils' independence very effectively, as pupils are required to select their own apparatus for their circus dance movements.

166. There is currently no coordinator for the subject. Plans are in hand to appoint a coordinator and teachers make use of an appropriate scheme of work to ensure continuity and progression. Extra-curricular sport contributes positively to pupils' attainment and progress and enables them to develop positive attitudes to teamwork. Key Stage 2 pupils play competitive sports against other schools and Year 6 pupils attend a residential week for outdoor and adventurous activities. The overall quality of resources is good, although there is no grassed area for team games, but the school makes full use of adjoining facilities.

169. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

169. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

1.The school was inspected by a team of four inspectors, including a lay inspector, who spent a total of 14 inspector days in school. During that time 57 lessons or parts of lessons were observed, assemblies and registrations were attended and a representative sample of a total of 21 pupils from the year groups was heard reading, totalling 70 hours. Pupils' previous work and displays around the school were also scrutinised.

2.In addition to the above, interviews were held with the headteacher, members of the governing body, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents. Prior to the inspection, a meeting was held for parents which 54 parents attended, and parents' views from the questionnaire sent to them were examined.

School documentation was scrutinised, which included:

- Schemes of work and teachers' planning documents;
- Governors' annual report to parents and minutes of governing body's meetings;
- School development plan;
- Pupils' individual reports;
- Staff handbook and job descriptions;
- School policies.

· **DATA AND INDICATORS**

· **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	206	3	15	25

· **Teachers and classes**

· **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	22.89

· **Education support staff (YR – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	73

Average class size: 29.4

· **Financial data**

Financial year:	1999
	£
Total Income	397,197
Total Expenditure	407,473
Expenditure per pupil	1,950
Balance brought forward from previous year	43,022
Balance carried forward to next year	32,746

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 145

Number of questionnaires returned: 75

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	29	61	7	3	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	32	51	8	9	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	14	40	31	11	4
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	20	65	13	1	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	41	55	3	1	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	53	46	1	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	24	53	9	14	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	39	47	7	7	1
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	47	49	7	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	51	43	4	1	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	61	35	4	1	0