

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Buckstones Primary School**

Shaw, Oldham

LEA area: Oldham

Unique reference number: 105671

Headteacher: Mrs J Cooke

Reporting inspector: Mrs D Bell  
16413

Dates of inspection: 13 – 17 March 2000

Inspection number: 181985

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Delamere Avenue Shaw Oldham
Postcode:	OL2 8HN
Telephone number:	01706 844308
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr George Read
Date of previous inspection:	17 November 1995

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs D Bell	Registered Inspector	Art	What sort of school is it?
		Music	How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements
		English as an additional language	How well are pupils taught?
Mrs J Smith	Lay Inspector	Equal Opportunities	Attendance
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs D New	Team member	Under fives	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
		History	How well is the school led and managed?
		Information and communication technology	
		Religious Education	
Mrs M Loudon	Team member	Special Educational Needs	How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development
		English	
		Geography	
		Physical Education	
Mr D Wilkinson	Team member	Mathematics	
		Science	
		Design and technology	

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Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
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33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>26</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Buckstones Primary School is an average sized primary school with 215 pupils on roll. It is situated on the border of Oldham and Rochdale. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds but most benefit from having supportive parents and from attending the school for all of their primary years. Children are admitted to the school at the beginning of the year in which they are five and on entry and most demonstrate average attainment for their age. Ten pupils (4.65%) are known to qualify for free school meals and 31 pupils (14.42%) are on the register for special educational needs. Both of these figures are below those found nationally. The special educational needs figure varies from year to year and, for example, in the current Year 6, 12 out of 31 pupils (38.7%) have special educational needs. There is a very small number of pupils from ethnic minority groups and there are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. There are 7 classes in the school, all of which cater for a single age group.

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

This is a very effective school. Very good leadership and management ensure that the school has a clear sense of purpose and direction. Governors and all staff have high expectations of pupils in terms of attitudes, attainment, behaviour and personal development. As a result of good teaching, the vast majority of pupils respond and achieve well by working hard and attaining above average standards by the time they leave the school. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- Seven and eleven-year-old pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science and musical achievement is very high by the age of eleven.
- Through very good leadership and management, the headteacher and governors have established very effective teamwork that is driving the school forward and providing it with a strong sense of purpose.
- Very good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make very good progress. Very good attention is also paid to the learning needs of all pupils, including higher attainers and those who are gifted or talented.
- The school cares very well for all its pupils. Their academic and personal progress is well monitored.
- Assessment information is used very well to guide planning that provides very good learning experiences for all pupils both during and outside of the normal school day.
- The school's partnership with parents is very good and parental involvement in the life of the school has a very positive impact on pupils' learning.

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

There are no major weaknesses in this school but areas for further improvement include:

- The scheme of work for design and technology;
- Curriculum co-ordinators' further involvement in checking on standards and provision in their subjects;
- Attendance of all pupils at the daily act of collective worship in order to meet statutory requirements.

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

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

School improvement has been good. The school has had a new headteacher and deputy head in the last eighteen months and they are working hard and successfully with all staff to drive the school forward. There is a shared sense of purpose in all of the school's work. The key issues from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. All staff have been involved in drawing up the comprehensive curricular guidance that is now in place for all subjects except design and technology. As a result, there is a shared understanding of what pupils need to learn and at what stage, and this is having a very positive impact on their achievement. Pupils are provided with a broad range of good quality learning experiences as they move through the school. The quality of teaching has improved and standards have continued to rise because pupils' progress is well monitored and effective action is taken to address individual and group weaknesses. The provision for special educational needs is greatly improved and good attention is paid to teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy in all subjects. The school sets itself challenging targets and is on course to achieve them.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	A	B	C
Mathematics	B	A*	A	C
Science	B	A	C	D

Key	
Very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The 1999 average points scores, when compared to all schools were above average in English and well above average in mathematics. They remained in line with similar schools in both of these subjects. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels in the tests was well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The lower standards in science against similar schools was due to a combination of the concentration on English and mathematics in this cohort, fewer pupils reaching level 5 in science than in English or mathematics, and some weaknesses in the science curriculum. The latter have now been addressed through an improved scheme of work. Given that the class of 1999 contained a slightly higher than average percentage of pupils with special educational needs, the results indicate a good level of achievement. The standards seen in the work of pupils currently in Year 6 are above the national expectation in English, mathematics and science. Taken across all three subjects, the trend in the school's average National Curriculum points score since 1996 has been broadly in line with the national trend. Pupils achieve well and make good progress because of the high expectations that teachers have of what they can do. At the age of 7, the average points score is well above the national average in reading and above the national average in writing and mathematics. In the 1999 tests, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading and writing was above the national average and in mathematics, it was close to the national average. Teacher assessments indicate that in science, results are in line with the national average. Good standards are evident throughout the school in art, information and communication technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education, and in all of these subjects, pupils achieve well in relation to their prior learning. In design and technology, the standards seen in pupils' work are appropriate for their age. In music, there was insufficient evidence on which to judge standards in the 5 to 7 age group but in the one lesson seen, singing was of a satisfactory standard. However, in the 7 to 11 age group, standards and achievement are very high because of the very good quality teaching pupils receive both in class and in instrumental lessons.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good: pupils are keen to come to school. They involve themselves fully in school life, have good attitudes to learning and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good: the great majority of pupils respond well to the high standards expected of them in terms of behaviour. The small number of pupils who display disruptive behaviour are well supported to help them improve.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: pupils form very good relationships with staff and fellow pupils, respecting each other's different views and opinions. They also learn to think and learn for themselves.
Attendance	Good: most pupils attend regularly and on time. More than half of pupils' absences are due to parents taking their children on holiday during term time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good. Teaching is at least satisfactory in 98 per cent of lessons. It is good in 35 per cent of lessons, very good in 36 per cent and excellent in 6 per cent of lessons. There was one unsatisfactory lesson in the inspection week, representing 2 per cent of all lessons. English and mathematics teaching is good. It is always at least satisfactory and in both subjects it is at least good in 67 per cent of lessons. The teaching of pupils up to the age of 7 is very good and gives them a good start in their education. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught throughout the school and in all subjects. The school very successfully meets the learning needs of all pupils, enabling them to achieve well in relation to their prior learning. Teachers' planning is very good. It shows clearly what pupils are expected to learn and pupils respond well to the high demands made of them. They are successfully taught to persevere in their work, to give of their best at all times and as they grow older, to take more responsibility for finding things out for themselves in order to consolidate and extend their learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and good account is taken of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. It is enriched and enhanced by the study of a modern foreign language in Years 5 and 6, and the opportunity to play a musical instrument in Years 3 to 6. There is also a very good range of activities available to pupils outside of the normal school day.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good: individual education plans are well constructed. The targets set, the effective support provided and the very good monitoring of their learning enable pupils with special educational needs to make very good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. In all subjects, very good attention is given to developing these areas. Pupils are taught to live and work together, help each other, appreciate the world around them and celebrate human achievement. They are also taught that they have to look after and care for themselves, each other and their environment. These aspects of personal development permeate the life of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well: the school is a caring community that provides very effective support for all its pupils, both academically and personally. It monitors their performance and assesses their work very well and makes very good use of the information gained from doing so to plan what they should do next.

There is a very effective partnership between parents and the school. The school benefits from being able to rely on high quality parental help and support both in school and at home. Parents, carers and sometimes grandparents work very effectively with small groups of pupils in different classes and this has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and on standards and achievement.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good: the headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection and is having a very positive impact on the work of the school, its standards and the quality of teaching. A strong sense of team work has been established. The school's values and aims are clearly evident in every aspect of its life and there is a very clear commitment to high standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They give good support to the headteacher and to the staff and share the strong educational direction that has been established. All statutory duties are carried out with the exception of ensuring that all pupils attend the daily act of collective worship.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good: the school evaluates its performance well and takes positive and effective action to address its weaknesses. Governors are appropriately involved in this and keep a close watch on the school's achievements. They have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and the challenges it faces.
The strategic use of	Very good: the spending of specific grants is well documented and the school

resources	very carefully evaluates the effect of its spending on the standards it achieves. It plans ahead well and has already taken appropriate steps to avoid allowing a reduction in its budget to affect standards.
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Staffing is adequate and well deployed. The accommodation is adequate but cramped and the size and shape of some teaching areas are difficult to manage. The school does, however, make the best use it can of all available space. High quality displays celebrate pupils' work and enhance their learning. Resources are good and are well used and cared for, well organised and easily accessible. The governing body is very aware of the principles of best value and ensures that the school applies them effectively in all of its work. A weakness in the otherwise very good leadership, management and provision is that a number of pupils are withdrawn from the daily act of collective worship for reading and/or extra learning support. This means that the school is not meeting the statutory requirement for all pupils to attend an act of collective worship every day.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>The vast majority of parents have very positive views of the school. They say that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school approachable</li> <li>• it expects their children to work hard</li> <li>• the school's leadership is good</li> <li>• their children enjoy coming to school and make good progress</li> <li>• behaviour is good</li> <li>• teaching is good</li> </ul>	<p>Very few parents made any negative comments. However, some would like to see an improvement in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount, range and type of homework given</li> <li>• the information about their children's progress</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with the parents' positive views and do not support the negative comments. The amount, range and type of homework are satisfactory and expectations for homework are given very clearly in the good quality half termly information leaflets parents receive from the school. Parents also receive good information about their children's progress although targets for improvement in English and mathematics are not consistently included in the pupils' annual reports. Suitable information is provided on what pupils know, understand and can do in all other subjects.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

#### The school's results and achievements

1. The 1999 National Curriculum test results for 11-year-olds indicate that the average points score for English was above the national average. In mathematics, it was well above and in science it was in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching level 4 or above, that is, the expected levels, was well above the national average for English and above the national average for mathematics and science. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels was well above the national average in English and mathematics and above the national average in science. The English and mathematics average points scores are in line with the average for similar schools, while in science, they are below. The lower standards in science against similar schools were due to a combination of the concentration on English and mathematics in this cohort, fewer pupils attaining the higher levels than in English and mathematics, and some weaknesses in the science curriculum. The latter has now been addressed through an improved scheme of work. Taken over the last four years, from 1996 attainment across all three subjects has been broadly similar to the national trend. **The attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 6 is above the national expectation in English, mathematics and science.** Given that the class of 1999 contained a slightly higher than average percentage of pupils with special educational needs, the results indicate a good level of achievement.
2. The 1999 National Curriculum average points scores for 7-year-old pupils were well above the national average in reading and above the national average in writing and mathematics. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels in the tests was above the national average in reading and writing and close to the national average in mathematics. Taken over the four years from 1996, pupils' performance has remained above the national average in reading and writing, having fallen between 1996 and 1997, then rising in line with the national trend since 1997. Standards fell to the national average in mathematics between 1996 and 1997, followed the national trend between 1997 and 1998, then rose more steeply than the national trend between 1998 and 1999. Teacher assessments indicate that standards in science are as expected when compared with national figures. When compared with similar schools, the results are average in reading and writing, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. **The attainment of the majority of 7-year-old pupils currently in the school is well above average in reading and above average in writing, mathematics and science.** The improved attainment in mathematics since the 1999 tests is a result of the school's concentration on raising the standards of numeracy in this age group. In science, it is the result of an improved scheme of work and better focused teaching.
3. Children come to the school with levels of attainment that are average for their age. By the age of five, most reach the nationally expected desirable learning outcomes and achieve well in all six areas of learning because of the very good teaching they receive. The good standards seen at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.
4. In English, pupils aged 5 to 7 learn to read fluently, accurately and with expression. By the age of 7, they understand what they are reading, can work out how to read unfamiliar words and can correct their own mistakes as they read. By the age of 11, pupils have been introduced to and enjoy a wide range of texts, including poetry. All enjoy reading and the majority can talk knowledgeably about plot and characters and quote from the text as they describe their favourite part of a book or poem. They can also competently use books and CD ROMs to find information across a range of subjects. By the age of 7 pupils can write stories with a clear beginning, middle and end using appropriate vocabulary. Their handwriting is neat. Spelling is mostly accurate and punctuation is used correctly. Between the ages of 7 and 11, pupils are encouraged to build on this good start. High quality learning experiences enable them to develop a good grasp of how to re-tell stories and how to write, for example, newspaper reports, police reports, instructions, persuasive writing and explanations. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed very well in all areas of the curriculum. Through the teachers' skilfully structured questions, high levels of demand are made of all pupils with regard to the use of Standard English and subject specific vocabulary in discussions and debates.

5. In mathematics, pupils learn to add, subtract, multiply and divide, and explain the different ways in which they arrive at their answers. By the age of 7, most pupils are able to calculate mentally the sum of two digit numbers. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils have confident recall of multiplication tables and can use them competently to solve two and three digit number problems in their heads. All pupils have an at least sound understanding of fractions and their common equivalents, and can work with decimals and percentages. Pupils develop a good understanding of shape, space and measure as they move through the school. They and learn to handle information and present it in the form of graphs, including using spreadsheets on the computer to do so.
6. In science, pupils have many practical first-hand experiences in lessons and by the age of 7 begin to develop an understanding of the need for a fair test in their investigative work. They record their findings in many different ways, including reports and diaries and develop good observational skills. By the age of 11, they have a good knowledge of scientific topics such as the solar system, forces and living things. They are able to undertake challenging investigative work in these areas because they are encouraged to do so by teaching that is well planned to extend their learning, make them think and reason things out for themselves, test their hypotheses and record their findings.
7. In both age groups, there are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. However, in English at the age of 11, the national trend is reversed and boys do slightly better than girls. This is because the school has successfully addressed the issue of boys' attainment, which was identified as a weakness when previous test results were analysed. In mathematics at the age of 7, the gap between the attainment of girls and boys is slightly greater than that found nationally, with girls attaining the higher standards.
8. The school sets ambitious targets for both 7 and 11 year olds. It works very hard to achieve them and has a number of effective strategies in place to support it in doing so. The targets are based on accurate assessments of pupils' work over time. Each pupil has individual targets and the progress of all pupils is well monitored.
9. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards the well thought out targets in their individual education plans. There has been good improvement in this area since the last inspection because the targets are now more specific and subject to better assessment. It is a measure of the good added value that the school provides that many pupils with special educational needs attain the nationally expected levels in the National Curriculum tests and assessments by the age of 11. The school also addresses well the needs of its higher attaining pupils, including those who are identified as gifted and talented. All pupils make good progress and achieve well in relation to their prior learning because of the very good provision made for them and the high quality support they receive.
10. Good standards and achievement are evident throughout the school in art, information and communication technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education. In design and technology, the standards seen in pupils' work are appropriate for their ages and their achievement is satisfactory. There was insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on standards in music in the 5 to 7 age group, but in the one lesson seen, singing was of a satisfactory standard. However, in the 7 to 11 age group, standards and achievement are very high because of the very good quality teaching pupils receive both in class and in instrumental lessons.
11. Pupils use their literacy skills well in all areas of the curriculum. For example, from a young age, they use reference books effectively to find information in history, geography and religious education. Young pupils write instructions for baking and recount religious and historical stories. From Year 3 pupils learn to take notes and use these to write reports in science, history and geography. In Year 5, pupils write well-structured reports about the Battle of Hastings and information about North American dwellings using headings and sub headings to organise their prose. A clear geographical explanation informing the reader where rain comes from has been written by pupils in Year 6.
12. Pupils use their numeracy skills appropriately in other subjects. For example, in history they have plotted graphs showing the growth in use over the years of the number of television sets. When constructing a model of the earth, sun and moon and their relative motions they applied their knowledge of geometrical

shapes and angles to determine the centre of a circle. Pupils also use their mathematical skills appropriately in music as they learn about sequencing patterns and rhythms, and counting on beats as they wait their turn to play in performances. In art they consolidate their knowledge of shape, space, pattern and symmetry, and the use of perspective in pattern and landscape work, often related to the way in which famous artists used these concepts.

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

13. The pupils' very good attitudes, values and personal development have been maintained since the previous inspection. They contribute to the good learning atmosphere achieved in the school because pupils are able to work and play in an environment that free from oppressive behaviour and harassment.
14. Pupils are keen to come to school and form very good relationships with adults and fellow pupils. They involve themselves fully in school life and display very good attitudes to their work. They respond very well to the high demands made of them by concentrating well, persevering and working hard in all subjects. These good attitudes enable them to learn and achieve well and attain the good standards seen. Co-operative work is good. When working in pairs and groups, pupils share equipment and take turns. They plan well together, listening to and respecting each other's contributions. When working independently they take responsibility for their own learning, finding the resources and equipment needed for the task and tidying away efficiently at the end of the lesson. Personal development is very good and is actively encouraged from an early age. All classes have monitors who help with the daily routine of school life by taking registers, giving out equipment and tidying the book corner. Pupils in Year 2 take responsibility for ensuring the hall is safe before a physical education lesson by removing any objects that could be hazardous. As they grow older pupils take on more responsibilities. They set up the hall for assemblies, put benches out in the playground, help the infants at lunchtime and look after them in the playground. Two Year 5 pupils are the school's road safety officers. They liaise with the external road safety officer and disseminate information to the other pupils. Year 6 pupils meet with the cook and write out the lunchtime menu, posting it around the school. Most impressive is the behaviour of the pupils who practise, mostly unsupervised, music compositions at lunchtime and playtimes. They work sensibly and co-operatively, discussing their contributions, rehearsing and putting their final composition onto tape.
15. The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good. Staff set high standards to which pupils respond well. They move around the school sensibly, play fairly in the playground. There are no recorded incidents of bullying and pupils could not recall any. They are confident that should any occur, staff would deal with them swiftly and fairly. Pupils are courteous and polite to adults and to each other, holding doors open and finding chairs for visitors. In discussions, pupils listen well and respect each other's opinions. They praise the good work of fellow pupils and comment sensitively when asked to evaluate other pupils' work in, for example, English, music and dance. The small number of pupils who display disruptive behaviour are given extra support and this is successfully helping them learn to behave in an acceptable way. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
16. Attendance is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is above the national average. Registration is taken efficiently. Punctuality is good and the school day gets off to a prompt start. The school rigorously analyses the reasons for pupils' absence. Despite its considerable efforts to discourage parents from taking holidays in term time, more than half of all absences are due to such holidays.

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

17. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is at least satisfactory in 98 per cent of lessons. It is good in 35 per cent of lessons, very good in 36 per cent and excellent in 6 per cent of lessons. There was one unsatisfactory lesson in the 7 to 11 age group during the inspection week, representing 2 per cent of all lessons. In one lesson in each of the three age groups in the school, teaching was excellent. Teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection. It has moved from good to very good in the under fives and 5 to 7 age ranges. Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school as a result of the quality of teaching and this prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

18. The teaching of children under five is very good. All staff have a good understanding of how young children learn and they work closely together to plan structured, interesting and stimulating activities that motivate them and enable them to learn well. Expectations of children's achievements are consistently high and the children respond well by settling quickly, following instructions and working hard. Teachers pay very good attention to the children's personal development and teach them to take charge of their own learning and work from a very early age. This works well and the children can be seen moving purposefully from one activity to another. Assessment procedures are very good. Teachers keep good records of the children's achievements and use the information well to plan future work at the right level for individual pupils.
19. The teaching of English and mathematics is good overall. It is always at least satisfactory and in both subjects it is at least good in 67 per cent of lessons. The National Strategies for these two subjects have been successfully implemented and the three-part structure of lessons is being used to good effect in many other subjects. The time allocated to each part of a lesson is appropriate, although in one lesson the introduction too long. The final plenary sessions are mostly used well to help pupils evaluate their own and others' work and a successful atmosphere of mutual trust is created in which pupils learn to do this constructively and sensitively. This and the mostly good marking help pupils to understand their strengths and weaknesses and how to improve their work. Throughout the school, teaching is also good in science, art and religious education, and very good in physical education. It is very good in music in the 7 to 11 age range, promoting very high standards and achievement, but insufficient teaching was seen in the 5 to 7 age range to make a secure judgement on teaching. Insufficient teaching was observed in either age group, in design and technology, geography, history and information and communication technology for a secure judgement to be made on the quality of teaching in those subjects. The teaching in the lessons seen, however, was always at least satisfactory.
20. Throughout the school teachers plan their teaching in great detail and with a good understanding of the small steps in learning that are required for pupils to make good progress and achieve well. What pupils are expected to learn is shared with them at the beginning of each session. New learning is clearly linked to prior learning. In the best lessons, what has been learned is very effectively reviewed with pupils at the end of the session. The information obtained from good marking, record keeping and the rigorous assessment of pupils' work is well used to plan further learning. Most teaching successfully promotes independent learning and perseverance even when tasks are more demanding. Pupils are successfully taught to think and learn for themselves and to give of their best at all times. In almost all lessons teachers insist on high quality work, good behaviour and a good pace of working. Their expectations of what pupils can do are consistently high. Pupils respond well to the high demands made of them and particularly impressive is the way in which pupils manage and organise their work in music and physical education. In the great majority of lessons in all age groups, teachers manage their classes and all resources very well. In the one unsatisfactory lesson observed, however, this was not the case and, although most pupils continued to work, the small nucleus of pupils who did not live up to the school's high expectations caused a significant amount of disruption. Support staff and volunteer parents are very well briefed and their work is carefully planned to ensure their good contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers place great value on pupils' efforts, praising and encouraging them and spurring them on to even greater effort. In most lessons, teaching motivates pupils well because teachers are able very effectively to transmit their own enthusiasm and mostly very good subject knowledge to the pupils. They skilfully use question and answer techniques to draw all pupils into a lesson by altering their questions to suit pupils' differing levels of prior attainment. Teachers also carry out thorough evaluations of their lessons and adjust their planning accordingly.
21. Good emphasis is given to teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Very effective links are made with the pupils' own experiences and with other subjects to involve them fully in text work. In most lessons, teachers remind pupils about the quality of their writing and insist that they use the appropriate vocabulary for the subject when discussing issues in class. Good speaking and listening skills are actively promoted in all lessons and in assemblies. Research and information retrieval skills are promoted well in subjects such as science, history and geography. Similarly, teachers promote and consolidate numeracy skills by encouraging pupils to make the connections between, for example, numeracy and counting in music, using co-ordinates in geography and measuring accurately in science and in design and technology.

22. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Class teachers and support staff have good knowledge of the individual needs of these pupils and with the support of the special educational needs co-ordinator produce high quality individual and group education plans with tasks designed to ensure progress. Very good support is given from extra teaching staff, special educational needs staff and classroom assistants. They guide the pupils in their work by giving clear explanations, asking and answering questions and supporting them in recording their findings. This allows the pupils to take an active part in the class lesson while working at their own level of ability. Where pupils are withdrawn from class for additional support in developing language and social skills, the support assistant devises well structured activities for them and as a result they make very good progress. The school has also identified a small number of gifted pupils who do particularly well in mathematics and written work. They too are given suitably demanding tasks commensurate with their abilities allowing them to extend their knowledge and understanding and make good progress. Talented musicians are provided with a very good range of opportunities to practise and refine their musical skills by using their instruments in composition work and by performing both in and out of school. All the issues from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed and improvement has been good.
23. All teachers set an appropriate range and amount of homework regularly in line with the school's policy. The homework serves to consolidate pupils' learning and to prepare them for new learning by sometimes encouraging them to undertake some research tasks at home. The vast majority of parents are satisfied with the amount and type of homework that pupils are given but some felt it could be improved. Parents are split as to whether there is too much or too little. Inspection findings are that the amount, range and type of homework are satisfactory.

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

24. The curriculum has improved since the previous inspection. The school provides a very good range of worthwhile curricular and other opportunities that meet the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. However, overall curriculum time is below the minimum recommended nationally. In the 5 to 7 age range it falls short by 1 hour per week, and in the 7 to 11 age range by 1 hour and 10 minutes per week. The effect of this is minimised by the very good use made of all teaching time. In addition, breaks, lunch times and time after school are all used very effectively for further learning in specific subjects, for example, literacy and numeracy, information technology, music and sport. Although not all pupils take part in all activities, a large number of pupils and teachers are involved in different activities and they considerably enhance pupils' learning.
25. The curriculum for children under the age of five is good. Reception planning is based on National Curriculum guidelines but due regard is given to the six areas of learning. There is a good emphasis on teaching literacy and numeracy skills and particular attention is given to developing children's personal and social skills. The appropriate parts of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully introduced in this age group.
26. The curriculum for all other pupils is very good. It meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The time allocated to each subject ensures breadth and balance across the curriculum and good emphasis is placed on teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented. The teaching of French to pupils in Year 6 and Spanish to pupils in Year 5 and the very good provision for musical tuition in Years 3 to 6, provide good curriculum enrichment and prepare pupils well for life beyond the school.
27. There are a number of appropriate policies relating to pupils' personal and social development. The headteacher is currently drawing these together to form a unified personal, social and health education policy that includes the school's stance on sex and drug education. Despite the lack of a unified policy, the school's provision in these areas is very good. For example, as a result of the identification of pupils' 'bubbly' behaviour in Year 1 and Year 4, the headteacher is involved in teaching half of each class during their 'circle time' while the class teacher teaches the other half. This enables pupils' needs to be met and relevant issues to be explored in smaller groups.

28. In most subjects, curricular planning is based on well constructed schemes of work that provide good guidance for teachers as to the content to be covered each year. This represents good improvement in religious education and very good improvement in geography, areas considered to be weak at the time of the previous inspection. The shared understanding of the small steps that need to be taken to ensure progression in learning year by year is having a very positive impact on pupils' achievement. The exception is design and technology, where progression in designing and making skills is not clearly defined. Individual policy documents are in place for the majority of subjects but the final development of the art scheme and the upgrading of the music scheme have been delayed due to the priority given the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. This has not adversely affected standards in art and music and both subjects are now back to being priorities in the School Development Plan. Medium and short term planning is good. It shows clearly what pupils are expected to learn with specific activities for different groups of pupils where this is appropriate. The provision for equal opportunities is very good. There is a strong awareness among all staff of equal opportunity issues and they provide good role models across the school. All pupils irrespective of age, gender and ability have equal access to all activities that the school provides.
29. Very good provision is made for all pupils with special educational needs to ensure that they have full access to the curriculum and to all extra-curricular activities. Individual education plans are carefully constructed with achievable targets for literacy, numeracy and, where relevant, improved behaviour. Teachers use these targets well when planning their lessons and all pupils make very good progress. The result of the very good provision and planning is evident in the test results at the age of 11, in which a significant number of pupils with special educational needs attain the nationally expected levels.
30. A very good range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits extends the curriculum. Sporting activities include football, netball and rounders and cricket. Music is also given high priority within the school and there is a very good brass band, a brass ensemble, two recorder groups and a choir. The school participates in a number of local festivals and succeeds in winning several trophies. The school also provides good opportunities for pupils to enjoy residential visits to places of interest that support their learning in, for example, history, geography, and physical education.
31. The school has good links with neighbouring schools, including the local high schools and very good links with the community that serve to enrich the curriculum. For example, close liaison with a local high school has resulted in the shared use of its computer suite and pupils develop a sense of citizenship through their participation in charity work involving a wide range of charities through collections and sponsored events. Links with the community also enhance to music curriculum by, for example, involving the brass band playing at two residential homes in the area. Good involvement with local businesses has resulted in the award of a cup for the most improved child.
32. The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and for their personal development.
33. The provision for spiritual development is very good. In assemblies pupils are given time to reflect on the wonders of the world and the individuality and uniqueness of the animals and people in it. The words of hymns and prayers and the feelings and moods evoked by music are very effectively explored to enhance spiritual awareness. Opportunities are taken in art, music, religious education and dance lessons to develop pupils' spirituality and their ability to empathise with people in different situations. Through a very good telling of the story of Jesus in the desert, Year 1 pupils were led to an understanding of the concept of 'sacrifice' and were able to identify what they would have difficulty giving up. In a Year 2 lesson, through sitting in a darkened room and through directing a blindfolded pupil around the room, pupils empathised well with what it would be like to be blind and what they would miss in terms of the beautiful things in the world. At the end of the lesson, the pupils went out to play with the instruction to find 'beautiful things' around the playground that they would miss if they were blind. In a Year 3 dance lesson, pupils were able to empathise with the feelings of Jesus and his disciples at Easter and develop spiritually their understanding of the importance of the Easter story. A significant number of pupils are withdrawn from the daily act of collective worship for learning support and reading. This involves different pupils each day. Despite there being class assemblies and pauses for reflection at the end of the

day, withdrawing pupils devalues the mostly very good and very well planned acts of collective worship. The school has no way of checking that every pupil attends an act of worship daily.

34. The provision for moral, social and personal development is very good. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and are actively encouraged to think about how their behaviour affects others. They have formulated their own five rules in terms of what is needed for safety and comfort in the school. These are displayed in the foyer and pupils take responsibility for their own standards by signing up at the end of the day if they have achieved all five targets. The school's policy for behaviour is consistently applied throughout the school. The small number of pupils that have difficulty complying with the high standards set are given extra support. In 'circle time' they discuss acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, what they would do in different situations and how it would make them and others feel. This is having a positive effect and they are learning to listen to the teacher and others and think about the consequences of their actions. All staff provide good role models and reinforce good behaviour through all areas of the curriculum. The school provides many opportunities for the pupils to develop their personal and social skills. They are given increasing responsibility as they progress through the school and willingly contribute to its running. Older pupils help look after the younger pupils, collect stamps and money for charity and show great maturity in the way that they work together, largely unsupervised, on musical compositions. Pupils in the brass band play for elderly people in two residential homes and, together with the recorder groups and choir, play and sing in music festivals. Every year pupils achieve good success in the local choral speaking festival and pupils in the many sports teams play against teams of pupils from local schools. They further develop their social skills by working co-operatively in lessons, leading in assemblies and through participation in worthwhile residential experiences.
35. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Many opportunities are provided through, for example, music, art, religious education, history and geography for pupils to learn about their own culture. Although there is no formally structured approach to it, multicultural education is also good and pupils are prepared for life in a multicultural society because teachers are careful to include this provision in their work over time. In music, for example, suitable opportunities are provided for them to participate in Asian music workshops, to listen to music from different parts of the world and to discuss how music is used in different cultures. As teachers open pupils' minds to the similarities and differences in the major world religions, they are also careful to include what effects the different religions have on the lives of the people who follow them. This helps pupils to gain an understanding of the richness and diversity of different religions and cultures across the world.

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

36. The school cares very well for all of its pupils. Relationships throughout the school are very good and teachers know pupils well. The very good support and guidance provided for all pupils contribute in great measure to their achievements and to the standards they attain. This is because a learning environment is created in which teachers know individual pupils well and pupils are confident in approaching their teachers or other members of staff if they are worried, upset or need help with their work. The school has good orderly routines and supervision at the midday break is good. The school's concern to improve the quality of playtime is indicated by its construction of a new junior playground. Pupils now enjoy playing volleyball on it. Parents value the very good care that the school takes of their children.
37. The school has effective procedures for ensuring pupils' safety. Teachers show a good awareness of safety considerations in their lessons and the teaching of safety is covered in the curriculum. The school has effective child protection procedures that are known to all staff. It carries out termly risk assessments of the premises and takes appropriate action on its findings. There is a sufficient number of staff with first aid qualifications and the school ensures that their training is kept up to date.
38. There are very effective procedures for promoting good behaviour. Teachers have clear and consistently high expectations of good behaviour and the majority are highly skilled at maintaining a calm and orderly learning environment. Reward systems such as stickers and house points are used very effectively to motivate pupils to work hard and behave well and pupils are proud of them. The school uses appropriate strategies to tackle the poor behaviour of the few pupils who have behaviour difficulties. There are very effective procedures in place to discourage bullying and other forms of harassment. The

school ethos, which is promoted through assemblies, circle time and in many other ways strongly encourages pupils to consider the feelings of others.

39. Procedures for monitoring attendance, which were criticised in the previous report, are now very good. The school regularly reminds parents of the disruption caused to their children's education by taking holidays in term time. It keeps track of the number of days each pupil takes for holidays and fulfils statutory requirements by entering holidays in excess of those that are authorised, as unauthorised absence. The school works actively in conjunction with external agencies to improve the attendance of the very few pupils who have irregular attendance.
40. The school monitors and supports pupils' academic and personal development very effectively. Teachers know pupils well. Pupils are given good opportunities in class, circle time and assemblies to express their ideas and opinions. In the Year 1 and Year 4 classes, where some pupils display attitudes that interfere with their own and other pupils' learning, 'circle time' is used very effectively to help them to reflect on their attitudes and values. For these pupils, improvements in behaviour are well documented.
41. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. Teachers keep good records of pupils' progress, mark and assess their work thoroughly and use well the information gained from assessment to plan further learning at an appropriate level. Challenging targets are set at whole school, group and individual levels to spur pupils' on to better achievement. All test and assessment results are very well analysed. Weaknesses are identified and effective action is taken to address them. The school has provided well-targeted support for literacy and numeracy for several years and as a result, pupils' attainment has risen, even in years where the percentage of pupils with special educational needs has risen. Very good support is also given on an individual basis. For example the school ensures that those pupils who receive little support at home are given extra reading practice in school.
42. The school has good procedures in place for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator liaises effectively with staff from external support agencies and the teachers and support staff to ensure that all pupils needs are met. The special educational needs co-ordinator carries out spelling and reading tests and meets regularly with class teachers and parents to review the pupils' progress and set new targets. Documentation is very good and the recommendations Code of Practice are fully implemented. This indicates very good improvement since the last inspection where inspectors found that external support agencies were not effectively used, systems were not rigorously applied and the Code of Practice was not fully implemented.

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

43. The school's partnership with parents is very effective. The parents' meeting and parents' questionnaire returns confirm that parents have very positive views of the school and support it very well in its work. Parents agree that their children are expected to work hard and are making good progress. They consider that teaching is good and that the school is well led and managed. They find it easy to approach the school. Inspection findings support these positive views. A small minority of parents have concerns about the information that they receive and about homework but inspection findings do not support these concerns.
44. The school provides parents with very good quality information including the prospectus, annual governors' report and regular newsletters. Parents particularly value the curriculum newsletter that is sent out for each class at the beginning of term. This gives good information about the curriculum to be covered, the homework expected and also contains reminders about routine matters such as the days on which physical education kit is required. The school listens carefully to parents and responds well to their views and concerns. For example, several questionnaires have been sent to parents and the headteacher is regularly in the playground so that parents have informal access to her. As a response to parents' requests for more information about assessment the school has held meetings on this subject and has produced an informative booklet for parents on National Curriculum tests. Copies of school policies and governors' minutes are kept in the entrance hall for parents to consult at any time.

45. Annual reports on pupils' progress are satisfactory. For literacy and numeracy the reports outline the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work and many contain useful suggestions on what pupils need to do to improve. However targets for improvement are not consistently included. Suitable information is provided on what pupils know, understand and can do in all other subjects.
46. Parents' close involvement with the work of the school has a very positive impact on their children's education. Over twenty parents, grandparents and parent governors regularly help in the classrooms by assisting with practical activities or by hearing pupils read. In large classes the presence of parent volunteers in addition to support staff provides pupils with valuable individual attention and help while they are doing group work. Teachers provide good guidance to parent helpers and the quality of help given is high. The school makes good use of parents' specialist skills. For example a parent governor helps with rugby coaching and a grandfather with football. There is a thriving parent support group, which holds social events and raises valuable funds for the school. The majority of parents are keen to support their children's education and do this by listening to them read regularly and by supporting their homework. The school keeps parents of pupils with special educational needs well informed. It involves them closely in their children's learning, for example by providing special work or activities for pupils to do at home. Where a pupil has a statement of special educational need, their parents or carers are also suitably involved in the statutory annual review of the statement and of their children's learning targets.

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

47. The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher provides strong and sensitive leadership and, with the effective support of the senior management team and the governing body, gives a very clear direction for the development and improvement of the school. The quality of education owes much to a hard working and committed team of staff and governors. Together they have succeeded in creating a learning environment where relationships are very good and pupils feel secure and valued. There is a positive ethos that reflects the school's commitment to achieve high educational standards and equality of opportunity for all pupils.
48. Governors take their responsibilities seriously and make a good contribution to the effective running of the school. They are kept well informed and work hard in their individual and collective roles. They have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and the chair of governors works very closely with the headteacher to keep all of the school's work under constant review. All governors' committees have appropriate terms of reference. They meet regularly and report back to the full governing body as appropriate. The governors for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs are all knowledgeable and very supportive of the work in the school. The special educational needs governor is employed as a classroom assistant working with pupils with special educational needs and thus provides a very effective link with the governing body. Regular reviews of special educational needs provision is undertaken by checking with the relevant staff that good records are kept and targets set in individual educational plans are appropriate for the needs of the pupils. The governing body fulfils all its statutory obligations apart from the withdrawal of some pupils during acts of collective worship.
49. The headteacher has been in post since May 1998 and maintains a good balance between the strategic, administrative and monitoring elements of her role. In all of these she is very well informed. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has been effective in raising of standards in English. Similar steps are now being taken to monitor the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. The whole staff are involved in developing policies and schemes of work. This collaboration ensures that all have a very good awareness of the requirements for each year group, and that the planned curriculum progressively develops pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements have more recently centred on the implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and have involved the headteacher, who is the literacy co-ordinator, and the Local Education Authority's advisers in monitoring the teaching of literacy and numeracy. This has had a good effect on the quality of teaching throughout the school and has led to a shared understanding of what an ideal literacy lesson should contain and a clear understanding of how best to implement the National Numeracy Strategy. It is also providing effective support for the recently appointed mathematics co-ordinators as they develop their new role.

50. Most subjects now have appropriate policies and schemes of work, developed through the very effective involvement of all staff. The very good practice of evaluating planning and discussing pupils' work at staff meetings has led to very effective teamwork and a shared understanding of what is required to be developed, improved or modified in each subject. This collaborative style of working creates an effective atmosphere in which all co-ordinators are able to give advice and guidance to their colleagues and in turn, teachers are confident to ask each other for help when they need it. This has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and on standards. The headteacher rigorously monitors all teaching and also checks on teachers' planning and pupils' work in all subjects. Where necessary, and in order to address individual weaknesses identified through the monitoring, she also provides good support in the classroom. At the present time subject co-ordinators have not had the opportunity to undertake formal monitoring of teaching in their subjects because of the decision taken to give all staff appropriate time to implement successfully the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. However, this extension of the co-ordinator's role is identified in the School Development Plan.
51. The school has suspended teacher appraisal because of teacher action but operates a good programme of professional development interviews with the headteacher. During these interviews the headteacher tries to match individual career development needs with the identified needs of the school. Each teacher, including the head and deputy, has a set of targets that are written into an action plan. Newly qualified or appointed members of staff are given a very good level of support with the headteacher acting as mentor.
52. The School Development Plan is a useful working document. At present this is for one year only and is a continuation of the 1998/1999 plan that was in place when the headteacher took over. The outline beyond this year clearly indicates that the new plan will be linked to the financial year and that both staff and governors will be fully involved in determining future educational priorities. Targets are set and costed and efficient procedures are in place for monitoring and evaluating the extent to which these priorities are achieved.
53. Staffing is adequate and well deployed. The school benefits from a number of hard working and skilled support staff who make a positive contribution to the quality of education provided. The school is managing well the handing over of special needs responsibilities to the deputy headteacher as it is set to lose its part-time special educational needs co-ordinator at the end of this school year. The school benefits from having a large number of reliable parents who very ably assist the teachers when the pupils are working on group tasks.
54. The accommodation is adequate. However, all teaching areas, apart from the reception class, are barely sufficient for the number of pupils and the awkward shape of the Year 1 area is particularly difficult to manage. Nevertheless, the teachers make very good use of every available space in the school. The practical and shared areas are always a hive of industrious activity with pupils working by themselves or in small groups with the support of a teacher or other adult helper. Throughout the school there are attractive displays that help raise the standards of pupils' work. They encourage pupils to present their work carefully and celebrate their successes. Standards of tidiness and cleanliness are consistently very good throughout the school. Since the previous inspection additional space has been created in the upper junior area by converting the courtyard space into an additional teaching area for group work. Outdoor facilities are good. The recent extension to the hard surface play area and the school field together provide adequate space for playtime and for games lessons.
55. Resources are good, including those for information and communication technology. There is a well-stocked and well-used library and a good number of fiction and non-fiction books throughout the school. All resources are well maintained, annually audited and accessible to staff and pupils.
56. The school's financial planning is very good and it manages its budget very well. The governors have acted swiftly upon the recent advice of the Local Education Authority to reduce expenditure in the coming year because of a reduction in the school's budget. This is linked to falling roles in the school and in particular to larger numbers leaving from Year 6 than are being admitted to the reception class. The school is careful to ensure that earmarked funds are used appropriately. Accounts for these specific headings are carefully monitored by the headteacher. The provision for and management of special educational needs is very good and the allocation of funds is used well to promote learning.

57. Routine financial and administrative procedures are satisfactory and the school administrator can readily provide accurate financial information to guide the headteacher and governors. The school is set to move from a manual system of budget control to a computerised system in the near future. The school has dealt satisfactorily with the minor issues identified in the most recent auditor's report. Curriculum co-ordinators have been given their first budget allocation and have welcomed the practical and effective arrangement in helping them to manage their subjects better. Governors ensure that the principles of best value are applied well in the school's work particularly when prioritising spending decisions and their likely effect on standards and achievement. The school is very aware of how it is perceived locally. The senior managers are receptive to the ideas and suggestions made by others and regularly consult parents on the quality of the school's work and the actions it takes.

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

58. There are no major key issues for the school to address. However, the governors should include the following in their action plan:
- Improve the scheme of work for design and technology by updating it to show the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils should achieve year by year, to ensure that their learning is continuous as they move through the school.
  - Accelerate the curriculum co-ordinators' involvement in the monitoring of their subjects.
  - Ensure the attendance of all pupils at the daily act of collective worship.

The first two action points are already included in the School Development Plan.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

52

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

35

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	36	35	21	2	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	215
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	10

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	31

#### **English as an additional language**

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

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	4.37
National comparative data	5.4

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	18	17	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	17
	Girls	17	16	16
	Total	33	33	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (86)	94 (80)	94 (100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	17	6
	Girls	16	16	15
	Total	31	33	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (80)	94 (97)	89 (94)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	18	16	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	15	17
	Girls	14	11	13
	Total	30	26	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (83)	76 (86)	88 (90)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	17
	Girls	14	12	14
	Total	30	28	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (72)	82 (86)	91 (97)
	National	68 (63)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	1
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	212
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.9
Average class size	30.71

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

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	153

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A

Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	363104
Total expenditure	349478
Expenditure per pupil	1533
Balance brought forward from previous year	20431
Balance carried forward to next year	34057

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	215
Number of questionnaires returned	128
Percentage return:	59.5

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	38	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	42	3	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	47	2	2	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	44	10	2	2
The teaching is good.	59	39	1	1	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	33	13	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	34	2	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	27	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	48	38	10	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	60	34	3	2	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	41	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	51	9	0	5

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

59. The majority of children enter the reception class with the levels of attainment expected for their age. Most are on course to achieve the nationally expected desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five years of age. Evidence for this comes from the baseline assessments carried out as children start school and the recording of their progress, ongoing throughout the reception year.
60. Children enter the reception class in the September of the year in which they are five following a good induction programme. Parents and children are welcome to attend any social function such as the Christmas play or sports day prior to entering school. The teacher has very good links with the nearby pre-school and nursery and visits are arranged for children to ensure that they feel safe and secure when entering school. Meetings are arranged for parents to give them information on the curriculum and suggestions as to how they can help their children at home. Parents are welcomed as partners in their children's learning and a large number give valuable help in the classroom.

#### **Personal and social education**

61. By the time they are five, most children achieve the standards expected in this area of their learning. They quickly form positive relationships with the staff and other children and are happy and secure in school. They settle quickly, adapt to the school's routines and learn to comply with the code of acceptable behaviour. The teaching is good and pupils quickly learn to sit still, listen attentively and take turns. All staff are patient and consistent in their approach to developing the children's social awareness. Staff show a great deal of care and concern for the children. This ensures that they make good gains in relating to others, promoting an atmosphere in which children can flourish. Children's independence and confidence is promoted in a caring way and they are encouraged to work and play with each other. There is a friendly but firm control and any inappropriate behaviour is quickly corrected. The teachers and support staff provide very good role models for social relationships.

#### **Language and literacy**

62. The attainment of the majority of children at the age of five is good. As a result of very good teaching, they achieve well and make good progress in relation to their prior learning. They listen carefully to the teacher and take turns when speaking. Very good questioning skills by all staff enable the children to develop a wide vocabulary. This is reinforced through role-play, which is used effectively in all areas of learning. Appropriately adapted work is planned according to the National Literacy Strategy guidelines and whole class shared reading sessions are having a good impact on children's progress and achievement. They recognise that print has meaning, and use both picture cues and word recognition. The more able children are beginning to use phonic cues in their reading. They learn to look at the title, front and back covers and pictures to predict what the book is about. Children enjoy sharing 'big books' with adults and other areas of learning are promoted well through this activity, for example, when studying the life cycle of a butterfly. Very good attention is given to developing the children's phonic awareness. For example, the use of nursery rhymes as a stimulus, with Mother Hubbard's cupboard providing items to be matched to a letter board, ensures that the children are well motivated and highly stimulated to learn. Follow up activities designed for each child's needs have a very good impact on the children's learning. Children are taught to form their letters correctly from the time they enter the school. Less able children are supported well and encouraged to trace accurately the teacher's writing. Higher attaining children independently form letters and words and simple sentences and are developing a uniform style of writing.

#### **Mathematics**

63. The attainment of the majority of children in mathematics is good. They achieve well and make good progress as a result of the very good teaching they receive. Work is very well planned using the relevant sections of the National Numeracy Strategy. Through well-structured play, practical activities, number

songs, rhymes and counting games many children recognise the numbers to 10. The majority of children are competent at writing the numbers correctly, create sets and can write the total number. The lower attaining children can recognise and write numbers to 5 and higher attaining children are confident with numbers up to 9. Simple addition is introduced well through practical activities involving counting objects and adding one more at a time. Higher attaining children are confident with addition using numerals for example 3 and 3, 6 and 2. Knowledge of money is successfully developed through role-play in the 'Toy Shop'. Activities are always planned to stimulate and keep the interest of the children. Very good attention is given to developing mathematical language and children can identify 'less than', 'more than', 'larger', 'smaller', 'square', 'triangle' and 'circle' successfully. The teacher continually assesses how well the children are learning and adjusts her questioning to ensure that all make good progress.

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

64. Children attain good standards in this area of learning by the age of five. They achieve well and make good progress. The teaching in this area of learning is very good. Staff ensure that the children learn about the movement of time through, for example, thinking about the order of their own day, how they have changed and what has happened to them since they were born. Children learn to design and make a variety of objects including sandwiches and aprons. Effective questioning by the staff enables them to use construction materials successfully to make Noah's ark and begin to consider, for example, what design would be best for the roof and what shape would be best for the ark to float. They are encouraged to think through a problem to find the answer for themselves and learn to use the correct vocabulary. For example, as they learn about the life cycle of a butterfly, higher attaining children know that the caterpillar 'changes' and 'becomes' a butterfly, whilst a kitten, a puppy, or a chicken 'grows' into its adult form. A wide range of stimulating activities provides challenging opportunities that have a good impact on children's learning. As a result of well-focused teaching, children are able to use the computer confidently and can, for example, use the mouse confidently to 'drag' and 'drop' icons on the screen. They also successfully carry out simple word processing activities related to English and mathematics. Children begin to consider a world outside as they look beyond themselves at their community and at other people.

### **Physical development**

65. The children achieve well in this area of their learning, make good progress and attain sound standards by the age of five. They are mature and sensible in their approach showing an awareness and control of their own and others' space. They can jump hop and skip and show lightness of movement when running. The reason for warm-up exercises are well known as is the need for quiet during the lesson. During gymnastics lessons they display a good level of control whilst moving through, under, over, and in and out of apparatus. They respond to the teacher immediately and try very hard to carry out instructions. They have many opportunities to handle tools such as scissors, pencils, crayons, paintbrushes and glue sticks. The majority of children manage them well and are developing good control. Regular practice using jigsaws and small construction kits is also having a good impact on developing the children's dexterity. Very good and stimulating teaching has a very positive impact on children's learning. For example, the reading of a story about a sloth and how it moves, provides a good stimulus for a dance lesson and leads to children holding a stretched shape well, even pointing their toes. Every opportunity is taken to demonstrate good practice and encourage children wherever and whenever necessary.

### **Creative development**

66. Children make good progress in this area and by the age of five the majority attain satisfactory standards and achieve well. Good teaching ensures that they are introduced to a wide range of media through which, for example, they explore colour, shape and texture by painting pictures using a variety of brushes and paints, and making collages and three-dimensional models. They are successfully taught how to use fabric paints as they design and paint the aprons they have sewn themselves. Staff use their own voices competently to teach children to sing nursery rhymes and number songs tunefully and children can use their voices to demonstrate loud and quiet sounds. Effective demonstrations by the staff lead to the children being able to use hand movements accurately and with control to identify 'high' and 'low' sounds as the teacher uses a xylophone to 'swoop' up and down the scale. The children are encouraged to

express their feelings through their work and finished articles are effectively displayed, reflecting the high value staff place on the children's work.

67. The quality of teaching for the under fives is very good and at times excellent and this enables the children to make good progress and to learn well. The teacher and support staff provide a good range of stimulating activities to meet the needs of the children and all have good questioning techniques that encourage pupils to think for themselves and respond confidently. Children with special educational needs are well supported to enable them to make a good start at school and to make good progress in their learning. Curricular planning is based on the required six areas of learning recommended nationally for this age group and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are used well to promote these areas of the children's learning. In other areas, children are moved onto the National Curriculum programmes of study as and when they are ready. The baseline assessment carried out when children first start school is used well as a starting point for planning the children's learning and the continuous assessment tracks individual progress very well. This leads to an excellent awareness of the needs of the children in this age group. Pupils' learning is further enhanced by the way all staff discuss and plan together what is to be taught so that all know exactly what is expected of them. The management of the provision for children under five is very good. Both standards and provision have improved since the previous inspection.

## ENGLISH

68. The school's average National Curriculum points score in 1999 was above the national average for pupils aged 11 and in line with the results for similar schools. Given that the class of 1999 contained a higher than average percentage of pupils with special educational needs, the results indicate a good level of achievement. The percentage of pupils reaching level 5 or above (the higher levels) was well above the national average. Since 1996, the school's average National Curriculum points score has fluctuated from well above to above the national average, but the overall trend is broadly in line with the national trend. Boys achieve slightly better than the girls, reversing the national trend and reflecting the impact of the school's work in raising boys' attainment. **Eleven-year-old pupils currently in the school are attaining standards above those expected nationally in all aspects of English and their achievement is good.**
69. For pupils aged 7, the 1999 average National Curriculum points score was well above average in reading and above average in writing. In both aspects of English, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels (level 3 or above) was above the national average. Teacher assessments indicate that pupils attain satisfactory standards in speaking and listening. Since 1996, standards in reading have risen in line with the national trend overall, although, while remaining above the national average, there was a decline in standards between 1996 and 1998. In writing, while standards have again remained higher than the national average, they fell from 1996 to 1997 but have risen in line with the national trend since then. When compared with similar schools the results are average in both reading and writing. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls at this age. **Seven-year-old pupils currently in the school are attaining standards well above those expected nationally in reading and above those expected nationally in writing. They are also reaching very good standards in speaking and listening and in all aspects of English, their achievement in relation to their prior learning is good.**
70. In reading, pupils aged 5 to 7 develop very good phonic knowledge and sight vocabulary and use this very well to read fluently, accurately and with expression. By the age of 7, they understand what they are reading and self correct when they make a mistake. Good teaching ensures that as they move through the school, pupils learn to use with increasing confidence, both the text and their own good phonic knowledge to decipher unfamiliar words. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils show a good understanding of plot, can discuss characters, describe their favourite part of a book and give examples from the text to justify their opinions about the meaning of significant parts of a story or poem. Teachers successfully introduce pupils to a suitably wide range of authors. Pupils can explain why particular ones are their favourites and many extend their reading skills outside school as members of the local library. They confidently use contents and index pages in non-fiction books to find information and higher attainers understand the purpose and use of a glossary. All pupils enjoy reading and read regularly at home. Some older pupils read to their younger brothers and sisters. Infant pupils also read regularly in school heard by staff and parent helpers. This makes a significant contribution to the very high standards

in reading. One of the older pupils commented that he enjoyed reading because 'it feels as though you're in the text' and said the author does this by 'putting questions in the reader's head'.

71. All pupils learn to write well. By the age of 7, as a result of good teaching, pupils can write stories with a clear beginning, middle and end using appropriate vocabulary. Their handwriting is neat with accurately formed letters and full stops and capital letters are used correctly. Simple phonetic and common words are spelt correctly with plausible attempts being made to spell more difficult words. The higher attaining pupils write lively stories using an adventurous and descriptive vocabulary. Main characters are identified and developed and complex words such as 'honeymoon' and 'argument' are spelt correctly. Pupils aged 7 to 11 structure their work well when writing stories and recording information. In stories descriptive words and phrases are used effectively and particular attention is given as to how the introduction can best be presented in order to 'hook' the reader. In this age group, pupils' writing is lively and characters are developed well. Punctuation and spellings are mostly correct. Higher attaining pupils show good awareness of the audience by the use of dialogue and different narrative techniques. Dialogue, action and description are interwoven in stories that have more adventurous vocabulary and phrases. Handwriting is well formed, neat and cursive except in Year 3 where, as pupils begin to write with a pen, it tends to be untidy and as a result, work is poorly presented. All pupils have the opportunity to develop a wide range of writing skills and have a good grasp of how to write, for example, newspaper reports, police reports, instructions and explanations. The persuasive writing of higher attaining pupils is of a particularly high standard. Pupils' writing skills have greatly improved since the last inspection and the weaknesses identified at that time have been very successfully addressed.
72. Pupils attain good standards and achieve well in speaking and listening throughout the school. They use these skills very well in all areas of the curriculum as they talk for a range of purposes and explore, develop and explain ideas in discussion. For example, pupils learn the correct subject vocabulary in music, art, mathematics, science and geography. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment are able to take a full part in discussions because teachers skilfully structure questions aimed specifically at them, encouraging their participation. In the whole class sessions at the ends of lessons, pupils speak clearly and confidently, explaining to others what they have done and learned. All pupils listen well and respect each other's ideas and opinions. Two pupils in the 5 to 7 age range who have particular difficulties with language, receive very good support from the special needs support assistant who, by guiding them through a structured programme, is extending their speaking and listening skills. Choral speaking encourages very good speaking skills. The very high standards attained are recognised outside the school. Pupils have gained honours and distinctions in a local festival for several years and last year won the coveted 'Rose Bowl'. The pupils entering this year practised their contribution in a whole school assembly. They recited two poems, one of which they had written themselves, clearly and with expression and enjoyment using gestures, facial expressions and body movements very effectively to convey meaning. This achievement spills over into lessons and, for example, in a Year 4 English lesson, pupils read a poem with expression and sensitivity, each word clearly enunciated.
73. English teaching is good and, in all age groups it has improved since the last inspection. There are no significant weaknesses in English teaching. All teachers have good subject knowledge and plan thoroughly for each aspect of their lesson, using very effectively the successfully implemented National Literacy Strategy. They select a wide variety of resources in order to engage the pupils' interest while extending their learning. Tasks are well matched to the individual needs of the pupils enabling them to build on skills previously learned and to acquire new knowledge. Good questioning and clear explanations help pupils gain an understanding of different texts as they explore fiction, non-fiction and different forms of poetry. Effective links are made with the pupils' own experiences and with other subjects to involve pupils fully in text work. When sharing a poem about a bully, for example, the teacher asks the pupils to think back to the work done in circle time about bullying and this helps the pupils to explore mood and meaning and to empathise with the victims of bullying in the poem.
74. Teachers form very good relationships with the pupils and respect and value all contributions. This gives pupils the confidence to participate in class discussion, ask questions and try out more difficult tasks. They settle to their work enthusiastically, concentrate and persevere, taking pride in the end result. All resources are readily available and pupils are reminded constantly of the time in which they have to complete a task. This ensures that no time is wasted and that maximum learning takes place. In only one lesson did a whole class session take too long, leaving pupils with very little time to complete tasks and

put into practice what they had been taught. In the very good lessons the teachers have very high expectations of the pupils and find more imaginative and stimulating ways of teaching. In an infant class, for example, pupils are taught direct speech through sharing a big book and the teacher engages them in imaginative practical activities that brings them to a good understanding of how and when to use speech marks. Effective challenges inspire upper junior pupils to work independently to find words with prefixes in a range of dictionaries and then use their skills to work out the meaning of the prefixes. They rose to the challenge well, taking great interest in the task and proud of their knowledge of the Greek language gained through their work in history. Pupils readily rise to the teachers' clear expectations that they will take increasing responsibility for organising their work. For example, the pupils working on prefixes decided whether to use webs or lists to record their findings and all pupils plan their stories and poems in draft form before undertaking their final compositions. Pupils in Year 6 have a list to check through when their writing is complete before asking the teacher to mark it.

75. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because they receive very good support from teachers, support staff and classroom assistants throughout the lesson. Higher attaining pupils are stretched with challenging tasks. Computer programs are used well to give these pupils practice in spelling and grammatical exercises. More able pupils in Year 6 extend their learning by working on a program about subordinate and in subordinate clauses. Talented orators are given good opportunities to use their abilities in choral speaking.
76. Pupils are given good opportunities in other subjects to practise the skills taught in English. From a young age, they use reference books effectively to find information in science, history, geography and religious education and they record their findings in appropriate ways. For example, young pupils write instructions for baking and accounts of religious and historical stories. From Year 3 pupils learn to take notes and use these effectively to write reports in science, history and geography. Pupils in Year 5 write well-structured reports about the Battle of Hastings and information about North American dwellings using headings and sub headings to organise their prose. A clear geographical explanation informing the reader how rain occurs has been written by pupils in Year 6.
77. Assessment is very good. Teachers keep good records of pupils' progress in reading identifying the books they have read and analysing strengths and weaknesses. Older pupils add to these records by writing a review of each book they read in the silent reading session. Marking is good. Pupils are told what they have done well and how to improve. Assessment information is used well to plan for pupils' future learning needs and to identify under-achieving pupils who are then allocated extra support. The school established 'booster' classes before the government funded initiative and the good support given to pupils helps to maintain high standards. The monitoring of pupils' attainment is used to set challenging targets for pupils aged 11. Although these targets are ambitious the school is confident that the pupils will meet them, basing this confidence on the high quality extra support that pupils receive and the fact that it exceeded the targets it set in 1999. The school has also set targets for pupils aged 7 and for individual pupils as they move through the school and their performance is rigorously monitored. The 1999 targets for 7-year-olds were exceeded in reading and were missed by only one per cent in writing. Homework is used consistently well throughout the school to enhance and consolidate pupils' learning. Pupils regularly take home reading and spelling tasks and other homework effectively links with what the pupils are learning in class.
78. The subject is very well managed. The co-ordinator has trained the staff in all aspects of the National Literacy Strategy and regularly checks teaching, planning and pupils' work, giving valuable feedback to staff. Through the thorough analysis of the test results, strengths and weaknesses in the subject have been identified and programmes for improvement implemented. A high quality portfolio has been developed showing examples for each National Curriculum level in speaking and listening, reading and writing. The writing examples cover all genres and are taken from a wide range of subjects. This is used to help teachers assess the quality of pupils' work across the curriculum. Further good practice is seen in the recent introduction of a system of tracking three pupils from each year group through the school to determine their progress and to evaluate the quality of the teaching and learning that they experience. The school is well resourced with a good selection of books although more non-fiction large texts are needed. There is a small library area that is well used for helping pupils to develop their interest in reading as well as their skills of finding information from books.

## MATHEMATICS

79. The school's average National Curriculum points score for pupils aged 11 in 1999 was well above the national average and in line with the average for pupils in similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels (level 5 and above) was well above the national average. Given that the class of 1999 contained a higher than average percentage of pupils with special educational needs, the results indicate a good level of achievement. Over the past four years, standards of attainment have shown some fluctuations, similar to those seen in English and science. The results have risen broadly in line with the national trend and have remained consistently above the national average. At the age of 11, girls attain slightly higher standards than boys in mathematics but the difference is the same as is found nationally.
80. The school's average National Curriculum points score for pupils aged 7 in 1999 was above the national average but below the average for pupils in similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels (level 3 and above) was close to the national average rather than above, as in English and mathematics, thereby reducing the overall average points score. Over the past four years, standards of attainment have fluctuated. The trends have been similar to those in English but at a slightly lower level of attainment. Standards were above the national average in 1996, in line with the national average in 1997 and 1998, then rose again, faster than the national trend, in 1999. At the age of 7, the gap between the attainment of girls and boys is slightly greater than that found nationally, with girls attaining the higher standards.
81. **Pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are reaching standards that are above the national expectation and all are achieving well.**
82. The school sets ambitious targets for both 7 and 11-year-old pupils. Its very good records show that in 1999, the targets for 11-year-olds were not met because of pupil absence during the tests. The targets set for 7-year-olds were exceeded. Since the previous inspection, standards in mathematics throughout the school have improved. The successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy effectively ensures the systematic development of pupils' mental arithmetic, an area identified as weak in the 1995 report.
83. By the age of 7, pupils' attainment in numeracy is good. Pupils count accurately and show a good understanding of the size of number and place value. They confidently count backwards and forwards in 2's, 5's and 10's. As a result of good teaching, they are beginning to have good knowledge of basic multiplication facts. They show good levels of achievement in their use of doubles and halves. With the support of a '100 square', most pupils are able to calculate mentally the sum of double-digit numbers. They work with two and three-dimensional shapes and successfully classify them according to their properties, for example, the number of sides or edges.
84. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils have confident recall of their number bonds including their multiplication tables. They use a wide range of strategies for mental calculation and are able to explain them clearly. For example, they will adjust the size of decimal numbers before adding them in order to make use of their knowledge of doubles and then adjust their answer accordingly. The majority of pupils confidently calculate using traditional pencil and paper methods. Most pupils are able to solve multiplication problems involving two and three digit multiples. All pupils have an understanding of fractions and their common equivalents and higher attaining pupils are also able to calculate fractional parts of quantities including problems in percentages.
85. An appropriate range of graph work is undertaken at both key stages. From an early age pupils plot bar graphs and pupils produce simple graphs with the use of spreadsheets on the computer. At the age of 11, higher attaining pupils, in their work on interpreting graphs, have begun to study such concepts as mean values. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to use their mathematics in other subject areas, for example, in history they have plotted graphs showing the growth in use over the years of the number of television sets. When constructing a model of the earth, sun and moon and their relative motions in science, pupils competently applied their knowledge of geometrical shapes and angles to determine the centre of a circle.

86. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The individual education plans of these pupils have improved substantially since the previous inspection and are now of a high quality. Pupils receive good levels of support from their teachers and the classroom assistants. Work is regularly matched to each pupil's needs and mathematically gifted pupils are presented with suitably challenging work.
87. The quality of teaching is good in all age groups. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when teaching was judged to be sound. Teachers successfully use their good subject knowledge and understanding of mathematics to help pupils learn, make progress and enjoy the subject. They have successfully adopted a common approach to the teaching of mathematics based on the three-phase lesson structure of the National Numeracy Strategy and this is having a positive effect on pupils' progress. Teachers plan their lessons well and share the lesson targets with pupils. This helps pupils understand what is expected of them and because in most lessons teachers also refer back to the targets as the lesson proceeds, pupils' progress is assured by their being kept on task. Lessons get off to a brisk start because resources are always well prepared. The introductory part of the lesson focuses on good direct teaching of mental calculation but in approximately one third of lessons the pace of mental work is not fast enough. This means that pupils are not yet learning sufficiently well how to solve number problems both quickly and accurately. Nevertheless, good direct teaching engages the pupils well. Good routines are being established and pupils are beginning to understand more clearly what is expected of them in these sessions. Pupils enjoy mathematics lessons and respond with a high degree of participation as teachers successfully use a range of stimulating resources such as '100 boards', white boards, number lines and practical equipment to demonstrate different methods of working. An analysis of the work undertaken by pupils since September 1999 indicates appropriate breadth and balance in the topics covered. However, it also shows that commercial worksheets are sometimes used that do not always present sufficient challenge for all pupils. In the group activities, pupils are kept on task well by the teachers' regular intervention and challenging questions. Groups are often well supported by a classroom assistant or other adult helper. In one lesson, however, the complexity of the organisation of both the groups and the resources demanded too much of the teacher's time and as a result, some pupils were left without support for too long a period.
88. Although information and communication technology (ICT) is used appropriately in mathematics, it is not yet developed in a structured way to support the subject. Each year group has and uses relevant software but, although pupils were seen using spreadsheets, printing off graphs and using a floor robot, opportunities are sometimes missed to use ICT in basic number work and teachers are not yet making the most of the available software. Other resources are good and all resources are used well. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' progress are very good. They include a rigorous analysis of pupils' performance with individual and group target setting.
89. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The two mathematics co-ordinators, one in each key stage, are new to the role but have a good knowledge of the standards being achieved and have been instrumental in the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. The headteacher currently and very effectively monitors teaching, teachers' planning and pupils' work and is giving good support to the co-ordinators as they take over their role. Having successfully addressed the issue of writing in English, the school development plan shows that the next focus for the school is to increase substantially pupils' numeracy skills. Assessment procedures are very good and the information gained is used very well to plan further work. Pupils' performance is well monitored and effective action is taken to address weaknesses. All statutory requirements are met.

## **SCIENCE**

90. The school's average National Curriculum points score for pupils aged 11 in 1999 was broadly in line with the national average but below the average for similar schools. The below average score against similar schools is not as significant as it might be because of the high number of pupils reaching or exceeding the expected levels in a cohort where there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected levels (level 4 or above) and the higher level (level 5) was above the national average. These results indicate good levels of achievement in the 1999 cohort. Over the past four years, standards of attainment in science have shown some fluctuation year on year, falling sharply between 1996 and 1997, rising as sharply again in 1998, then

falling back again in 1999. The fluctuations are similar to those seen in English and mathematics but while the average points score has been consistently above the national average until 1999, overall, standards have fallen since 1996. This is because the school has placed the greatest emphasis on English and mathematics and the implementation of the national strategies in those two subjects.

91. Teacher assessments of the standards attained by 7-year-old pupils in 1999 are in line with the national average but well below the average for similar schools. Over the past four years standards have been consistently at a level where at least 90 per cent of the pupils have obtained the nationally expected level 2 or above. However, in 1999 few pupils achieved the higher level 3 compared to previous years, reflecting not only the emphasis placed on literacy and numeracy but also some imbalances at that time in the science curriculum. For example, when teacher assessments are compared with the national averages, results were very high in physical processes and average in experimental and investigative science but well below average in life and living processes and materials and their properties. The school has successfully addressed these imbalances in a recently implemented good quality scheme of work that is helping to raise standards throughout the school across all areas of science. As a result, **the attainment of pupils currently aged 7 and 11 is above the national expectation and they achieve well in all areas of science.** There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.
92. Pupils have many practical first-hand experiences in science lessons. For example, pupils aged 5 to 7 have investigated what and why things float; what materials will and will not let light pass through, and they have conducted a fair test to determine which of their parachutes work best. Consequently, pupils show good gains in their knowledge and scientific skills. They are provided with good opportunities to use their literacy skills also, as they record their observations in a variety of ways by, for example, writing reports, tables and drawings. For example, pupils keep a diary of the week by week development of a plant they have grown from seed. This enables them to develop their skills of observation and make predictions as to what might happen. Pupils have a good knowledge of the life cycle of a plant and know the function of the various parts of the plant.
93. By the age of 11, pupils have a good knowledge of scientific topics such as the solar system, forces and living things. In investigative work related to friction and the soles of shoes, pupils show good levels of understanding. They are able to identify criteria that might affect the grip of a shoe, for example, factors to do with surface area, type of material and the degree of wear. Challenging investigative work is undertaken in all classes in this age group. Pupils conduct experiments with electrical circuits, observe changes of state, and plan a fair test to investigate work on shadows. Achievement is good. Pupils in Year 4 are able to explain the differences between gases, liquids and solids and give examples of common materials that can easily be changed from one state to the other and pupils in Year 3 use their good knowledge of electrical diagrams to read simple electric circuits. Pupils use their mathematical skills appropriately in science when, for example, they measure accurately for their investigative work. As they construct a model of the earth, sun and moon and their relative motions, they respond well to the teacher's challenge to use their knowledge of geometrical shapes and angles to determine the centre of the circle to be used for the basis of their model.
94. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They often have the support of an additional adult within their group. Teachers regularly provide work for these pupils that is well matched to their prior attainment, as they do for pupils who demonstrate higher levels of achievement.
95. Good quality teaching has been maintained since the previous inspection. Unsatisfactory teaching was, however, seen in one lesson. This occurs because of weaknesses in class control that result in too much attention having to be given to the unsatisfactory behaviour of a significant minority of pupils, disrupting the learning of the majority. Because of good planning and resource preparation by teachers, most lessons get off to a good start. A typical lesson begins with direct teaching to the whole class and this effectively sets the scene for the pupils and raises their curiosity. They then respond well and with a high level of interest, eager to engage in investigative work, discuss what they are likely to find out and compare this with what actually happens. Through the use of effective questioning, teachers help pupils recall and make links to their previous work. Teachers are skilled at finding out what pupils already know about a new topic and they build well on this knowledge to extend and challenge pupils' scientific thinking. Through guided research and investigative work, teachers encourage pupils to think and learn for themselves. They ensure that right from the reception class, children acquire and consistently use the

correct scientific language related to the topics they are studying. For example, by the age of 5, pupils know that a caterpillar ‘changes’ and ‘becomes’ a butterfly, while a kitten, puppy or chicken ‘grows’ into its adult form. By the age of 7, pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a ‘fair test’ and by the age of 11, they can talk about ‘changes of state’ as they investigate solids, liquids and gases. In their planning, teachers give a clear focus to the objectives for the lesson. In the best examples these are simple enough for the pupils themselves to understand, for example, ‘that plants need light and water in order to grow’.

96. Teachers encourage pupils to use their literacy skills appropriately in science as they record their investigative work by making notes, writing scientific reports and by using labelled diagrams. Occasionally, however, teachers rely too heavily on the use of commercial work sheets for pupils to record their work and this lacks appropriate challenge. Science work is therefore usually well presented and pupils can use their written work to reinforce and consolidate their previous learning as they approach new topics. This is not always the case in Year 3, however, where pupils are expected to write with pen for the first time. Work is less well presented, many books are untidy or work is incomplete and pupils do not therefore have the same access to their previous work. Numeracy skills are reinforced appropriately as, for example, when teachers ensure that pupils measure accurately during their investigative work.
97. Two teachers, one from each key stage share the subject co-ordinator’s role. Management of the subject is good. Resources are good and have been carefully checked to fit in with the cycle of topics studied in science and the new scheme of work. In some classes, appropriate use is also made of computer software, for example, when Year 1 study the life cycle of plants. However, the use of information and communication technology is not well structured throughout the school. Because of the recent emphasis on literacy and numeracy, the co-ordinators have not been involved in monitoring teaching. However, because of the good assessment procedures that are in place, they are clearly aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject in terms of standards and achievement. These are used well to identify targets for whole classes and groups of pupils. The headteacher currently and effectively monitors teaching, teachers’ plans and pupils’ work and staff work in close collaboration with each other, giving advice and guidance when needed.

## **ART**

98. Pupils attain good standards in art at the age of 7 and 11 and all, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in relation to their prior learning. As they learn about a wide range of artists and their techniques, pupils experience a wide range of good quality art activities across all areas of the art curriculum and their observational skills become much better as they move through the school. Pupils achieve well In an excellent Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils saw and observed in detail the content of a wide range of William Morris’ patterns. Then, because of the excellent teaching, the vast majority were able to reproduce their own very detailed and closely positioned repeated patterns in the style of the artist. Work on display and in the sketch books of older pupils demonstrates pupils’ good achievements in colour mixing from basic colour wheel work through to using colour to create camouflage. In line work, pupils progress from simple line drawings with pencils through to using pencils and ink to produce effective and increasingly complicated line drawings with different shades and tones achieved by using the techniques of hatching and cross hatching. Pattern work is also extended as pupils move through the school until, in Years 5 and 6, they study and reproduce the patterns seen in Islamic art and culture. Pupils of all ages and prior attainment clearly enjoy art and rise to the high demands made of them in terms of their work and behaviour. They also benefit from the very effective input of a number of support staff and parents, working to the teacher’s good direction.
99. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan well for art. The written scheme of work is not yet complete because of the recent emphasis on literacy and numeracy, but the close team work amongst all staff ensures that all pupils take the small steps in artistic learning that enable them to make good progress and to achieve well. Helpful portfolios of pupils’ work in each year provide good exemplars for teachers, who are further assisted by the organisation of the curriculum that involves the whole school undertaking the same art project from time to time. This enables teachers effectively to assess progress in skills through the school and to check the range of activities covered. During the inspection, the display

of pupils' work on hands illustrated the success of such a project. Pupils made simple hand prints in the reception and Year 1 classes while pupils in Year 6 undertook the very detailed observation of fingerprints and produced enlarged line drawings linked to their work in science. In other years pupils worked with modelling dough, foil, looked at hands in different positions and studied and reproduced some Mehendi patterns used in hand painting in Asian cultures. Teachers use their good subject knowledge well to question pupils closely about what they see in works of art and how they can apply their learning in their own work. Sketchbooks are mostly used appropriately. In Year 6, for example, the teacher positively encourages pupils to use them not only to practise skills, but also to make notes from research, including using a CDROM, and to gather pictures and ideas that could later be used in their work. However, sketchbooks are not yet being used to plan work or to show how projects might be taken through from a simple starting point across different media and materials. In all lessons, teachers manage pupils very well and foster good attitudes to art. Challenging questions and the teachers' own enthusiasm for the subject not only place a high demand on pupils, but also encourage them to think creatively, to bring their own knowledge and understanding to bear on their work, share ideas, tools and materials and to learn from each other. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Pupils' work is assessed well in lessons and the information is well used to show pupils what they need to do next to improve their work. Art makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

100. Management of the subject is good. Work is well advanced on the new scheme of work and all staff have been fully involved in the process. There is good guidance on how and what to teach to ensure that pupils learn well. The co-ordinator monitors the subject appropriately, discussing work with teachers, offering help and advice and she has been instrumental in the development of good portfolios of exemplar work in each year group. The close collaboration of all staff in the way they plan and work together means that there are constant checks on all work undertaken in the school. There has been good improvement in standards and in curriculum coverage since the previous inspection.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

101. Although only one design and technology lesson took place during the inspection, evidence from the models, displays and photographs around the school indicate that pupils undertake a wide range of activities. They learn to work with a variety of materials such as construction kits, wood, textiles, food and mouldable materials. The standards of work seen are as expected for their ages and their achievement is satisfactory.
102. The amount of work is inconsistent between year groups and the inconsistency of provision results in pupils not building up their skills in a systematic way. The present scheme of work gives insufficient direction as to the programme of work that teachers should undertake each year. Consequently, teachers have no secure reference point on which to base their planning. Likewise, the school is unable to ensure that pupils receive a balanced programme of work or that the succeeding year's work builds on pupils' previous learning. However, there are some good examples of work being undertaken, for example, well finished models of musical instruments made by pupils in Year 2. These bear a close resemblance to the pupils' original designs. The originality of some of the designs is illustrated in a 'Tiny and Tang' instrument, which is a shaker, a drum and a guitar imaginatively combined into the one instrument. The fairground rides, constructed mainly from wood by previous Year 6 pupils, demonstrate satisfactory skills of sawing, measuring out and gluing, and the quality of the finished products is satisfactory.
103. There is insufficient evidence to give a secure judgement on the quality of teaching but it was satisfactory in the one lesson seen. Pupils were given appropriate opportunities to investigate how a cereal packet was made and then tried to replicate its construction on a smaller scale. In this way pupils measuring, scoring, and cutting skills were satisfactorily developed. The pupils enjoyed the work and soon discovered the need for accuracy in measurement if they were to succeed.
104. Management of the subject has undergone significant changes since the previous inspection and is currently weak. The present co-ordinator has been in post only a few weeks and has not yet had the opportunity to influence developments. The pressures and priorities of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have meant that the subject has received little attention recently. The lack of clear guidance as to how skills should be developed and assessed as pupils move through the school has led to

a drop in standards and in the quality of teaching since the last inspection, when both were judged to be good.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

105. It was possible to observe only one lesson during the inspection due to timetabling arrangements. However an analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning, interviews with the teachers and discussions with the pupils indicate that pupils aged 7 and 11 attain good standards and achieve well in relation to their prior learning. Seven-year-olds develop good map reading and mapping skills. They use symbols accurately to find footpaths, churches, railways and bridges. They also produce accurate plans of the classroom, and design their own pictures and symbols to show how to get from a house to a church by following a route on a map. They can identify towns beyond their own locality and compare and contrast them with their own. They can point out attractive and unattractive features in their environment, identifying how it is changing and suggesting ways to maintain or improve it. Pupils aged 11 confidently and accurately use globes and atlases to find different places and are beginning to understand how human and geographical processes change the features of places and affect the lives of the inhabitants.
106. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. However, teachers' planning is good. Teachers use the detailed scheme of work to plan appropriate learning in each year. They follow the good guidance given on how to teach geographical skills, knowledge and understanding so that pupils are continually building on what they already know. This results in a good balance being obtained between imparting facts and enabling pupils to find information for themselves. This enables pupils in Year 4, for example, to use photographs and reference books to contrast their own locality with a town in France and to record their findings in their own way. Pupils in Year 6 use their knowledge of centigrade temperatures to decide which countries to visit and make informed decisions about the safety of a balloon trip from reading weather charts. Well-planned field trips bring geography alive and good links with other subjects give pupils the opportunity to consolidate and use their knowledge.
107. Good attention is given to using basic literacy and numeracy skills in this subject. For example, after studying traffic congestion, pupils in Year 6 use their literacy skills to write a reasoned argument about how to solve the problem. Pupils in all year groups use their literacy skills well to research information and record their findings in different ways and the higher attaining pupils use a high level of technical language as they present conclusions from their findings in writing and in graphs. Pupils use mathematical knowledge to follow graphs and charts and information and technology skills to access information about countries and atlases on the computer. When learning about Ancient Greeks and Egyptians in history and about Islam and Hinduism in religious education, the pupils use geographical skills to find where these people live and compare and contrast their lives with their own experiences. Good provision is made for higher attaining pupils and for pupils with special educational needs. This ensures that work is well matched to all pupils' abilities and that all pupils are stretched and challenged to achieve and learn well.
108. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good. The production of a very good and detailed scheme of work, training for teachers and the purchasing of a wide variety of resources have successfully addressed all of the issues raised at that time. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is clearly aware of the standards that pupils attain. Assessment procedures are good and the information gained is used well to inform teachers' planning. The co-ordinator does not monitor teaching at the present time due to the recent emphasis on literacy and numeracy but effective monitoring of teaching, planning and pupils' work is undertaken by the headteacher.

## **HISTORY**

109. It was possible to observe only a limited number of lessons in history during the inspection. Judgements are therefore based on evidence gained from these lessons, analysis of pupils' past work and teachers' planning and discussions with pupils about their work. All pupils, including those with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior learning and the vast majority attain good standards at the ages of 7 and 11.

110. Pupils aged 5 to 7 develop a good sense of the passage of time as they move through Key Stage 1. By the age of 7, they can recount their own personal history and the major events in their lives, and compare their own growth from when they were babies. They acquire a good knowledge of an appropriate range of famous people. This learning is consolidated effectively as Year 2 pupils make good use of their literacy skills to write independent accounts of the 'Gunpowder Plot' and eyewitness accounts of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.
111. Between the ages of 7 and 11, pupils begin to carry out in depth studies of, for example, the Tudors. They use notes and reference books and CD ROMs to find information, which they then use to enliven their writing. They can sequence events leading to Henry VIII becoming king and understand why he changed religions to be able to divorce his wives in order to produce an heir. Pupils in Year 4 compare and contrast family life and the differences in housing and dress in Anglo Saxon, Viking and Roman times. They use timelines accurately to sequence major events in these ancient civilisations. By the age of 11, pupils are beginning to understand how the events of the past have influenced present day living. For example, they know about the effects that the Second World War had on family life. They comment with feeling on how men fighting abroad changed the way of life in Britain and led to women being employed in the factories and to children being evacuated from the main areas of bombing. They can empathise with the children and they understand why many buildings in London and the dock areas of Liverpool and Portsmouth have been re-built since the Second World War. They have a good knowledge of events in the 1930's. They understand why these years were known as the 'Devil's Decade' and know, for example, that the Jarrow March was an example of how men fought for better working conditions.
112. Pupils use literacy and numeracy skills well in this subject. They record their work in a variety of ways, through drawings, the completion of appropriate worksheets or writing their own account of what it would be like to live in a different time. Speaking and listening skills play an important part in developing the pupils' knowledge of this subject. The majority of pupils contribute well to lively whole class discussions in which they are able to express their own views and listen to those of others. The quality and amount of writing produced is good throughout the school.
113. Good teaching was seen in the one lesson observed in the 5 to 7 age range and satisfactory teaching was seen in the one lesson observed in the 7 to 11 age range. Well planned activities enable pupils in both age groups to make good progress in historical knowledge and understanding. Where teaching is good, a brisk pace is achieved through the teachers' high level questioning and this keeps pupils on task, interested and able to link their new learning to what they had done previously. Teachers plan a good range of activities designed for the varying abilities and needs of the pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are given work that is suited to their needs and they make good progress. Teachers foster in their pupils good attitudes to learning and have high expectations of both behaviour and work rate. Pupils respond with good behaviour and good levels of concentration during group activities and co-operate and exchange ideas informally as they work. They present their work with care and imagination in their individual topic books.
114. The co-ordinator manages the subject well and, in contrast to the findings of the previous inspection, there is now a very detailed and comprehensive scheme of work for history that gives teachers good guidance in their planning. It sets out the units that each year group can study, covers all current requirements and includes a clear outline of what knowledge, skills and understanding pupils should acquire as they move through the school. This demonstrates very good improvement since the previous inspection. Appropriate use is made of CDROM programmes, particularly for research, to enhance the pupils' learning. Resources for history have been greatly improved since the last inspection and are now good. The co-ordinator has a good awareness of standards through the high quality of displays around the school and from discussions with staff who effectively evaluate pupils' work. The co-ordinator is not involved in monitoring teaching at the present time. This is, however, effectively carried out by the headteacher.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

115. Information technology is a rapidly developing subject and improvement since the previous inspection has been good. **At the ages of 7 and 11 pupils reach standards that are above those expected nationally.** They achieve well across all aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study.
116. Pupils in Year 1 build on the good knowledge and skills they acquire in their reception year. They confidently use the computer for word processing, can enter text and number information onto a spreadsheet and know how to print off their work. With adult support, they can also save and retrieve their work. They learn how to use video and tape recorders safely and productively. Pupils in Year 2 build on their Year 1 work and in one lesson a pupil, by selecting the correct icons and using the mouse, successfully drew a symmetrical shape. Pupils also competently use a floor robot, programming it to move along a given path and they become more accurate at estimating and programming the required distances to each corner and also the angle of turn required.
117. Pupils aged 7 to 11 use information and communication technology in a wide variety of situations. All pupils have their own folders, which are saved on the computer. They confidently extract information from them as and when needed. In Year 3, pupils learn to 'save as' in a different file and with support, they can create and use a database. They use 'search' programs during quiet reading time to support their learning in other subjects. In Year 4 pupils use the computer during literacy lessons to reinforce their work on plurals and spellings. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils are working with the technician to create a web page for the school. They also produce a 'Rag Mag' that is published and circulated to pupils, parents and the local secondary school. This demonstrates the effective use of appropriate desk top publishing skills. Year 5 pupils further develop these skills and also learn control and monitoring skills by using the excellent facilities available on a residential visit to a nearby outward bound school. By Year 6, most pupils are confident in and use well a wide range of word processing applications, readily changing from one type of machine to another. They clearly understand how to use pull down menus to edit and move sections of text, and to use spell checkers and other common tools.
118. Although no teaching was observed during the inspection, it is evident from a scrutiny of teachers' planning and from an examination of samples of completed work that teachers have high expectations of their pupils. The majority of teachers plan challenging activities both in information and communication technology lessons and in other subjects such as literacy, numeracy, geography and history so that pupils can practise and improve their skills. Teachers keep appropriate records of pupils' progress and a new assessment sheet is to be tried out in the summer term to track progress and coverage. Teachers plan a good range of activities to cover all current National Curriculum requirements, the detail of which indicates that the majority of teachers have a good knowledge of the subject. The good provision elicits good responses from the pupils, the majority of whom work hard and co-operate very well to complete tasks. Many have computers at home and use them to develop the skills they learn at school. The school is careful to build on this and also to support those pupils who do not have computers at home.
119. Subject management is good and has led to improved standards throughout the school. The subject is given high priority in the school development plan and work is well advanced on a new scheme of work to meet the requirements of the revised National Curriculum. Because of the excellent links with a nearby secondary school, both staff and pupils are able to use its computer suite to enhance their skills and receive further training. Monitoring is effective although it is informal at the present time. The assessment and evaluation of pupils' work is discussed weekly at staff meetings and planned further work is adjusted as a result of the findings. Statutory requirements are met.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

120. The curriculum is enriched in this school by the teaching of French to pupils in Year 6 and the teaching of Spanish to the pupils in Year 5. Pupils clearly enjoy these lessons and parents are very pleased with the school's provision in this area. The work demonstrates the school's commitment to equality of access and opportunity and it also contributes to pupils' cultural development. The teaching of Spanish was introduced to help settle in a Spanish-speaking pupil who arrived in the school last year.

## **MUSIC**

121. Pupils aged 11 attain very high standards and their achievement in relation to their prior learning is very good. In this age range, similar very high achievement and progress is evident in the work and contribution of pupils with special educational needs and the more gifted and talented musicians in the school. In the 5 to 7 age range, there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about all aspects of music but in the one lesson seen, with pupils in Years 1 and 2, singing was of a satisfactory standard.
122. Throughout the school, singing is tuneful, joyful and enthusiastic. Pupils learn a wide range of songs from different styles and cultures. All pupils in the junior age range can sing in rounds. As they get older they confidently sing and play in parts, holding their parts well both in groups and as individuals. A very large number of pupils from Year 3 upwards play brass instruments and recorders. This extends to well over half of the pupils in Years 5 and 6. Parents are very supportive of this instrumental work and praise the school's achievements in providing the opportunity for all pupils to learn to play, rather than limiting the tuition to a few. Instrumental tuition contributes in very great measure to the standards pupils attain in performing, composing, listening and appraising. The vast majority can read and write traditional notation accurately, follow musical scores, perform with very good levels of sensitivity to the importance or otherwise of different parts in the music and play rhythms accurately. They use these skills very effectively when composing their own music. They perform confidently in class and sensitively evaluate their own and each others' performances and compositions, aided by very effective teacher questioning. Pupils develop a good sense of musical appreciation and use their speaking and listening skills very well to describe the different musical effects they hear. They have a very good range of musical vocabulary, including traditional Italian terms. Pupils use their numeracy skills well. They learn to count on while waiting to play their parts and to recognise and use sequencing and pattern as they work in or listen to different musical styles. Pupils in years 5 and 6 have a well-developed sense of musical style. This was evident in the Blues composition that pupils in Year 6 had prepared for performance to the rest of their group and in the way they could discuss what it was that gave the music a 'Blues feel'.
123. Only one lesson was seen in the 5 to 7 age range and in this, teaching was satisfactory. In the 7 to 11 age group, teaching is at least very good and sometimes excellent. This applies to instrumental as well as class teaching. The teachers impart enthusiasm for and a love of music that elicits very positive responses from the pupils. They have very high expectations of pupils' learning, achievement, application and behaviour. The music co-ordinator takes all of the junior classes for music, teaching two classes at a time in the hall. The work is very well planned following the school's scheme and an extremely brisk pace to each lesson results in an action-packed and highly motivating half hour for the pupils that covers very effectively all areas of the music curriculum. The work done at this time sets the scene for pupils' own composition and performance work during the week. There is a clear expectation that this work will be done at home or in school at break or lunch time. This successfully addresses the imbalance between composing and performing that was evident at the last inspection. Pupils show very high levels of responsibility and initiative as they work very hard and with total commitment at break times and lunch times, recording their compositions for later evaluation and improvement. The co-ordinator is extremely skilled at involving all pupils through well-targeted questions that enable those with special educational needs as well as talented musicians to respond at an appropriate level and to take a full part in every session. The excellent management of the large groups, the good use of praise to raise pupils' self esteem and the very well planned range of progressive activities result in highly motivated pupils who are very keen to do well and to perform at their best. Instrumental tuition very effectively complements pupils' class work. The teacher is very skilled not only at teaching the full range of brass instruments but also at very effectively developing pupils' listening, appraising and performing skills by drawing attention to the composers' intentions and the way they have annotated the music for performers to interpret those intentions. Pupils very effectively apply the skills they learn in their instrumental lessons when composing and performing in class.
124. The range of extra-curricular musical activities is very good and involves large numbers of pupils. There is a very strong brass band involving between 30 and 40 pupils in Years 5 and 6. The band plays to a very high standard. In addition, there is a chamber brass group for Year 6 pupils and two recorder groups, one for beginners and another for more advanced players. Again, the playing is of a high standard. There is also a large school choir for any pupils who wish to be involved. All musical groups enter the various local festivals and the school is justifiably proud of the comments that the adjudicators make about the standard and quality of music in all of the various ensembles.

125. Subject management is very good. Standards and achievement are monitored well in the 7 to 11 age range and satisfactorily in the 5 to 7 age range. Effective action is taken to address weaknesses based on what the teachers learn from their ongoing assessment of pupils' work. The co-ordinator is very clear as to how she will take music forward with the revised National Curriculum orders so that the current very high standards are maintained. Music is an integral part of pupils' learning in this school. It contributes extremely well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to their personal development, and they learn very well indeed. Standards have risen since the last inspection.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

126. Standards in physical education are good and considerable improvement has taken place since the previous inspection. The very good teaching in both key stages enables all pupils to plan, perform and evaluate their work and strive to improve their performance in all areas of the curriculum. By the age of 7, pupils are able to use different parts of their body to travel on the floor and on apparatus. They can link a series of movements together ending with a controlled position. They recognise and describe the effects of exercise on their body. At the age of 11, pupils know the rules for and play small-sided games, continually striving to improve their skills. They practise and refine a series of increasingly complex gymnastic movements on the floor and on apparatus and evaluate their own and others' performances. By the time they leave the school, the vast majority of pupils can swim the nationally expected 25 metres.

127. Teachers use their very good knowledge and understanding of the subject to give clear instructions and explanations that enable pupils to understand the task. Lesson plans are very detailed and tasks are broken down into small steps that gradually increase in difficulty so that pupils can refine and develop their skills. In games' lessons for 7 to 11 year old pupils, sufficient time is afforded for individuals to practise their skills at dribbling balls using feet and hockey sticks. In groups and pairs they have the opportunity to practise passing and receiving and they then consolidate and develop these skills in a game. In gymnastics, infants practise individual movements using different parts of their body before putting them together in a sequence.

128. Teachers effectively demonstrate the correct techniques for handling equipment and passing and receiving balls and then move around the groups as the pupils practise giving encouragement and reinforcing correct skills by further demonstrations. This is particularly effective in rugby and hockey lessons. As a result, pupils listen attentively, watch the demonstrations carefully and then work hard to practise what they have been taught, displaying high standards of concentration and perseverance. Particularly impressive is the perseverance of the Year 3 and 4 pupils who are inexperienced with hockey sticks but determined to improve their skills. Teachers also use pupils effectively to demonstrate good practice. Again, pupils observe these demonstrations carefully, evaluate their own performances and strive to improve.

129. Teachers set very high expectations in standards of work to which the pupils respond very well. From a young age pupils learn the importance of warm ups, cool downs and safety issues. All pupils enthusiastically join in the challenging warm up routines at the beginning of the lessons and understand the reason for them. They respond well to the good opportunities provided for them to develop their personal, moral and social skills. For example, monitors check the hall for safety before a physical education lesson and remove any objects or pieces of equipment that may be hazardous. Pupils in all classes put out equipment sensibly and carefully and by the age of 11 the pupils are totally responsible for the safety of the apparatus that they are working on, checking it regularly throughout the lesson. Teachers use praise well to inform pupils of their achievements and then challenge them to improve. Pupils respond well to this challenge. They display very good attitudes to, and behave well in all physical education activities. They work hard, both independently and in groups, striving to improve their performance. When playing team games they are competitive and are keen to win but they follow the rules and show good sporting behaviour when they lose. They co-operate and work well as a team being generous in their praise of the efforts of team members. Particularly noticeable is the pupils' support for pupils with special educational needs. They help them to improve their skills by demonstrating good practice, praising their efforts and giving encouragement. The only dance lesson seen was linked to a religious education lesson about Easter. In this very carefully thought out lesson the pupils planned,

performed and evaluated dance movements that empathised with the mood of Jesus and the disciples. Some groups used speech to heighten the atmosphere. The very well taught lesson greatly enhanced pupils' spiritual development and showed that they achieve well in dance.

130. A good number of very committed staff offer pupils a wide variety of extra curricular activities such as netball, rugby, football, cricket, gymnastics and athletics. This gives pupils further opportunities to practise the skills learned in lessons and develops their social skills well by playing competitively against teams from local schools. Good links are formed with the community in sharing expertise. Two pupils from the local secondary school help with the weekly rugby practice and arrangements have been made for members from the local rugby league team to run a training session for the pupils. Improvement has been good since the last inspection.
131. Subject management is good and the physical education programme is well planned and appropriately monitored. Assessment procedures are good and the information gained from assessment is used well when planning further work.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

132. At the age of 7, pupils reach standards that exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This shows an improvement since the last inspection when attainment was judged to be difficult to ascertain. In Year 1, pupils build on their work in the reception class and learn more about the preparation for the birth of Jesus. They give good independent accounts of how the astrologers followed the bright star. They also study some stories from the Old Testament and link the creation story to the beauty of the natural world around them. In preparation for Easter the pupils in Year 1 discuss the temptations of Jesus in the desert and carefully consider what they would find difficult to give up in their own lives. Pupils in Year 2 know about different aspects of Jesus as a person and as a healer and they learn how trust in Jesus helped people. This is seen in a lesson where pupils discussed the story of 'Blind Bartimaeus'. The teacher effectively sets the scene by closing the curtains and putting out the lights. Pupils are asked how they feel and how their feelings change as light is introduced to disperse the gloom using first a torch and then a candle. Pupils of this age also study some basic aspects of Islam. They know that the Q'uran is a holy book similar to the Bible and can relate some of the stories from it. Pupils consider the ritual of Muslim prayers and compare it with their own experience in school or at church. They have a growing understanding of the need for rules in social and religious life. All pupils achieve well in this age group.
133. Pupils aged 11 also attain standards that exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This also represents good improvement since the last inspection when knowledge and understanding was judged to be insufficiently developed. Continuing the theme of preparing for Easter, Year 3 pupils listen to the story of the 'Last Supper'. They consider the betrayal of Jesus and are encouraged to think about the feelings of the disciples as well as Jesus. Within the classroom pupils act out the story and the local Methodist minister helps pupils understand the ritual of Holy Communion through the practical activity. The teacher also carefully planned a dance lesson around this theme resulting in some very spiritually evocative work. As they progress through the key stage pupils give thought to the most important things in people's lives. They learn to accept that each person has personal values and ideas and why they should respect them. As they explore the religious beliefs of groups and individuals, they consider the inherent moral and social codes of different religious traditions, consider the commitment of belonging and apply their learning to their own experiences of life so far. They know that Muslims and Christians believe in one God and that Hindus have several gods but that they are all part of the one God. Pupils' achievement is also good in this age group.
134. The quality of teaching is good. It supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. The majority of teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding. They plan well and have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Pupils respond very positively and this has a good effect on their learning. In the best lessons, teachers have very good questioning skills and they very carefully prepare interesting activities supported by stimulating resources that keep pupils highly motivated, enthusiastic and willing to learn. Teachers are good at helping pupils to understand the elements of worship and they create an atmosphere of respect and reflection in religious education lessons. As a result, pupils confidently and sensitively contribute to discussions and their responses are considered and

thoughtful. There are many opportunities provided for pupils to discuss and record their ideas and opinions and this helps to develop expressive thought through speaking, listening, reading and writing. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into religious education lessons. They too achieve well and make good progress throughout the school.

135. Subject management is good. The newly appointed co-ordinator has raised the profile of religious education by effectively involving all teachers in the writing of the new scheme of work. All teachers are therefore very aware of the whole curriculum for religious education and use the scheme very well to write their own detailed planning for each year group showing the small steps in learning required for pupils to make good progress. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and teachers make good use of the information gained to inform their next planning. The daily acts of collective worship are also very well planned and have a positive impact on pupils' learning. The co-ordinator has a clear plan for action to take the subject forward. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and the weaknesses found at that time in terms of a lack of balance in activities has been successfully addressed.