

INSPECTION REPORT

Irlam Primary School

Irlam, Salford

LEA area : Salford

Unique Reference Number : 105898

Headteacher : Mrs L Davies

Reporting inspector : Mrs D Bell
16413

Dates of inspection : 4 – 8 October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706783

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery, Infant and Junior
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Lester
Date of previous inspection:	6 – 10 February 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs D Bell, Registered Inspector		Characteristics of the school Attainment and progress Quality of teaching Efficiency of the school
Mrs L Brock, Lay Inspector	Equality of opportunity	Attendance Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Mr J Heap, Team Member	English Geography Religious education	Leadership and management
Mrs M Lomas, Team Member	Areas of learning for children under five Science Art	Curriculum and assessment
Mrs H Evans, Team Member	Mathematics Design and technology Information and communication technology Special educational needs	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mr V Leary, Team Member	History Music Physical education	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

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London WC2B 6SE

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

Most pupils achieve at least satisfactory standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school.

Good and sometimes very good teaching, particularly at the end of Key Stage 1, helps pupils to achieve above average standards in this age group.

Throughout the school, teachers work hard and support each other and pupils very well.

Good behaviour and attitudes to learning are evident throughout the school.

Relationships are good and moral and social development is strong.

There is a good range of activities for pupils at lunchtimes and after school and many pupils attend these.

There are good systems in place to involve governors in checking the content of the curriculum by visiting classrooms and meeting with co-ordinators and teachers.

Where the school has weaknesses

There is an insufficient number of trained support staff in the reception and Key Stage 1 classes to give pupils the support they need at the moment at which they need it, for example, in writing and mathematics.

Long-term financial planning is unsatisfactory, there is no effective school development planning beyond the current school year, and governors do not yet use the information they gather during their visits to question the school about its standards and systems.

Other than in literacy and numeracy, subject co-ordinators do not have the opportunity to check on or support the quality of teaching.

The school has many good features and these clearly outweigh the weaknesses. However, the governors will produce an action plan to address the weaknesses and they will send it to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has satisfactorily addressed the key issues raised during the previous inspection. The quality of teaching has improved. Teachers' planning is much more detailed and it shows how teachers intend to meet the needs of pupils with different levels of attainment. Standards have been maintained in English and mathematics and have improved in science. Standards have been maintained in information technology. The accommodation has been significantly improved, the professional development of teachers is well organised. The School Development Plan is both detailed and costed. There is also a very brief outline beyond the current year but a weakness is that there is insufficient detail in this to see what priorities the school has beyond the year 2000. There are, nevertheless, a number of good strategies to do with checking the quality of educational provision at governing body, senior management, co-ordinator and class teacher levels, that enable it to demonstrate that it has sound capacity for further improvement.

Standards in subjects

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

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

The 1999 results show that the percentage of both seven and eleven-year-olds achieving at least the expected grades in the three core subjects has been maintained. Pupils currently approaching the end of Key Stage 2 are achieving the expected standards in English, mathematics and science. At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is above average in all three subjects. In information technology, attainment is in line with the national expectation. In religious education, the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus are met. In all other subjects, pupils' attainment is at least in line with what is expected for their ages. Pupils under five make satisfactory progress. In Key Stage 1, progress is good in most subjects and in Key Stage 2 it is satisfactory. Pupils do, however, make good progress in singing throughout the school.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Science		Good	Good
Information technology		Insufficient evidence	
Religious education		Good	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory

Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. It is now very good in 7% of lessons, good in 43% and satisfactory in 49%. There was only one isolated incident of unsatisfactory teaching.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good – pupils respect each other and adults and develop good attitudes to learning. The new behaviour policy and anti-bullying policy has the overwhelming support of parents.
Attendance	Satisfactory – and punctuality is good. Most absence is associated with parents taking their children on holiday in term time.
Ethos*	Satisfactory – relationships are good and pupils are keen and interested in their work. Staff are committed to raising standards.
Leadership and management	Satisfactory. The headteacher provides a clear educational direction and governors have good systems for monitoring the content of the curriculum. However, the school lacks sufficiently detailed long-term planning both in terms of the School Development Plan and financial planning. Governors are also somewhat uncertain about their role in holding the school to account for its decisions and standards.
Curriculum	Satisfactory – all statutory requirements are met. Planning is sound. However, many schemes of work are new this school year and have therefore not been in place long enough to assess fully their effectiveness. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and are beginning to be used appropriately when planning further work and setting targets for improvement.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Moral and social development is good. Spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Although there has been some improvement since the previous inspection, the school has not thought through how spiritual and cultural aspects in particular, can be addressed in all areas of the curriculum.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory. There is an adequate number of teaching staff, but an inadequate number of trained support staff for the reception and Key Stage 1 classes. Resources are satisfactory. The accommodation has been improved considerably since the previous inspection.
Value for money	The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

- Parents are happy with the standard of teaching and with the attainment and progress of their children.
- The school promotes good attitudes to learning and children show respect for themselves and for each other.
- Class teachers are approachable and are caring, warm and helpful towards both parents and pupils.
- There is a good induction programme for children entering the nursery.

What some parents are not happy about

- Parents feel that higher attaining pupils are being
- Most parents feel that the school could have a better
- Parents feel they are not well enough informed about
- They feel their suggestions and complaints are not
- They feel they are not encouraged to be a part of the other school events.
- Identification of bullying is poor and rewards for them.
- The school destroys pupils' work at the end of the

· 100 questionnaires were returned - one third of those sent out. Of these, one quarter contained the negative views listed above. These negative views were confirmed by a majority of the 24 parents who attended the parents' meeting. In addition, several parents asked to speak to inspectors during the inspection week, and many more discussed various aspects of the school with inspectors as they brought their children to school or collected them at the end of the school day. Inspectors thoroughly investigated both positive and negative views and their findings are as follows:

- I. Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. They also agree that there is some under-achievement for some higher attaining pupils in, for example, mathematics, physical education, history and in the nursery and reception classes. However, the provision for these pupils has improved since the previous inspection.
- II. A range of the information sent to parents was examined in the school and found to be adequate. Parents were also recently fully consulted on the behaviour and anti-bullying policies and the vast majority have responded positively to the suggested home/school agreement.
- III. Pupils assured inspectors that there was very little bullying in the school, including name-calling, and that when there is a problem, they are confident that the relevant staff will deal with it well.
- IV. Curricular information is brief. There has been an example of good practice in two year groups, where additional information regarding what is to be taught was sent to parents at the beginning of the term. The school assured inspectors that this good practice is to be taken up throughout the school to provide parents with fuller information on a half-termly basis.
- V. Inspectors are assured that the school gives parents' suggestions and complaints full consideration before any final decisions are made. No parents approached the school in this way during the inspection. Inspectors did find, however, that the school does not readily communicate to parents, the reasons for its decisions and this has led to some misunderstandings in the past.
- VI. The reasons for not encouraging parents to attend in-school events other than whole school productions are to do with a lack of suitable space. The school is now considering different ways of overcoming this problem.
- VII. The many pupils spoken to were very proud of the certificates and awards they receive for good work and consistently good effort.
- VIII. The school is reviewing its practice of destroying pupils' books. As a start, some work was photocopied for a parent who requested it at the end of the last school year.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to raise standards further, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. Find ways of improving the level of support available in the reception and Key Stage 1 classes so that opportunities are not missed to extend pupils' learning and address their weaknesses in, for example, writing and mathematics.
(Paragraphs: 9, 31, 40, 91, 92, 97, 98, 114)

2. Make better use of the wide range of information already gathered from the monitoring undertaken by governors and senior staff in order to improve further school development and financial planning. In order to achieve this:
 - . involve staff and governors more effectively in agreeing the strengths and weaknesses in the school and use these to determine, in greater detail, the school's priorities over the next two to three years;
 - . use the three-year budget projections already received from the Local Education Authority to outline the finance to be attached to each priority;
 - . extend the role of the curriculum co-ordinators, senior managers and governors to include checking on whether the money spent in each area is effective in raising standards.
 - . include opportunities for co-ordinators to check on the quality of teaching in the subjects for which they are responsible.(Paragraphs: 36, 69, 70, 71, 84, 85, 125, 135, 149, 155, 173, 177)

In addition to the above key issues, the following more minor weaknesses should also be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- . more challenging work for higher attainers, especially in mathematics (*paras: 13, 21, 31, 36, 115*)
- . improved information for parents (*paras: 58, 59, 60*);
- . consistency in marking (*paras: 36, 39*);

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Irlam County Primary School is a large infant and junior school with a nursery, situated in the town of Irlam in Salford, Greater Manchester. The inspection took place only one month into the new school year. The school was coming to grips with many new initiatives such as the National Numeracy Strategy, new schemes of work for most subjects and a new non-class based role for the deputy headteacher as special educational needs co-ordinator and support teacher.
2. The school caters for pupils aged 3 to 11, admitting children to the nursery in the year in which they are four and to the main school in the year in which they are five. Most of the 48 children (26 boys and 22 girls) who come to the nursery attend part time. Most pupils come from owner-occupied houses in the area and from families where parents are anxious for them to do well, value education highly and want to be involved in their children's learning. The attainment of the majority of children on entry to the nursery, and of most five-year-olds at the end of their reception year is in line with what is expected for their ages. No children in the nursery or reception classes had reached statutory school age at the time of the inspection.
3. Twenty pupils (5 per cent) are on the register for special educational needs and no pupil has a statement of need. Only 10 per cent of pupils are known to qualify for free school meals. In addition, there are only 2 pupils whose first language is not English. All of these figures are lower than both the local and national averages. There has been a considerable change in staffing since the previous inspection and the number of pupils on roll has increased slightly. Currently there are 385 pupils (216 boys and 185 girls) in the main school.
4. The school has set targets for English and mathematics for the next three years, taking account of its knowledge of the pupils currently coming through the school. It has a number of appropriate social and academic aims related to developing good attitudes to learning, good behaviour, respect for others and to achieving high standards. Its current priorities, set out in the School Development Plan include:
 - continuing the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy
 - implementing the National Numeracy Strategy
 - improving information and communication technology
 - preparing for the implementation of the revised National Curriculum.

Key Indicators (figures in parenthesis refer to 1997)

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1998	31	26	57
- National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics	
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	29	28	28	
	Girls	25	26	26	
	Total	54	54	54	
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	95 (94)	95 (96)	95 (98)	
	National	80(80)	81(80)	84(84)	
- Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	30	31	29	
	Girls	25	26	25	
	Total	55	57	54	
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	96(94)	100 (96)	95(94)	
	National	81(80)	85(84)	86(85)	

Attainment at Key Stage 2¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1998	27	28	55
- National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science	
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	18	21	25	
	Girls	21	22	25	
	Total	39	43	50	
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	71 (81)	78 (81)	91 (88)	
	National	65(63)	59(62)	69(69)	
- Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	23	22	25	
	Girls	23	24	25	
	Total	46	46	50	
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	84 (81)	84 (83)	91 (83)	
	National	65 (63)	65 (64)	72 (69)	

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	5
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	7
Satisfactory or better	99
Less than satisfactory	1

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

1. The results of the 1998 national tests for eleven-year-olds in English were in line with both the national average and the average for similar schools. In mathematics, the results were above the national average and well above the average for similar schools. In science, pupils' performance in the tests was well above both the national average and the average for similar schools. Taken across all three subjects, attainment in 1998 was above both the national average and the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Since the previous inspection, attainment across all three subjects has varied from year to year but has remained well above the national average. Early indications from the 1999 tests are that these good standards have been maintained.
2. The majority of pupils currently in their last year in the school are achieving average standards in English, mathematics and science. This differs from the test results quoted for mathematics and science for three clear reasons. First, new schemes of work are in place for these subjects. In mathematics, the National Numeracy Strategy is in the process of being implemented and a new commercial scheme has been purchased to help cover this. The National Numeracy Strategy is already having a very positive impact on pupils' mental mathematics skills. In science, the school has begun using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work in conjunction with its previous commercial scheme for this subject. Teachers are still learning to work with the new schemes and adapt them to ensure they meet the needs of the pupils. Secondly, at this early stage in the year the school has not yet set in motion its strategies to help average and higher attaining pupils in Year 6 to make better progress so that they can achieve the higher levels in the English and mathematics tests. A third reason is that there is sometimes insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils earlier in this key stage. All pupils do, however, make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2 in all three core subjects.
3. At the end of Key Stage 1, the 1998 National Curriculum test results were well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with the results achieved by pupils in similar schools, attainment in reading was very high and it was well above average in writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments in speaking and listening indicate that attainment was in line with the national average. In English overall, attainment was above the average for similar schools. In science, teacher assessments indicate that the attainment of seven-year-olds was in line with the national average. Between 1996 and 1998, pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science improved while nationally it remained steady. Early indications from the 1999 tests and assessments are that these good standards have been maintained. The majority of pupils currently in Year 2 achieve standards that are above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils make good progress in all three subjects in this key stage, and particularly in Year 2.
4. Children enter the nursery showing the levels of attainment expected of four-year-olds nationally. Baseline assessments carried out at this time indicate that their attainment is above the average found locally. Children make sound progress in the nursery and reception classes. By the age of five, most meet the nationally agreed 'Desirable Learning Outcomes' in all six areas of learning, namely, language and literacy, mathematics, personal and social development, knowledge and understanding, creative development and physical development.

5. Progress in the reception classes is sometimes hindered by an inadequate number of support staff to help keep these young children's minds focused more securely on their work, especially when they are working away from the direct supervision of the teacher. For example, in mathematics, higher attaining children working with a commercial workbook required adult support and practical equipment to deepen their thinking and extend their understanding of the concept of coils and springs, but this was unavailable as the teacher worked with her focus group. Similarly in a writing activity, children spent an unnecessary amount of time writing over or under what the teacher was writing. In the case of higher attainers who could already form letters correctly, this was a waste of time. In the case of lower attainers, letters were not formed correctly, there was no one immediately available to show the children how to do so and bad habits were beginning to form. The result of this is evident in the older age groups, where handwriting and presentation are the weaker areas in the English curriculum. These aspects of English are lowering standards, and have been identified as doing so by the headteacher in her analysis of the test results.
6. In English, progress in speaking and listening is good in both key stages. Pupils learn to listen more carefully and more attentively to each other and to their teacher. They confidently ask and answer questions and demonstrate a good range of vocabulary as they contribute to class discussions, particularly in whole class sessions. They learn to understand what is dialect and what is Standard English and to vary the way they speak depending upon audience and purpose. This was particularly well demonstrated in a Year 5 class as they examined the text of "The Sheep Pig".
7. Progress in reading is good. From an early age, pupils read accurately from a range of suitable texts. They learn to discuss what they have read and to predict what will happen next. They become more skilled at using books to find information and demonstrate an appropriate range of strategies to decode unfamiliar words, for example by sounding them out and by relating them to the text. Most pupils enjoy reading. They learn to re-tell the stories and to express preferences for particular authors and texts, becoming quite articulate about this by Year 6.
8. Progress in writing is satisfactory. Most pupils learn to spell accurately and to use appropriate grammar and punctuation. In Key Stage 1, they learn to write in a sequence of sentences and in Key Stage 2, they extend these into longer narratives with increasingly complex sentence structures. However, particularly in Key Stage 1, pupils do not use as wide a range of vocabulary in their writing as they do when speaking. In Key Stage 2, they learn to draft and correct their work. However, too often, spelling is satisfactory but too many pupils lack adequate knowledge of the rules. Handwriting is variable and pupils do not easily use a joined style of writing. These factors detract from the presentation of their work and hinder their progress and attainment.
9. In mathematics, pupils in Key Stage 1 learn to count on and back from given numbers. Most recognise and can describe both simple shapes such as rectangle and triangle, and complex shapes such as cylinder and cuboid. They use a good range of mathematical language for addition and subtraction, talking confidently about, for example, the difference between two numbers. In Key Stage 1, while progress is satisfactory overall, it is good in the mental mathematics sessions and for the group receiving skilled support when working with the teacher or the member of support staff. The limited nature of extra support prevents more rapid progress for some pupils in most lessons. By the end of the key stage, pupils can count in 2s, most know the 2 times table and can add and subtract with money. They build on this work in Key Stage 2 as they learn to tell the time, to sort shapes using a Venn diagram and to identify them from descriptions only. Pupils' mental skills are improving. They know, for example, how to double and halve numbers accurately and to formulate 'rules' for mental calculation. They can add and subtract mentally using money and most are able to explain how they arrive at their answers. By the end of the key stage, pupils measure accurately, identify angles and can use set squares appropriately to check their work. Almost all pupils have instant recall of number bonds and multiplication facts. They can calculate using fractions and decimals and work easily with negative numbers. Progress in mathematics is satisfactory throughout the school.

10. In science, pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn to distinguish the characteristics of different animals. They gain good inquiry and prediction skills as they investigate, for example, the effect of heat on their cake mixes and describe the differences they observe before and after heating. In Key Stage 2, they learn about the human skeleton, its make-up and purpose. By investigating how their own joints work, they can confidently say where they should put bones and joints in a model for stability and movement. In the later years of the key stage, pupils learn to distinguish between solids, liquids, and gases. Prediction, observation and scientific recording skills are further enhanced as they record their work and discuss what they have found when they add bicarbonate of soda to liquids, for example. At the end of this key stage, pupils consolidate previous learning about the environment necessary for plants to be able to grow. They explore further the purpose of the root system and the various uses plants make of carbon dioxide, learning not only what is meant by 'photosynthesis' and 'chlorophyll' but also their function in the food-making process.
11. At the end of both key stages, attainment is in line with the national expectation for information technology. Pupils make satisfactory progress in this subject. A combination of their work in school and the access they have to computers at home enables them to cover all areas of the subject and to experiment for themselves. However, progress in modelling and control is considerably weaker than in other aspects because the school does not yet have a sufficient range of software to enable pupils to pursue these in enough depth.
12. In religious education, pupils make satisfactory progress and attain the standards expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages. As they move through the school, they learn about the major world faiths and the effects these have on the lives of the people who follow them. Through this greater understanding, they learn to respect the values and beliefs of others, even when they differ from their own.
13. In all age groups, pupils make good progress in art and achieve standards that are higher than those expected for their ages. This is achieved by their becoming increasingly skilled in different techniques, and having access to a wide range of artistic materials and media. They also acquire good knowledge and understanding of the work of other artists across time and place.
14. Progress is good in design technology and geography in Key Stage 1. Pupils in this age group achieve standards above those expected for their age as they become familiar with drawing and understanding plans and maps, learn about the weather and recognise how different localities have similar and different characteristics. In all other subjects, namely design and technology and geography in Key Stage 2, and history, physical education and music in both key stages, progress is satisfactory and the standards achieved are commensurate with those expected for pupils of their age. Pupils make good progress in singing throughout the school.
15. Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills satisfactorily in other subjects. They undertake different styles of writing in history and science, for example, use information books well and contribute confidently to class discussions in many subjects. They use their numeracy skills appropriately in subjects such as geography, science and design and technology.
16. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is in line with that of other pupils in all subjects. Where appropriate, individual education plans are in place. Pupils are well supported through the 'Additional Literacy Support' scheme in class and, for some Year 5 and 6 pupils, through input from the special educational needs co-ordinator in withdrawal sessions. This support enables their attainment to match that of other pupils in the class, especially in English and mathematics. The careful teaching of skills and techniques in art and in design and technology enables these pupils to make good progress in these two subjects also.
17. Since the previous inspection, the school has worked hard on planning to improve the progress of higher attaining pupils and this is reflected in the increased percentage achieving the higher levels in the National Curriculum tests. However, there is still some way to go to ensure that these pupils make the progress of which they are capable in all subjects and age groups including, for example, in physical education and in the reception classes. Where work is well matched to their prior levels of attainment, and there is appropriate adult input, their progress is good. Occasionally, however, suitable extension work is still lacking and pupils sometimes end up marking time by, for example, colouring in while waiting for others to catch up.

18. The school has recently revised the targets it set with the Local Education Authority for English and mathematics in order to aim for higher attainment in the next two years. It has begun to analyse more systematically pupils' attainment and progress, using their end of Key Stage 1 tests and assessments as a starting point. Following the introduction of 'booster' classes in the last school year, it was able to help a significant minority of pupils make better progress and achieve higher standards than expected. The Qualification and Curriculum Authority's voluntary tests are also being used in Years 3, 4 and 5 as markers to chart pupils' progress. The weakness here is that some teachers in these years are not yet secure in assessing the level at which pupils are working and there is little in the way of in-house exemplar material to help them. Nevertheless, these factors represent a positive move forward in the commitment to higher achievement.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

19. Children under five settle quickly into the well-established routines of the nursery and reception classes. They are keen to learn, enthusiastic and display positive attitudes to learning. They behave well and most are able to work both independently and in groups. For example, in the nursery during their outdoor play, children show initiative and learn to give and take in their own 'follow my leader' game when riding bikes. Children form good relationships with each other and with familiar adults. They learn to take turns, to listen carefully and to have respect for what others say.
20. Throughout the rest of the school, pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils are friendly, polite and welcoming. Most are well motivated. They settle to work immediately after registration and demonstrate an eagerness to learn. In the most effective lessons, when their intellectual curiosity is aroused, their response to learning is good and they ask thoughtful questions. This happens in some history lessons in Key Stage 2, where pupils are asked to decide on whether the evidence provided was based on fact or opinion; and in Year 5 games lessons where pupils show courage as they participate in rugby tackles. Pupils enthusiastically support a wide range of extra-curricular activities such as outdoor sports, choir, instrumental groups and school concerts. Pupils also develop sound capacity for personal study as they learn to use the library for research and work on their own, often for considerable periods of time in class. These good attitudes to learning have a positive effect on their attainment and progress, enabling them to concentrate on their work for considerable periods of time.
21. Behaviour is good both inside and outside school. The good standard of behaviour has been maintained since the last inspection. No pupils have been excluded in recent years. Pupils respond well to the system of rewards and sanctions provided in the school. A small percentage of pupils display inappropriate behaviour in lessons. These lapses are often due to shortcomings in the planning or teaching of the lesson. Pupils respond positively to instructions from staff and, even when not directly supervised, they observe school rules such as walking on the left in corridors. Incidences of bullying or inconsiderate behaviour are few and whilst play at breaks and lunch times is lively, there is no evidence of aggression. The great majority of pupils display pride in their appearance and in their work and they treat both school and personal property with respect. The school grounds are virtually litter free. Pupils' good behaviour supports their attainment and progress.
22. Relationships are good at all levels. Pupils work harmoniously to complete joint tasks. There are many examples of this in the shared sequencing of activities in gymnastics lessons. Pupils are on relaxed and friendly terms with teachers, with whom they work collaboratively by, for example, offering help or volunteering suggestions where appropriate. They are generally respectful of the views, values and beliefs of others. These relationships assist both teaching and learning and are beneficial to the pupils' attainment and progress.

23. The personal development of pupils is good. From an early age, most pupils select appropriate resources for themselves and tidy up well when they finish an activity. As they move up the school, they happily and readily accept more responsibilities. Year 6 pupils act as librarians organising the returning of books. They monitor behaviour at playtimes and lunch times in a mature and sensible manner. On wet days, they share indoor playtimes with the infants, helping them with their reading. They collect registers and organise the halls for assemblies. Other initiatives from pupils lead to whole school sponsorship, such as the collecting of tokens to acquire more computers. They respond positively to opportunities to provide aid for people in distress or need, supporting for example, a shoe box appeal for the Kosovo refugees. They develop appropriate links with the local community by, for example, taking part in a tree planting initiative in a local park.
24. Pupils identified as having special educational needs also display good attitudes to their work. They work alongside other pupils and are well integrated in every class. They work hard, concentrate well and are willing to offer ideas and suggestions in mental mathematics and general discussion sessions.

Attendance

25. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory and in line with the national average. There is only a very low amount of unauthorised absence in this school year and there was none in the previous year. A scrutiny of registers for the current term revealed that a large proportion of the authorised absence is due to parents taking pupils on holiday in term time. Pupils enjoy school. They attend willingly and the great majority arrive at school punctually.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

26. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection when one third of teaching was found to be unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. Teaching is now very good in 7 per cent of lessons, good in 43 per cent and satisfactory in 49 per cent. There was an isolated example of unsatisfactory teaching.
27. The teaching of children under five is satisfactory and in 40 per cent of lessons, good. Teachers have a secure understanding of this age group and of how children learn and quickly form very good relationships with them. Clear and effective long and medium term planning takes account of all six areas of learning but is also flexible enough to enable the National Curriculum programmes of study to be introduced as and when relevant. Ongoing assessment of children's work is appropriately recorded and used to plan what they will do next in the short term. Occasionally, however, non-adult directed activities are not sufficiently focused to enable pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. For example in a mathematics session with reception children, although the teacher used her time appropriately to move between groups, some of the activities children were expected to do were not sufficiently challenging without adult questioning and input.
28. Teaching is good in Key Stage 1. In 12 per cent of lessons it is very good; in 52 per cent it is good and in the remaining 35 per cent, it is satisfactory. In this key stage, teaching is good in English, mathematics, science, religious education, art, design and technology and geography. It is satisfactory in information technology, history, music and physical education. Good teaching is evenly spread throughout this key stage but the very good teaching occurs in Year 2. Here, teachers are particularly skilled at posing challenging questions that require pupils to think hard. They then build effectively on the pupils' responses to help them make good progress, for example, in physical education and design and technology. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, for example, superb relationships and very secure knowledge of the subject enable the teacher to check and evaluate pupils' learning throughout the lesson. A range of effective teaching strategies helps them to count on in twos accurately, consolidate their work on the 2 times table and add and subtract with money using 'coin ladders' to help them. Throughout the key stage, teachers' calm and purposeful management of pupils and of their learning contributes substantially to their progress in all subjects. Planning is mostly good. It takes account of prior learning and demonstrates that teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do related to their prior attainment.

29. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is very good in 7 per cent of lessons, good in 39 per cent and satisfactory in 53 per cent. One lesson was judged unsatisfactory in this key stage. This was the result of badly produced resources and a lack of clarity of explanation in one literacy session that led to pupils making unsatisfactory progress. In this key stage, teaching is good in mathematics, science, art, design and technology and geography lessons. In all other subjects, including English, teaching is satisfactory with the exception of information technology, where there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement.
30. Where teaching is good, teachers show secure knowledge and understanding as they re-cap on previous work, for example in Year 4 science. Here, the teacher encourages pupils to use their own jaws, necks and shoulders to explore how joints work and to discuss where best to put joints in a model to ensure both stability and movement. Expectations are appropriately high in this project and higher attaining pupils receive suitable extension work related to the need for good nutrition to maintain bone structure and effective working of joints. Teachers' day-to-day planning is much more detailed than at the previous inspection. In most subjects, they effectively translate the long and medium term plans for the subjects into weekly forecasts. A strength in this is that they evaluate what they actually cover in a lesson and alter subsequent planning to ensure concepts are covered adequately. They are currently implementing new schemes of work for all subjects except English, art, music and physical education and are working hard to provide continuity for the pupils as they move from the old schemes.
31. Elements of the National Literacy Strategy are having a positive effect on teaching not only in English but also in other subjects. All teachers use whole class teaching and group work appropriately, matching the classroom organisation to what they require pupils to do. In most classes, final whole class (plenary) sessions also help to consolidate work done during lessons and on the whole, both time and resources are used appropriately. Classroom management is good throughout the school. Most teachers motivate pupils well and engender a love of learning. Their expectations of pupils' behaviour are both high and well met.
32. Although the teaching of English is mostly good in lessons observed, the scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that in English, for example, there are significant inconsistencies in marking and presentation, relating to both spelling and handwriting, that have hindered progress over time. In mathematics there are some significant weaknesses in planning that are affecting the progress pupils make at the present time. The National Numeracy Strategy (NNS) and the new commercial scheme of work have only been in place for one month. Some teachers' knowledge and understanding of how best to adapt these to meet the needs of the pupils is insecure and they do not yet use either the NNS or the scheme effectively to support their planning in this subject. They have rightly identified significant gaps in pupils' learning. The strategies put in place to address weaknesses in mental mathematics are bringing about good progress in this aspect. However, teachers are as yet insecure as to how they might adapt the NNS to ensure that gaps in pupils' knowledge are filled. This results in under-achievement in some classes particularly for higher attaining pupils, who make hardly any mistakes and over-expectation in others, for example, as Year 4 pupils are taught about parallels. The co-ordinator for mathematics has not yet had the opportunity to observe or support her colleagues in the classroom to try to help her colleagues to address these weaknesses.
33. The school has made satisfactory progress in providing more challenging work for its higher attaining pupils in most subjects. Most planning now shows clearly how this will be achieved and most teachers have appropriate expectations of what different groups of pupils should be able to do. The scrutiny of pupils' work and the observation of support staff both indicate that good support is given to lower attaining pupils and to those who are identified as having special educational needs. Teachers make careful provision for pupils with special educational needs in all class lessons. There is a small amount of additional support in class at Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4. Continuing a previously set up system, some pupils in Years 5 and 6 are still being helped in withdrawal groups specifically designed to increase their expertise and understanding in work in phonics. The special educational needs co-ordinator monitors this work rigorously and good records are maintained of all pupils' progress. Work in all classes is matched to pupils' needs and prior attainment and there is a good range of resources available to teachers and pupils. Individual education plans (IEP's) for those pupils at or beyond Stage 2 on the special educational needs register, are well written and contain clear objectives and realistic targets. Teachers across the school use the IEP's well when planning work relating to pupils with specified difficulties.

34. In general, teachers plan well for the use of support staff. But occasionally, however, support staff are not gainfully employed during whole class sessions and their good support is evident only during group work.
35. Most teachers manage to keep a check on the progress pupils make during lessons. They circulate effectively and move pupils' learning on appropriately. They mark pupils' work regularly but the extent to which this marking is helpful in leading pupils to understand their strengths and weaknesses varies from class to class. At its best, marking includes supportive comments and points out how pupils can improve their work. At its worst, comments are short and sometimes sharp or marking consists only of ticks with no indication of their purpose and no comments to aid progress by showing pupils how to improve their work. Homework is regular and appropriate and helps pupils both to consolidate work done in class and at times to prepare for work that is about to begin.

The curriculum and assessment

36. Curricular provision is satisfactory for children under five. The curriculum is firmly based on the six areas of learning and is appropriately planned to meet the nationally agreed 'Desirable Learning Outcomes' and also to take account of the National Curriculum programmes of study as appropriate. Appropriate assessment procedures are in place for children under five. Children are assessed on entry to the nursery and again at the beginning of their reception year and appropriate records of progress are kept. Further assessment at the end of the reception year is used appropriately to plan for grouping by prior attainment in Key Stage 1. Policy documents and schemes of work for children under five are detailed and include long, medium and short term plans. In the nursery, the plans also include appropriate opportunities for less structured activities such as 'playing' with construction toys or engaging in role play in the home corner. The areas and the equipment needed are well prepared and set out in the classroom so that children can move to them after they have completed their main activities. Appropriate adult input enables them to make progress in several areas of learning, for example, language and literacy, mathematics and social development. Such activities are also planned in the reception classes. However, the areas and equipment are not as well prepared or set out and there is a lack of adult input to move children's learning on.
37. The curriculum is broad and balanced in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. All statutory requirements are met. Policies are in place for all subjects and for health education, which includes the dangers associated with drugs, and sex education. In addition, there is an appropriate personal and social education policy. Long, medium and short term planning systems are in place for all subjects. For most, these are based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) schemes of work, which have just been put in place in this school year and are not yet fully incorporated into the school's work. The exceptions are music, art and physical education. The school has also recently purchased a new commercial scheme for mathematics. The two teachers in each year group plan together to ensure equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils. Satisfactory improvement has taken place in these areas since the previous inspection. Most planning shows clearly what teachers expect pupils of differing levels of attainment to do. However, in the reception classes and in history and physical education, not enough thought has been given to this. Both subject co-ordinators and the senior management team regularly receive teachers' planning. They check on the effective coverage of the curriculum and that teachers are following the agreed programmes of work in each year.
38. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The register of special educational needs is well maintained and it is reviewed regularly. The identification of pupils is clear throughout the school, as is the process for gathering evidence and working with parents. All teachers understand the requirements for regular assessment. The number of identified pupils is small and individual records offer a clear overview of the work undertaken. Pupils move off the register when appropriate following consultation with parents, teachers, outside agencies and in some cases the pupils themselves. At present there are no pupils in the school who have statements although one child is at Stage 4, has a 'note in lieu' and is given specialist classroom support.

39. The school provides a good range of activities in which pupils participate both at lunchtime and after school. These include musical activities such as the choir, several recorder groups, a clarinet and a string group. There are many sporting activities also, including competitive sport and cross country running. Parents and external helpers assist the school with these and enrich the curriculum for the many pupils who take part. In addition, Year 5 pupils undertake an outdoor pursuits residential weekend and the curriculum is further enhanced by a range of visitors to the school and visits out of school related to the curricular topics being studied.
40. In both key stages, detailed and appropriate assessment procedures are in place for English, mathematics and science and are being used effectively to support further planning. They include using what is found from national tests and assessments to set targets for further improvement. In other subjects, annual assessments of pupils' work inform the reports to parents. Although this meets statutory requirements, it is not always used as consistently to inform teachers' planning and few ongoing records of progress are kept. The school has produced for this school year, effective record sheets based on the outcomes listed in the QCA schemes of work, which assist them both in planning and recording work for pupils of differing levels of attainment. There are no portfolios of moderated work to assist teachers in awarding levels to pupils' work or to help new teachers understand what work at each level looks like.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

41. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
42. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. There is now a more structured approach to the planning of assemblies and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Assemblies do not always contain a spiritual element but they are strong on moral and social development. Spirituality is enhanced in the beauty and poignancy of younger pupils singing about the power of God's love and in the junior hymn practice when pupils sing hymns based on, for example, the Creation. Stories used in collective worship enable pupils to learn to show respect for the beliefs and values of others. In some religious education lessons, pupils are provided with opportunities to explore sensitive issues that they have to deal with in their lives. Spirituality of a non-religious dimension is not specifically planned for or identified within subjects. However, pupils are provided with opportunities to reflect on the mood and atmosphere created by artists and composers. A good example of this occurs in Year 6 as pupils listen intently to Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue", and in Year 1 as they listen to Delius' "First Cuckoo in Spring" and count the number of times the cuckoo sings.
43. Provision for moral development is good. Pupils are helped to develop a sense of right and wrong by, for example, sharing ideas about the setting of class rules. Teachers successfully influence pupils to have a strong sense of respect for each other and every opportunity is taken to praise them when they show care and concern for others. Celebrations of kindness and thoughtfulness are a regular feature of assemblies. The staff are good role models for pupils. They expect and trust pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to have high levels of self-discipline. Pupils respond well to this
44. Provision for social development is good and strong emphasis is placed on developing their social skills. They are encouraged to listen to and help each other. Valuable opportunities are provided for older pupils to assume responsibility by helping with younger children at break and lunch times. Frequent opportunities are provided for pupils to work co-operatively together in lessons, for example, when reception children share ideas about buildings they have seen following a visit into the local community. Sports and competitive matches are planned in order to develop a healthy attitude to both winning and losing. Activities such as fund raising for charities like 'Children in Need' and the 'Kosovo Shoe Box Appeal' successfully promote the meaning of citizenship and help pupils to develop an understanding of life beyond school. The residential outdoor pursuits visit provides further opportunity for social development away from the day-to-day school environment.

45. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Opportunities are planned for pupils to enrich their knowledge of their own cultural heritage. There are regular visits to museums, for example, nursery children visited Manchester Science Museum and Year 4 visited Liverpool Museum for work on the Greeks. Year 4 pupils visit Beasley Green to help with their work on rivers and there is a residential experience for older pupils. An understanding of other cultures and religions is achieved through a study of religions other than Christianity, for example, Judaism and Hinduism. The geography curriculum effectively links with pupils' own background and compares it with other cultures. For example, younger pupils have made a link with the Orkney Islands and have compared the lives of pupils there with their own. These examples provide a good stimulus to learning in this area but there are still insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to learn about the different traditions and rich cultural diversity represented in the society in which they live.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

46. Good provision is made for pupils' support, guidance and personal well being. Good pastoral care is a strength of the school's provision. Parents report that they are happy with the levels of support that their children receive. Inspection findings endorse this view.
47. The monitoring of pupils' progress and academic development is satisfactory, although annual reports to parents are not consistent in the detail they provide about how pupils can improve in the future. Teachers and support staff demonstrate a good understanding of each pupil's strengths and weaknesses and carefully monitor their academic progress as they move from one key stage to the next. Teachers have a good knowledge of their pupils' personal and social development and are well aware of their achievements. There is a whole school, documented programme of activities to support this aspect of the school's provision but the school does not yet monitor its delivery.
48. Children under the age of five are well supported by the school. Pre-school links and effective links with the nursery enable the new intake to settle quickly into school with the minimum of anxiety. Pupils with special educational needs are also supported well through the effective use of specialist support both in classrooms and in preparing and maintaining the required documentation. The support provided enables identified pupils to make progress equal to that of their classmates in almost all cases.
49. The school successfully encourages and promotes consistent and punctual attendance. The school prospectus includes a strong statement informing parents of their responsibilities for good attendance and punctuality. Registration periods are efficient and provide an orderly start to the day. Most pupils are punctual to school allowing a prompt start to lessons.
50. Staff manage and promote good behaviour well. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and set high standards for them. They are consistent in their use of praise and encouragement for work well done and weekly awards are given for outstanding effort and attainment. School and class rules are well known to all pupils. Staff adopt an effective approach to discipline in which self discipline and responsibility are paramount. Parental involvement is sought at an early stage when any problems arise. Pupils of all ages have responsibilities in the school and this enhances their personal development.
51. Suitable arrangements are made to ensure that all members of staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities with regard to child protection and procedures are sound. The deputy head teacher is the designated teacher and she shares her expertise with all members of staff. Support from outside agencies is requested and used appropriately when required.

52. There are sound procedures in place for the safety and well being of pupils. Regular fire drills are held in the school and there are two fully qualified members of staff to administer first aid. Appropriate arrangements are made for the provision, administration and recording of any first aid treatment and children's medical problems are treated sensitively. There is a health and safety policy which follows Local Education Authority guidelines and there is a satisfactory procedure in place for the safety of pupils whilst on visits out of school. Lunchtime supervisors support teachers in upholding the high standards of behaviour expected by the school. Lunch times are pleasant, social occasions conducted in a calm, orderly atmosphere. The caretaker is conscientious in his duties and responds quickly to any hazards. A risk assessment was conducted recently by an external agency. A safety hazard identified during the inspection was trailing wires from computers when used in a hall that does not contain electrical sockets. The school is aware of this and arrangements are in hand to resolve the problem in the very near future as the new information and communication technology suite is built.
53. Arrangements for the induction of new pupils are good and there is good liaison with the main receiving high school to which most pupils transfer. A good induction programme ensures that their transfer is as smooth as it can be. Additional liaison work is undertaken for those pupils who have a special educational need to retain specialist help after transfer. Liaison with other agencies concerned with pupils' health, welfare and safety are good.

Partnership with parents and the community

54. Discussions were held with many parents during the inspection, both as part of the normal routine of inspection, and at the request of particular parents who asked for the opportunity to speak to inspectors.
55. The information sent to parents is satisfactory. Some parents feel that this could be improved with more information about the curriculum so that they can offer maximum support to their children and inspectors agree with this view. Examples of good practice have occurred in two classes, where the class teachers have given parents this information. The school assures inspectors that this is to be extended to all classes and parents will receive half-termly information about the topics being studied.
56. Parents feel that the united front presented by the chair of governors and the headteacher prevents their having a meaningful dialogue with senior management or the chair of governors when they have concerns. Inspectors found that the school does give due consideration to parents' suggestions and complaints. However, it does not always communicate clearly to parents the reasons for the decisions it subsequently makes. This lack of communication has led to some misunderstanding in the past. The school assures inspectors that it is taking steps to try and avoid any recurrence of this in the future.
57. Although the school brochure contains information about the school's policy and procedures relating to pupils with special educational needs some parents are still unsure about the exact nature of identification and support. For example, one parent approached inspectors about this, thinking her child was on the special educational needs (SEN) register and that she had not been informed. When inspectors investigated, it became evident that the pupil was in the 'Additional Literacy Support' group and not on the SEN register. The school had not explained the difference sufficiently well to the parent involved.
58. The parents of pupils who are on the register of special educational needs are all informed at an early stage and are then kept aware of the work undertaken and of pupils' progress. Parents are involved in the preparation of individual education plans for those pupils who need additional support beyond slight modification of day-to-day work in lessons. Where pupils need additional support to be provided by the Local Education Authority in respect of pupils at or beyond stage 3 of the Code of Practice, parents are made aware of who the support staff are. Parents are fully involved should it become necessary for formal assessment procedures to be undertaken with a view to preparing a statement of special educational needs.

59. Induction information and details of school routines are communicated effectively through the nursery pamphlet and the school prospectus. Appropriate letters are sent home to inform parents about events in the school and about new initiatives. Annual reports to parents on the progress their children make mainly summarise what a pupil can do in terms of subjects and are positive in tone. There are parents' evenings in the autumn and summer terms. Parents feel that the gap between these means they are not informed soon enough if their children have any difficulties and that they often only hear about this at the end of a school year. While parents value the parents' evening, they feel that the period of time allocated to them by teachers is insufficient to discuss the progress of their children. Inspectors found that they can and do approach the class teachers at other times for further discussion if they feel this is necessary.
60. Parents have been fully involved in their children's learning through meetings held to discuss the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the development of the behaviour and anti-bullying policies. The majority responded positively to a questionnaire on the home/school agreement. They have recently received copies of policies regarding behaviour, bullying and homework and the vast majority have returned their signed copies of the home/school agreement that resulted from these. Fifteen parents and grandparents help in school with a variety of activities like baking and listening to children read. Parents coach the football team and support pupils when on visits out of school. The Parents' Guild provides valuable extra resources for the school, such as more books for the library. Parents at the meeting confirmed that they enjoyed and appreciated the induction evening for new parents.
61. Due to a lack of space, the school took the decision not to invite parents to class assemblies but following parents' complaints, it has agreed to look at different ways in which it might be able to do this. Parents also showed concern that the school destroys their children's work at the end of the school year and again, following their complaints, the school is re-considering this action. Some work has already been copied for a parent who requested this. The Parents' Information Library run by the nursery nurse is warmly appreciated by parents and is a good example of involving parents in their children's learning.
62. Appropriate links have been established with the local and wider community and the locality is regularly used to support the curriculum. For example, reception children were seen analysing the results of a survey of buildings conducted in the locality. Geography projects have been presented to local councillors and to parents. Pupils enjoy educational visits to a number of places of interest including a residential experience for older children. There are links with local churches for religious events such as the Harvest Festival and Education Sunday. Other visits in the locality have been to a garden centre, a supermarket and the local library. Pupils visit museums and some have had the opportunity to visit the Mayor's Parlour. The school is represented well in sporting and musical events. It has established links with a school on an island in the Orkneys and some pupils correspond with children in a school in Canada. Pupils have a good social conscience and collect for local and national charities. Visitors to school have included the fire service, police liaison officers including the Crucial Crew, a visitor to talk about Judaism, and cycling proficiency officers. The local librarian provides effective support, visiting to read stories to reception children.
63. Since the previous inspection, there has been a satisfactory improvement in the school's links with industry. Links have been established with a local sports shop who provide football strips and footballs for the school. Local businesses donate prizes when fund-raising events are being held. The school has participated in projects supported by local environmental and school meals services.
64. There are good links with the main receiving school and both Year 5 and Year 6 pupils make visits there. A smooth transition is ensured for Year 6 through a good induction programme and appropriate transfer records are passed to the high school. The local Brownies and the Parents' Guild use the school in the evenings. All these links enhance pupils' attainment and progress and raise their awareness of the importance of being a good citizen.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

65. The school is led by a conscientious and caring headteacher who provides strong leadership and a clear direction for its work in the short term. She is ably supported by a competent senior management team, which comprises a fairly new deputy headteacher and well-established leaders of the key stage departments. At present their roles are not sufficiently well defined to ensure that they are totally effective. For example, some of the support work in classrooms carried out presently by the deputy headteacher is not using her talents as a teacher to the full. However, it is giving her a helpful insight into the work in several classrooms. This team serves as a useful sounding board for the professional discussion of management and curriculum issues. The governing body is fully committed to the school and individual governors are actively developing their roles with a view to becoming more effective. For example, the Literacy Governor has been appropriately involved in monitoring classroom practice and is rightly satisfied that the National Literacy Strategy is being implemented soundly. However, the overall effectiveness of the governing body as a 'critical friend' is less successful. Governors do not hold the management sufficiently to account for the decisions made, accepting rather that the headteacher is the person who knows what is best for the school. Nor do they use the information they acquire through their well planned 'information gathering' visits to classrooms to identify strengths and weaknesses in the school and prioritise these for development over time.
66. Curriculum co-ordination is at least satisfactory, despite the fact that, due to changes in staffing, some co-ordinators have held the roles for relatively short periods of time. Some subject areas are well managed, for example English. This is because the co-ordinator has benefited from the in-service training brought about by the National Literacy Strategy. She has also had the opportunity to monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work, and to check on how the subject is being taught by observing her colleagues in the classroom. This good practice is to be extended to mathematics as the National Numeracy Strategy and the new scheme of work are implemented. The picture here is one of steady progress since the last inspection, gradually developing, updating and reviewing policy and practice to a manageable timetable. However, in other subjects, this gradual development has not taken place, and several new schemes of work have been taken on board at the same time. Although co-ordinators see teachers' planning in these subjects, they do not have the opportunity to observe the quality of teaching or to give support in the classroom and some teachers are finding difficulties marrying the old and new schemes together as they work, including in mathematics. Subjects such as music and physical education particularly suffer from the lack of 'expert' support and advice in the classroom. The result here is an imbalance in composition work in music, and a lack of suitable challenge for higher attaining pupils in physical education, both due to a lack of adequate teacher expertise.
67. The headteacher and senior managers also receive teachers' planning and the weekly review sheets that record what they have or have not covered from their planning. These are used appropriately to check curriculum coverage and to ensure that teachers use their review sheets when planning what they do next. Where the monitoring of teaching and the curriculum is appropriate, as in English, the arrangements have served to build up trust and raise expectations. Weaknesses in provision have been properly identified, for example, in English these are to do with spelling and presentation. These weaknesses are supported by inspection findings and in the national test results. There are clear links between this ongoing process and the satisfactory development planning which is taking place at the moment. The present School Development Plan, which runs out at the end of this school year, is technically sound and is a satisfactory improvement on the one criticised in the last inspection report. The school has a sound overview of targets beyond this school year but this is not recorded in sufficient detail, nor is it costed. There is a very sketchy outline of a three-year plan beyond this year but it does not project sufficiently well into the future to provide a stable and helpful strategic view of the school's work.
68. The appropriate set of broad school aims, values and policies are generally well reflected in the life and work of the school. The vast majority of parents who returned questionnaires agree that the school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children. However, they lack some of the sharpness and academic rigour that help provide a clearer focus for a fully effective learning environment. The quality of teaching, good relationships and the clear expectations of good pupil behaviour all make a notable contribution to the positive ethos within the school.

69. The school has a detailed policy and well established procedures for the identification and support of all pupils with special educational needs (SEN). These procedures fully meet the requirements of the statutory 'Code of Practice' and all subsequent legislation. The deputy headteacher has taken on the role of special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) following the previous SENCO's departure from the school at the end of the last school year. She is clear about the way forward and liaises appropriately with the relevant agencies. She has not yet had enough time to prove her effectiveness, however, being only five weeks in post. Teachers incorporate the school's SEN policy in all school-produced schemes of work and in policies for other subjects in the curriculum. The arrangements for annual review meetings are satisfactory. All responsible personnel meet with parents and their views are taken into account. The head teacher is the governor nominated for oversight of SEN in the school. She reports to the governing body and in turn, the governing body reports to parents in their annual about the work carried out each year. The school brochure outlines the pattern of work in special educational needs and parents are informed that access to the full documentation is available on request.
70. The school meets statutory requirements in all areas of its work, including those relating to collective worship and equality of opportunity. The governors now have a satisfactory policy for sex education and appropriate behaviour and anti-bullying policies have been implemented recently. These indicate that there has been satisfactory improvement in the issues raised at the last inspection.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

71. The school has a dedicated and hard-working staff. They are well qualified to teach children under-five, the primary age range and pupils who have special educational needs. As a whole team, the teaching staff offers a good balance of subject expertise for teaching the subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education and the agreed areas of learning for children under five. Subject co-ordinators have a good knowledge of their subjects.
72. Although the situation has improved slightly since the previous inspection, there are still too few trained support staff and the help provided for teachers and pupils in classrooms is unsatisfactory, especially but not only in the reception classes and at Key Stage 1. The two part-time classroom assistants are suitably qualified for their roles and are rapidly gaining in experience. They make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. The one qualified nursery nurse works primarily in the nursery with a small time (half an hour) devoted to supporting work in each of the two reception classes but on alternate days. This has to be during the mid-day break in the nursery and there is no flexibility at other times. The existing support staff have a clear understanding of the nature and purpose of the assistance they give and enhance pupils' learning. The deputy headteacher is not class based during this term and has a timetable planned to support teachers and pupils in the classroom and assist pupils with special educational needs. As yet this role is not sufficiently well defined to provide effective support in the areas of greatest need. The school recognises the need to review the arrangement and has set this half term as its first review date.
73. The co-ordinator for special educational need is new in post. She has a clear job description and is continuing the work planned before her appointment. She has attended specific in-service training and her understanding of the role is satisfactory. Given the number of pupils on the SEN register, the co-ordinator has a generous time allocation for this term, which she is using to review current practice and identify particular needs and learning opportunities. The school is rightly keeping this under review.
74. The site officer provides a very friendly and efficient service to the school. The high standard of the administrative staff, identified at the time of the last inspection, continues to make a very positive impact on the smooth running of the school. Midday supervisors and cleaning staff are well organised and carry out their duties with care and efficiency. A number of parents give valuable help on a regular basis in classrooms.

75. There are good arrangements for the professional development of staff. Although currently there is no formal appraisal system in operation, the headteacher annually provides all staff with appraisal interviews to enhance their career development and their co-ordinator roles. Co-ordinators keep in touch with available courses and maintain records of their development. There are suitable arrangements to enable those attending courses to report back to colleagues. Arrangements for supporting newly qualified teachers and other teachers new to the school are very thorough. An induction tutor is provided, together with guidance in lesson planning, observation of work in the classroom, lesson observations and evaluations, and access to training opportunities. Newly qualified teachers have time out of the classroom to observe other teachers both in their own and other schools. All of these elements are part of the school's stated commitment to raising standards.
76. The accommodation satisfactorily provides for the teaching of the whole curriculum. The school is set in extensive and attractive grounds with sufficient hard surface play areas and a very large field for games and general use in dry weather. The playground is planned for purposeful play in an attractive way.
77. Inside, good use is made of available space. The shared area outside the junior classrooms is used effectively. The light corridors outside infant classrooms offer attractive learning areas but the lack of support staff inhibits their use at present. The halls offer good accommodation for drama, physical education and collective worship. They effectively double as dining areas at lunchtime. The standard of decoration is good throughout and is enhanced by well-chosen displays of pupils' work. However, in some areas of the school these are too high up on the walls and do not enable young children to interact with the displays or take pride in their displayed work. The site officer and the cleaners successfully create a clean and well-maintained environment for learning. The libraries in both the infant and junior departments provide suitable accommodation for pupils to develop appropriate library skills.
78. The resources for learning, including opportunities for outdoor play in the nursery and early years' classes are greatly improved since the previous inspection. Learning resources are now satisfactory. In English, they are good. There is a good range of big books, equipment and books for guided reading, mainly the result of the implementation of Literacy Hour. Classroom libraries are not extensive but are relevant and useful, an improvement since the last inspection. Resources for the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy are new and, although teachers have to plan carefully and sometimes share, they are at least satisfactory in range and quantity. The library has recently been culled of old and outdated books. The school has already started to fill the gap that this has made and there is a suitable range of fiction and non-fiction books. In most subjects resources are adequate and in art, music and physical education, they are good. The school enhances its resources for topic work by borrowing a range of artefacts and books for specific topics, from the local 'block loan' provision. In most subjects there is an adequate range of good quality equipment. The resources for information technology are to be enhanced in the next few weeks by the addition of an information technology suite with a networked system of computers and printers, as a result of grant from the National Grid for Learning project. Resources are well stored and are readily accessible. The generous financial support of the Parents' Guild has enabled the school to purchase many essential resources to enhance the curriculum.
79. There is an appropriate range of suitable resources for pupils with special educational needs. There is easy access to the building for disabled pupils and the accommodation presents no restrictions for learning. The school provides a satisfactory learning environment for pupils with a range of special educational needs.

The efficiency of the school

80. Short-term financial planning is detailed and effective. However, long-term financial planning is unsatisfactory. The School Development Plan is costed and financial procedures for checking on spending trends and ensuring spending is in line with agreed recommendations are secure. However, despite the fact that the school has received budget projections for the next three years from the Local Education Authority, it has not yet undertaken even outline financial planning beyond the current year.

81. Annual budget allocations to subject areas are made on the basis of maintenance and development lists received from and discussed with co-ordinators. Decisions are then taken by the headteacher as to how much each receives. The sums allocated are not always clearly based on a full discussion of, for example, prioritised development over time and do not include discussions as to possible alternative uses for some of the money. The school has added to the money provided for Additional Literacy Support in Years 3 and 4 and has extended the hours of the two non-teaching assistants so that, on a rota basis, they can give some support to all teachers in reception and Key Stage 1 over a period of two weeks. However, although the school is keenly aware that there is an inadequate number of support staff particularly in the reception and Key Stage 1 classes, different ways of addressing this have not yet been sufficiently discussed. The budget currently has a reasonable but increasing surplus, some of which is committed as additional funding for information and communications technology to add to the grant from the National Grid for Learning, but most of which will be needed to supplement the New Deal for Schools bids.
82. Teachers are appropriately deployed. The two trained classroom support staff available, and parent and grandparent helpers, are also used well to support a range of pupils including those with special educational needs and those in need of additional literacy support. The deputy headteacher's role has changed since the beginning of this year to include the role of special educational needs co-ordinator. For half of the week she supports teachers in the classroom or pupils with special educational needs, and the other half is to be spent on management duties. This role is not yet established sufficiently well for a secure judgement to be made as to its effectiveness. However, early indications are that the school is right to review it at the end of this half term. Some inefficient use of her time is already apparent in different classes because it is not yet well enough structured. Mid-day assistants and cleaning staff are all appropriately deployed and contribute to an effective learning environment. The school makes good use of the accommodation to promote learning. This includes the two libraries and the hall outside the junior classrooms, which is used very effectively for group work and for information and communication technology. All resources are used at least appropriately, including the locality, a range of visits to places of interest and a range of visitors into school.
83. The administrative staff continue to be well deployed and contribute to the effectiveness of the well-established school routines and good daily administrative procedures. All recommendations from the most recent audit report have been dealt with appropriately.
84. The school is committed to supporting pupils with special educational needs within classrooms. The money allocated to support special educational needs is tracked very carefully and the school adds to it to ensure that the specified pupils make at least satisfactory progress. This enables many pupils to attain the levels expected nationally by the end of Key Stage 2. A satisfactory range of good quality resources, readily available in all classes, is well used to support the curriculum for the identified pupils.
85. Pupils enter the school with average levels of attainment. Those currently in their final year also display average levels of attainment. The quality of education provided by the school, including the quality of teaching is satisfactory. This is achieved within a lower than average expenditure per pupil. The school is judged to be providing satisfactory value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

86. Children begin in the nursery at the age of three. Most attend for half a day, although there is a very small number of children who attend full time, going home for lunch in between the morning and afternoon sessions. They enter the reception class in the year in which they are four, and subsequently begin Key Stage 1 in the year of their fifth birthday. Very good induction procedures ensure that children settle into the routines of the nursery as soon as possible. This had already been achieved just one month into a new school year. In the reception classes, children benefit from being used to well-established routines and this enables them to work purposefully throughout most of the day. Children make at least satisfactory progress in all six areas of learning as they move through the nursery and reception classes and the majority enter Key Stage 1 having met the nationally agreed 'Desirable Learning Outcomes' for this age group in each area.

90. Language and Literacy

87. Pupils begin in the nursery with a range of spoken language appropriate for their age. They listen well and pay good attention to adults when their interest is engaged. By the end of their reception year, they ask questions confidently and demonstrate appropriate recall skills as they re-tell stories, talk about a character and give instructions. Pupils show an enthusiasm for books in both the nursery and reception classes. There are books in all classrooms but there is not always a comfortable reading area in which children can relax and enjoy them. They know that print carries meaning and most can handle books correctly, 'reading' from left to right. They can distinguish between books for information and storybooks and can read simple words from the 'big book' in unison. Children's reading is further enhanced by the visit from a local librarian. A suitably adapted version of the Literacy Hour is enabling these young children to learn about phonics work and the importance of having a range of ways to decode unfamiliar words. Children learn to write their names in the nursery and by the age of five, many can write their full names. The provision of a writing area in the nursery engages their attention and they use this well to emulate different styles of writing in a familiar environment. This good practice is not seen in the reception class, however. Here, children often under-write or over-write the teacher's writing or other print and correct letter formation is not systematically taught. They sometimes have to practise a letter over and over again even if they can already write it and other letters. This hinders the progress of higher attaining children as these children can usually form letters of a consistent size and write in a straight line. Similarly, because of the lack of adult support, children who cannot form letters correctly and who are sometimes left on their own for too long, write over the teacher's writing, repeating bad habits in letter formation which impact on their handwriting and presentation in later years.

91. Mathematics

88. Children learn to count to ten and many can go beyond this. They can write numbers and correctly match quantities of numbers to groups of objects. They also recognise a range of shapes such as circle, triangle and rectangle. They can match shape to shape and colour to colour in sequences and describe the properties of shapes, for example, explaining that a triangle has three sides. Higher attainers can also sort and match using more than one characteristic, for example, 2 and red in '2 red shoes'. Children in this age group develop appropriate mathematical language. Most can sequence the school day and show an understanding of the concept of yesterday, to-day and to-morrow. They know and can sing a range of counting rhymes and develop good understanding of 'more than' and 'less than' as they count and sort familiar objects to their own criteria. In this area of learning also, progress is hindered by a lack of support staff. Higher attaining children were observed working from a commercial scheme book on their own. Although they were able to work through the 'paper' exercises, they did not make the progress of which they were capable, because there was no practical equipment for them to work with, and no adult to engage them in the activities and discussions that would extend their learning.

92. Knowledge and Understanding

89. Children use a range of construction toys, both wooden and plastic to make, for example, a train track, and begin to use manipulative skills appropriately as they join large plastic connecting shapes. They acquire an understanding of the past in relation to the present by looking at photographs of their families and describing the similarities and differences in them. They also look at photographs of themselves as babies, and compare them with how they look now. They begin to develop sound investigative skills through sand and water play, often appropriately linked to their literacy and numeracy work. They learn about natural science through examining the effective displays on the 'autumn table', and are able to sort natural materials according to set criteria they themselves develop. Work on display indicates that pupils learn to draw and colour pictures using an art software program but no children were observed using the computer. Reception children undertake surveys of buildings in the locality and analyse the results of what they find about the number and type of houses.

93. Creative Development

90. While children make satisfactory progress across the whole range of activity in this area of learning, they make good progress in art. In both the nursery and reception classes, children have a wide range of art experiences. They use marbling inks to make creative pictures and begin to explore line and colour through creating different thicknesses of these using the computer. They work individually and in groups to create intricate collages and they experience weaving, printmaking, painting and pattern making. Children's finer motor skills are suitably extended through the use of glue, scissors and other art tools. They learn how to hold and use these correctly and safely, and how to use different media to create different textures. They sing well, enjoy singing in assembly and know an appropriate range of songs. Nursery children engage in role-play in the home corner but this is not evident in the reception classes.

94. Physical development

91. Nursery children have suitable access to outdoor play. They readily use the wide range of equipment available for them including wheeled toys and trucks. All children confidently participate in all activities and many show good climbing skills on, for example, the 'A' frame. They handle tools well, digging with the spades and carrying soil to a wheelbarrow. Nursery and reception children have timetabled physical education activities in the hall. They demonstrate an appropriate awareness of space and help to assemble and disassemble equipment with due regard for safety. They can make decisions about how to travel along a bench and can make a star shape with their bodies when jumping off onto the mats. Reception pupils display good physical ability.

95. Personal and social development

92. Children settle quickly into the routines of the nursery and reception classes and make satisfactory progress in this area of learning. They behave well and can concentrate for long periods of time. Most are able to work independently and co-operatively. For example, in the nursery during their outdoor play children show initiative and 'give and take' in organising their own 'follow my leader' game when riding bikes. They are enthusiastic about learning and adopt positive attitudes to their work. They take turns, listen to each other and to their teacher, and share equipment amicably in all activities. Through religious education lessons, they learn to care for each other. They confidently share their own experiences of being kind or unkind and begin to gain an understanding of how it feels to be treated in different ways.

96. The quality of teaching

93. The teaching of children under five is satisfactory. In 40 per cent of lessons, teaching is good. The good teaching occurs in some language and literacy lessons in both nursery and reception, and in mathematics and physical education lessons in the nursery. Teachers have a secure understanding of the age group and of how children learn and build up a very good rapport with them. Teaching is most effective when appropriate first-hand resources are used, combined with effective questioning to develop children's mental processes, for example, as reception children learn to develop their own criteria for sorting natural materials. Less effective teaching takes place when there is too much reliance on worksheets that do not sufficiently extend children's learning or engage their interest. There is clear and effective long and medium term planning that takes account of all six areas of learning but is also flexible enough to enable the National Curriculum programmes of study to be introduced as and when relevant. Ongoing assessment of children's work is appropriately recorded and used to plan what they will do next in the short term. Occasionally, however, non-adult directed activities are not sufficiently focused to enable pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. For example in a mathematics session with reception children, although the teacher used her time appropriately to move between groups, some of the activities children were expected to do were not sufficiently challenging without adult questioning and input.
94. There is one full time teacher and one full time nursery nurse in the nursery. The nursery nurse also gives half an hour on alternate days to each of the two reception classes and the children benefit greatly from this input. Reception teachers also have a small amount of additional assistance from the deputy headteacher. However, there is a lack of an adequate number of support staff in this age group. This means that there are too few opportunities for children to be able to participate in less structured activities that nevertheless require adult input for the children to make effective progress, for example, when they 'play' with construction toys and role-play in the home corner. Occasionally, there is an over-reliance on unsuitable worksheets, which do not sufficiently extend children's learning or engage their interest. Parent helpers assist teachers well in this age group and parents are appropriately involved with their children's learning.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

95. The results of the 1998 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in English were in line with both the national average and the average for similar schools. Taken across the three years from 1996 to 1998, attainment in English was above the national average. There was a slight dip in 1998 due to a difference in the cohort of pupils, but early indications from the 1999 results are that attainment has risen once again. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is average and all pupils make satisfactory progress throughout this key stage. This is because at this stage in the school year, the school has not yet begun to implement its strategies for enabling Year 6 pupils to aim for the higher levels in this subject.
96. At the end of Key Stage 1, the 1998 National Curriculum test results were well above the national average in reading and writing. When compared with the results achieved by pupils in similar schools attainment in reading was very high and it was well above the average in writing. Teacher assessments in speaking and listening indicate that attainment was in line with the national average but in English overall, was above the average for some schools. Between 1996 and 1998, pupils' attainment in English rose, while nationally it remained steady. Early indications from the 1999 tests and assessments are that these good results have been maintained. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is above average and all pupils make good progress in this key stage.
97. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in all areas of English and a significant minority achieve the nationally expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2.

98. Attainment in speaking and listening is above average at the end of both key stages. The majority of pupils make good progress, including those with identified special educational needs. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils listen carefully, are willing and able to explore ideas and communicate them to an audience. Particular strengths are levels of concentration, confidence and clear speech. Lower attaining pupils show confidence when talking to one another and can make suitable responses after listening carefully to a story. By the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils listen well and most respond eagerly and with understanding, particularly when teachers talk in a lively and interesting manner. Pupils listen to each other and are prepared to take their turn when speaking. The great majority of pupils speak confidently in lessons and converse readily with visitors. Some older higher attaining pupils use a very rich vocabulary and seek to express themselves with precision and force in discussions.
99. Attainment in reading is above average at the end of both key stages. The majority of pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs. By the end of Key Stage 1, higher attaining pupils read with good accuracy, fluency and understanding. They have a wide range of words and can read them expressively, making close reference to the text and often with a quick delivery. Lower attaining pupils recognise straightforward words in simple reading material but are good at using pictures to provide clues about the text. They have weaknesses when trying to blend sounds together. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils show good levels of accuracy, fluency and understanding. Higher attaining pupils produce greater levels of accuracy as they read complex non-fiction books. They are capable of providing detailed explanations about the plot and main characters of the books they read. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of how to find books in the library, including the use of the Dewey classification. The lower attainers show similar skills and understanding within a much smaller range and complexity of reading material. However their skills in finding books in the library are not as well developed as the majority.
100. Attainment in writing is average at the end of both key stages. The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs. By the end of Key Stage 1, higher attaining pupils produce work that is independently written. They use punctuation correctly, occasionally including exclamation marks and question marks. Handwriting is satisfactory and pupils confidently use dictionaries to check words. Some lower attainers have difficulty with pencil control and cannot achieve a flowing style. However, they benefit from group work where ideas for writing can be shared especially in poetry. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils plan their writing appropriately and usually demonstrate accurate punctuation. Higher attainers write for a variety of audiences and take advantage of the wider opportunities provided to do this. They write long and interesting stories containing a wide range of vocabulary. Lower attainers produce shorter pieces of writing but they make a number of mistakes in their spelling and punctuation. Writing styles develop appropriately and all pupils attempt to use paragraphs. However only the highest attainers achieve accuracy in this respect. The standard of handwriting varies from the neat and fluent to a very stilted and inconsistent form of printing. Too little care is taken to produce a neat and legible style. Spelling is satisfactory, but too many pupils lack adequate knowledge of rules.
101. The majority of pupils make appropriate use of their literacy skills in other subjects. This is particularly evident in religious education, history and geography. Pupils research topics, make appropriate notes and write about their findings. However, presentation is not always of a high enough standard and spelling is often inaccurate.
102. Pupils' attitudes to lessons are good in all parts of the school and the pupils invariably co-operative well. They are interested in their work, concentrate for long periods and persevere with tasks. Attitudes towards reading are particularly good for the majority of pupils with many pupils describing reading as a favourite activity. This helps them to make good progress in this aspect of English and enhances their work in other subjects.
103. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in 50 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the remaining 50 per cent. There are also single examples of very good and unsatisfactory teaching.

104. In Key Stage 1, teaching is good in 66 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. The strengths include a faithful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy with whole class sessions that are brisk and evaluative. Much of the questioning is appropriately open-ended, and requires pupils to think for themselves. Lessons are managed satisfactorily and teachers make their expectations of work and behaviour clear. A relative shortcoming is the use of day-to-day assessment to plan future work. However there have been recent improvements in this with the production of a record which plots pupils on-going attainment in, for example, the group reading sessions. In Key Stage 2, 60 per cent of teaching is good and 30 per cent is satisfactory. There are also isolated examples of very good and unsatisfactory teaching in this key stage. Where teaching is very good, as in Year 4, for example, the teacher leads pupils, through highly effective questioning, to an understanding of words that sound the same but are spelt differently. She then challenges their thinking by requiring them to spell the words correctly from the definitions given. Her management of the class is highly effective. The effective way in which she pulls their learning together in the plenary session at the end enables pupils to judge their progress against the very clear objectives for the lesson, given to them at the start. They made very good progress in this lesson. Good lessons are characterised by effective planning, clear expectations and explanations. Where teaching has weaknesses, planning is not sufficiently detailed, worksheets are badly reproduced and the classroom management is weak. Instructions are insufficiently clear in such lessons, for example, pupils are told to 'make it interesting' as they are about to engage in a writing task. Pupils' work is marked regularly but the quality of the marking is inconsistent and does not always indicate how work needs to be improved.
105. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and the satisfactory implementation of the National Literacy Strategy provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Assessment procedures are appropriate but some are too recent to evaluate their effect on planning further work. The school has clearly and accurately analysed both the results of the national tests and assessments and what the co-ordinator found from monitoring teaching in the classroom. These procedures have highlighted the need for better spelling and presentation and the school now plans to address these so that more pupils can achieve the higher levels. Reading tests are regularly administered and provide useful information that helps to identify pupils' attainment and progress and the most appropriate book for them to be reading.
106. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and has successfully disseminated her own literacy training to her colleagues, advising them in their classrooms and providing support from them in their planning. Resources are good. There has been a large amount of money spent on library, fiction and teachers' reference books. This development in resources has had a positive effect on pupils' attainment, progress and attitudes to learning, most particularly in reading. Additional support staff for literacy are effectively deployed and make a valuable contribution to the progress of the pupils with whom they work.

Mathematics

107. The results of the 1998 National Curriculum test results for eleven-year-olds were well above the national average in mathematics and also well above that of similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher grades in the tests was also above the national average. Early indications from the 1999 test results indicate that these good standards have been maintained. Taken over the last three years, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is well above the national average. The national trend has risen and fallen again. The school's results have followed this trend.
108. The attainment of the majority of pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 2 is average. The reason for the difference is mainly that the school has introduced a new mathematics scheme of work at the same time as the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers are still trying to find ways of bringing the two together to meet the needs of the pupils in the transition from one scheme to another. In addition, the analysis of the test results and the strengths and weaknesses identified from this are not shared sufficiently with all staff. This prevents a structured approach to curriculum review throughout the school, which in turn hinders pupils' progress as they move through each key stage.

109. The 1998 test and assessment results at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that attainment was above average when compared with the national average, and well above that achieved in similar schools. The attainment of pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the average for pupils of the same age nationally. At the end of Key Stage 1, national results have been steady over the last three years. The school's results have improved each year.
110. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, although this varies between satisfactory and good in different elements of the subject. As they move through Key Stage 1, pupils learn to recognise and describe the names of common shapes such as rectangles, circles and triangles. The higher attainers quickly progress to describing and identifying the more complex shapes such as cylinders, pyramids and cuboids. They learn to work with numbers and to count money. They know that there are different ways of arriving at the same answer, and by the end of the key stage, recognise that, for example, $4 + 12$ is the same as $19 - 3$. Progress is good in the mental mathematics sessions and for the group receiving skilled support when working with the teacher or the member of support staff. The limited nature of extra support prevents more rapid progress for some pupils in most lessons.
111. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. Progress is, however, good in the oral sessions, where pupils are making rapid gains in number manipulation and in their understanding and instant recall of addition and subtraction and of multiplication tables. As they move through this key stage, pupils build on their previous work and develop a sound sense of time and learn to use Venn and Carroll diagrams as they recognise three-dimensional shapes and place them in appropriate categories. Pupils in Year 4 learn to describe angles. They can find and describe degrees of turn and check their work using a set square. They increase their knowledge of factors, inverse operations in arithmetic and gain a sound understanding of place value as, for example, they work with money. By the end of the key stage, they can calculate mentally up to four digit numbers and have a clear understanding of decimals. Progress in group work is sometimes slowed for the more able pupils where they have to wait for the teacher who is working hard to raise the standard of the lower attainers. At these times, pupils fit the work to fill the time or else do more of the same kind of calculations until time is available for the teacher to increase the range and challenge of their work. Progress in numeracy is good in both key stages. Pupils and teachers are both experimenting with the new National Numeracy Strategy and as they are becoming more familiar with the format, rapid gains are being made.
112. Pupils use their numeracy skills appropriately in other subjects, for example, measuring in science and design and technology.
113. Pupils' attitude to work is good. They are keen to share in class activities and contribute well to oral sessions. They are industrious. The vast majority concentrate on the set activity and collaborate effectively in pairs or small groups. Behaviour is generally good. This enables them to continue to make satisfactory progress even when awaiting further adult input. Very occasionally, when waiting for the teacher, one or two will share a joke and need reminding of the code of behaviour. One look from the teacher or a timely reminder is all that is ever needed to cause them to get on with their work.
114. The quality of teaching is good overall. Good teaching occurs in 50 per cent of lessons and in a further 12 per cent, teaching is very good. In the remaining percentage, teaching is never less than satisfactory. In Key Stage 1, teaching is very good in 25 per cent of lessons and good in a further 25 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. In Key Stage 2, teaching is very good in 12 per cent of lessons and good in a further 50 per cent.
115. Where teaching is very good, as in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher works at a very brisk pace. She also uses stimulating home made resources that are totally relevant to the task and to the pupils' needs as they work with money up to twenty pence and with number in multiples of two. Here, and in a very good Year 4 lesson, the very effective questioning probes pupils' prior knowledge and the teachers use their responses well to challenge their thinking and move them on. Teachers constantly check, assess and reinforce how well pupils are doing and quickly address any weaknesses that emerge. These strategies help pupils to become increasingly confident in the skills required to manage their own learning.

116. In some classes, teaching is less secure and leads to pupils making less progress than they should. Some teachers have not yet come to grips both with the new scheme of work and the National Numeracy Strategy, and have not acquired the confidence to adapt these sufficiently in order to meet pupils' needs and ensure a progressive build up of learning. In a Year 4 class, for example, this led to inappropriately high expectations of pupils with regard to their understanding of the concept of parallel lines
117. In the books available for scrutiny from last year, many pupils made hardly any mistakes indicating that work, while matched to a reasonably appropriate level, was too easy for a significant number of average and just above average pupils. It was for this reason that the school decided to adopt its current strategies. Teachers mark work systematically but some accept less well presented work without comment and corrections are not always completed. However in many cases only very high quality presentation is accepted, work is marked sensitively with appropriate constructive criticism and justifiable praise and time is planned to ensure that all corrections are completed.
118. The National Numeracy Strategy and a new commercial scheme, both of which are now to the school this year, support the mathematics curriculum. They include appropriate planning for pupils of all levels of attainment. Teachers are beginning to have a sound understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. The more systematic approach to the teaching of mental mathematics strategies and the planning of work to match prior learning are having a beneficial effect on pupils' attainment. There is, however, some mis-match between the very new commercial scheme of work and previously completed work and some significant gaps in pupils' prior learning are emerging. The school is currently working hard to devise a manageable review strategy to collect information, assess strengths and weaknesses and plan a structured way forward. Despite these difficulties all statutory requirements are being met.
119. Pupils who find mathematics difficult are being encouraged and supported to reach the nationally expected levels and very few pupils fail to reach the national average at the present time. In achieving this situation the school does not always provide sufficiently challenging work for some other pupils who, with extra encouragement, could reach the higher levels. As teachers and pupils come to terms with the change in format and content of the curriculum, higher attaining pupils are not being afforded the extra impetus they need to enable them to make the progress of which they are capable. The restricted amount of classroom support is inhibiting the full development of the curriculum in mathematics at the present time.
120. Work is assessed regularly at the end of sections of work and the results form an important part of the next planning stage. The plotting of pupils' progress towards planned targets is beginning to have positive results in some classes. The results of statutory testing are analysed and findings are used to inform teaching and planning towards the end of Key Stage 2.
121. The leadership offered by the co-ordinator is satisfactory. She is herself very knowledgeable and keen to share her vision and enthusiasm for mathematics with colleagues throughout the school. She shares in the planning of work in the long- and medium-term and shares with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher the monitoring of planning files and samples of pupils' work. However, she has not yet had the opportunity to observe the quality of teaching or offer support to her colleagues in the classroom. Nor is she sufficiently involved in analysing the outcomes of the national tests and having the opportunity to address how progress can be improved prior to pupils reaching Year 6.
122. Staffing is adequate and teachers' expertise is equal to the challenges at present faced by the school. The balance of new and experienced teachers is good. Classrooms are well equipped to enable learning to take place at a good pace. Resources are of good quality and are adequate for the work in hand. Teachers plan and use them appropriately.
123. Since the last inspection the school has maintained the standards attained and has increased the numbers of pupils attaining higher levels although there is still more to be done in this area. Mathematics has a high profile in the school's future plans. Teachers are finding the task of combining the new scheme of work with the National Numeracy Strategy exciting and stimulating and both they and the pupils are working hard to achieve a successful outcome.

Science

124. The results of the 1998 National Curriculum test results for eleven-year-olds were well above both the national average and the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher grades in the tests was above the national average. The percentage attaining at or above the expected level fell slightly in 1999. The attainment of the majority of pupils currently approaching the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with the national average. Taken over the last three years, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is well above the national average. The national trend has risen and fallen again. The school's results have followed this trend.
125. The 1998 teacher assessments for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that attainment is above the national average. The attainment of pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average. At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in science has risen steadily over the last three years.
126. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, progress is particularly good in the areas of life and living processes and materials and their properties. Year 1 pupils, for example, have first-hand experience of observing how fish, stick insects, guinea pigs and hamsters move and can describe the difference between them. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have acquired good investigative skills and begin to make reasonable predictions about what will happen when, for example, ingredients are mixed together and a cake mix is heated in the oven. They can describe the changes that are likely to take place and are able to record their findings in a range of appropriate ways.
127. As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils learn to understand the concepts of variables and fairness in scientific testing. In Year 3, for example, they confidently discuss the variables in testing the 'stretchiness' of tights. This is taken further in Year 5 as they explore the quantity of bicarbonate soda they need to add to a range of household acids to make enough carbon dioxide to blow up a balloon. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a good understanding of the properties of electricity and the dangers of working with it as they construct simple circuits and record these in wiring diagrams. They know how the human skeleton works. They can name the different parts of the human body and explain the functions of the major organs. They have a sound knowledge of life cycles, the conditions needed for plant growth and the place of the earth in space. In both key stages, pupils know and use a good range of scientific vocabulary.
128. Pupils with special educational needs make progress similar to their classmates. They take a full part in most science lessons. However, some pupils in Year 5 miss the end of their science lesson every week because they are withdrawn for literacy support. Although the teacher ensures that they catch up with any work missed, this means they do not have the opportunity to share in discussions about scientific findings with the rest of their group.
129. Pupils demonstrate good attitudes to learning in this subject and most behave well in lessons. Occasionally, as in a Year 1 lesson, some boys can become excessively noisy in their eagerness to observe the animals, but they quickly respond to the sensible methods the teacher uses to calm them down. Pupils are keenly interested in science and confidently ask and answer a good range of pertinent questions in relation to their work. Pupils in Key Stage 2 show particular enthusiasm for the work they have undertaken so far this term and in Year 4, there are especially good collage pictures of the skeletal structure that show how it works. Pupils' lively and enquiring minds enable them to make good progress in this subject as they move through the school.
130. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. This good teaching occurs in 67 per cent of lessons and in the remainder, teaching is satisfactory. These proportions are the same in both key stages. Teachers display good knowledge and understanding of science. In Key Stage 1, they rightly rely on first hand evidence to teach pupils to investigate, for example, how materials change and to help pupils to classify materials according to given or well thought out criteria. In Key Stage 2, teachers make good use of the full range of teaching strategies, such as whole class, group and individual teaching to enable pupils to make good progress. Effective questioning skills enable pupils to indicate what they already know, and teachers then build on the responses to extend and challenge pupils' thinking. At the end of science lessons, a final whole class session is used well to consolidate what pupils have learned and to prepare them for what they will find out next. For example, in Year 5, following an initial discussion on how they might measure chemical reactions, pupils are skilfully led through a series of activities that result in their gaining a good understanding of the nature of such reactions and the

differences between solids, liquids and gases. Effective questioning at the end of the session enables pupils to show whether they have understood their investigations and provides good opportunity to address any misconceptions.

131. The science curriculum is well planned. Comprehensive long, medium and short term planning ensures that pupils make progress as they move through the school. Teachers are currently transferring from a commercial scheme of work to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) scheme. While this is resulting in some changes in the curriculum, teachers are being careful to ensure that pupils' learning is still continuous. Satisfactory assessment and recording procedures are in place and teachers use the information as they plan further work. Leadership is sound. The co-ordinator has been in place for one year. She regularly checks teachers' planning but has had no opportunity to monitor or support them in the classroom. She manages the satisfactory range of scientific resources well and makes the most of the limited storage space to keep them well organised and easily accessible to staff. Governors are appropriately involved in this subject and are due to review the implementation of the new scheme at the end of this school year. Statutory requirements are met.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Information and communication technology (ICT)

132. The attainment of the majority of pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with national expectations. A significant minority of pupils, who use computers at home, have skills which lift their attainment to above the expected level. All pupils make satisfactory progress in this key stage. The attainment of the majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 is also satisfactory. They make satisfactory progress in this key stage. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
133. At the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils can enter text into the computer using a word processing package. They use the keyboard and the mouse to control the programme to type in text and open programs for their personal use. Pupils use information technology to enhance and practise their work in English, history art geography and science. They use a simple 'paint' programme to create pictures. Higher attaining pupils readily print out their work and save on to the computer hard disk with some support. Pupils have a growing confidence and familiarity with information technology as a tool to aid their learning.
134. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils amend and correct text for basic grammatical and spelling errors using the 'spell-checker' option. They use 'paint' software to create simple pictures, save and retrieve files from the hard disk. Pupils combine text and pictures within a single word-processed document and use a desktop publishing package to create for example illustrated documents to support a related theme. They import pictures from a range of programs to illustrate work in geography, history and English. Using data gathered from personal investigation, pupils create bar graphs and pie charts. These increased skills are also helping to enhance the work in science, art, history, geography and mathematics throughout the school.
135. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in both key stages. This has been maintained since the since the last inspection. In Year 1, pupils develop the control of the mouse and can use simple mathematical and language modelling programmes. They begin to use appropriate technical vocabulary, such as 'mouse' and 'keyboard'. In Year 2, pupils develop an increasing accuracy in their word processing skills and learn how to program a robot vehicle to perform simple movements. They can also use listening centres to listen to story tapes while following the text in books. In Key Stage 2 pupils extend their word processing skills to include using different packages and for different purposes. They write letters and reproduce and enhance their extended writing from English lessons. They are able to use the skills of computer drawing and text processing together in the same document. They learn to save their work in an appropriate format and print it out. Most pupils have mastered the principles of control, enter commands to control a remote vehicle and create simple patterns on the computer screen.

136. Pupils' responses to information technology, at both key stages are positive. They have good attitudes to their work, respond well to challenges and persevere when programs on some of the older machines 'crash' and they have to repeat work. Pupils' relationships with class teachers are good. They behave well and work responsibly in pairs or groups, discussing possibilities, and sharing ideas. They willingly explain what it is they are doing and enjoy demonstrating their skills. Higher attaining pupils are increasingly confident when using the resources and equipment.
137. There was very little direct teaching observed during the inspection but the scrutiny of work, observation of pupils working, and discussion with pupils and teachers supports the judgement that the teaching is at least satisfactory, as it was at the last inspection. All teachers have increased their personal skills and confidence and are successfully passing these on to pupils. Teachers use information technology to support and enhance work in topics from other subjects. In these lessons the teachers have developed good subject knowledge which enables them to teach specific new skills to the pupils. The management of the pupils is good and the resources are used well.
138. The subject has developed satisfactorily over time due to good leadership from the subject co-ordinator who is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. The school has agreed detailed development planning and has made good use of available grants under the National Grid for Learning to acquire good resources now ready to be installed in the planned information technology suite. The subject policy has been revised and there is now an effective scheme of work. At present there is an emphasis on graphics and word processing. Expertise across the programmes of study is being developed systematically. The school has detailed plans to develop resources further. At present there is an adequate range of appropriate software to support all subjects across the curriculum. In all classes the levels of work are matched to the pupils' ability. All pupils have regular opportunities to work on the computers and there is a comprehensive recording and assessment system in place to record which pupils have achieved skills at any stage.
139. The scheme of work provides for continuous learning across all the strands of the programmes of study. There has been some in-service training for staff in preparation for the new computer suite. The level of staff expertise and confidence varies but individual skills are developing as extra training and support is provided for each teacher.
143. **Religious education**
140. The attainment of the majority of pupils meets the expectations of the Local Agreed Syllabus for this subject at the end of both key stages. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, however in a small number of lessons these pupils make good progress because of the thoughtful organisation of small groups. This type of organisation encourages pupils to make a more telling contribution.
141. By the time they are seven, pupils know about the key events in the life of Jesus. They are familiar with the Christian festivals of harvest, Christmas and Easter and know the reasons why these are celebrated at particular times of the year. Pupils know and understand why the church is a special place for Christians. Pupils in Year 3, through their study of Judaism develop a simple knowledge of the Hebrew language and its particular characteristics. For example, the fact that there are no vowels in the language and that the writing reads from right to left. Also, they gain an understanding of the Torah and the traditions associated with its study, for instance the necessity to use a yad so that the hand would not touch it. By the age of eleven pupils know about the religious beliefs, practices, symbols and places of worship associated with Christianity and about other faith traditions of Britain. For example, pupils know a number of different parables and understand why Jesus used them to illustrate the moral points he wished them to understand. Furthermore, they have grown in their understanding of the traditions and rituals that form a central part of all religions, for example baptism and the burial. They have an appropriate understanding of the key events in the life of Buddha and know about the five moral precepts and the four noble truths that are fundamental to a Buddhist.

142. Pupils make satisfactory use of their literacy skills when finding out more about the various religions that they study and by writing about their findings. Comparisons between written English and Hebrew provide plenty of helpful discussion points that illuminate pupils' knowledge and understanding of literacy. For example, the importance of reading a text from the right place and the importance of knowing rules of spelling. In Year 2, ongoing assessment and recording also ensures that literacy skills are used well.
143. In Key Stage 1, pupils listen sensibly, behave well and the majority show high levels of concentration. They respond particularly well to sensitive interventions from the teacher. For example, in a Year 2 lesson one pupil was upset by another who was telling lies. The teacher positively encouraged the pupils to make up and work together. By the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils are reflective and thoughtful when discussing a variety of parables and a good level of respect is shown for the views of all concerned. All pupils sustain concentration for long periods.
144. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In 50 per cent of lessons, teaching is good. Teaching is consistently good in Key Stage 1. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and this assists them in planning series of lessons that are linked by a common theme. Expectations are appropriately high, for instance the quality of presentation, work rate and the recall of facts about a church. Pupils are managed well and time and resources are used effectively. In Key Stage 2, teaching is good in 25 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. A major strength of a good lesson in Year 6, was the mixed-ability grouping which assisted some of the pupils with special educational needs to make a significant contribution. Good subject knowledge and understanding provides teachers with appropriate opportunities to draw sensible comparisons with the present day, for example, by asking pupils to explore questions such as "Are there good Samaritans today?" Expectations are rightly focused on pupils making thoughtful and respectful contributions to discussion. The main strengths of other lessons include good planning, sound instructions and expectations and the setting of appropriate tasks that encourage thoughtful, reflective responses.
145. The curriculum meets the requirements of the Local Agreed Syllabus. Areas of learning are appropriately set out over several weeks and the content of lessons usually progresses in a suitable manner. The management of the subject is satisfactory and the personal knowledge and interest of the co-ordinator are high. It is difficult for the co-ordinator to spread these attributes because she has few opportunities, beyond monitoring planning, to influence classroom practice by supporting teachers or by monitoring the quality of their teaching. Resources are adequate but a strength is in the number of artefacts the school has from the various religions studied. There are no assessment procedures in this subject. This was an identified weakness at the last inspection and little improvement has taken place.
149. **Art**
146. No direct teaching was observed in Key Stage 1, but a scrutiny of work on display and discussions with pupils provide a sound base from which to make a secure judgement.
147. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in art and attain standards that are above those expected for their ages. In Key Stage 1, pupils use self-hardening clay to make tiles with an engraved design, extending their knowledge of different media and developing their fine motor skills. They learn to mix shades and tones of different colours, and to create abstract pieces of art through exploration of different media and explore pattern as they engage in weaving and printmaking. Year 2 pupils produce effective and recognisable pen portraits of each other.

148. These skills are built upon in Key Stage 2 as pupils learn about form and engage in high quality observational drawing using graphite, pencil lead, chalk and pastel. As they move through the school, pupils gain in artistic knowledge and understanding as they learn to combine different techniques either to reproduce an artist's work, for example, Matisse, or to use colour mixing to create a backdrop to a display of poetry. In this key stage, pupils use their sketchbooks appropriately to collect ideas and practise techniques prior to producing their final work. For example, Year 5 pupils try out their different drawings of a range of Hindu symbols before realising their designs by making clay plates. They can explain the main features in Egyptian art and have a sound understanding of the colours and techniques used by the artist Claude Monet. Pupils develop an appropriate art vocabulary and use their literacy skills well in this subject as they label designs, make notes and discuss what they see in various works of art.
149. Pupils are interested in and enthusiastic about the subject. They enjoy it and develop positive attitudes that enable them to concentrate well on their work as they use, for example, shading and cross-hatching to gain different visual effects, and follow a topic through from its initial idea to completion. They readily respond to question and answer sessions and are always anxious to display their knowledge. They take care of the resources available to them and willingly tidy up at the ends of sessions. Art makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as they learn about artists from different times and places and reflect on the meaning behind the art produced.
150. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory. In 40 per cent of lessons, teaching is good. Where teaching is most effective, the teacher's knowledge and understanding is secure and pupils are taught well to consider the texture of three-dimensional objects they are drawing. For example, in Year 6 they draw a range of artefacts from direct observation. Clear explanations and effective questioning lead pupils to understand a difficult concept and to use appropriate pencils to create the textures in their own work.
151. The art curriculum is well planned. It covers all areas of the National Curriculum and there are good links with other subjects, related to the topics pupils are studying. Planning ensures that pupils' learning is continuous as they move through the school. What pupils have done is reported to parents annually but there are no assessment procedures or records of progress in the shorter term. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and all staff have contributed to the comprehensive scheme of work that is in place. The co-ordinator receives teachers' planning to keep a check on coverage and gives effective advice to her colleagues. She has not yet had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching in the classroom. Resources are good. They are well organised and easily accessible.
155. **Design and technology**
152. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. Most achieve standards commensurate with their ages and a significant minority achieve above the expected level. The subject has maintained its successful place in the curriculum identified at the time of the previous inspection.
153. All pupils have good experience of planning and designing. They understand the need to practise skills and make preliminary designs. They explore the properties of materials to find suitable methods of fixing, and use their skills to bring relevance and interest to other areas of the curriculum. They look at the outside world for ideas, improve their design skills and extend their ability to evaluate their work.
154. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use construction kits and simple tools effectively to explore a variety of ways of assembling artefacts. They construct vehicles with axles and wheels, and build model houses, which have windows and doors. They work with new and recycled materials and learn to join parts strongly by making secure corners and using appropriate fixings. They gain understanding of terms such as 'structure' and 'component'. They communicate their designs with labelled drawings before making, for example, working lighthouses, puppets, and fantastic animals and insects. They select appropriate materials such as wool for hair and split pins for joints. They enjoy lessons in food technology where they produce delicious cakes and biscuits.

155. At Key Stage 2, pupils produce interesting work to support and enhance a variety of topics. They make a range of innovative toys during their study of the Victorians. They make working models with appropriate turning mechanisms and incorporate electrical systems including burglar alarms in their work about the present day. Boys and girls delight in explaining how the models work and why. They gain more detailed knowledge and understanding of processes, for example as they learn appropriate methods for joining wood, fabrics and plastics for use in future situations. Pupils working to design and produce a container for holding money consider in detail the size, purpose and eventual owner as they investigate materials, and a range of possible fasteners. Pupils use a range of finishing techniques to complete their designs. They review, refine and improve their work after evaluation, and this is a strength in both key stages. Emphasis on function and purpose is evident in all pupils' plans and reviews.
156. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy design and technology and are keen to discuss their work. Younger pupils use their imagination to build with construction kits and older ones delight in 'making things work' with batteries, wheels and pulleys. They share their ideas enthusiastically and are proud when their work is displayed. Pupils use skills learned in literacy lessons to label and review their designs and are meticulous in measuring accurately using skills and knowledge learned in mathematics. The enthusiasm shown in discussions with pupils of all ages contributes well to their undoubted success.
157. The quality of teaching is never less than good, and in one Key Stage 1 lesson, it was very good. Teachers display good levels of confidence and expertise and encourage pupils to strive for high attainment in all lessons. Teachers' planning is thorough and it closely follows the programmes of study of the National Curriculum and the recently adopted scheme of work. Tasks are suitably broken down into manageable steps so that all pupils gain skills in a systematic way, and that time is used effectively in lessons. The development of the correct vocabulary is stressed and the use of technology in the wider world is included in the planning. Relevance is ensured through links with class topics, and pupils' successful work is used well to demonstrate effective ways of working. It is displayed attractively throughout the school and is annotated by pupils and teachers to explain the processes involved in the making. Teachers encourage pupils to use their individual sketchbooks or folders as reference sources when they begin new work. The books provide a more structured pattern of development, as pupils do not always date work in their folders.
158. The subject is effectively managed by the enthusiastic co-ordinator, and support for teaching, whilst mostly provided informally, is readily given and is also effective. There is a clear policy and very useful scheme of work, which together provide a secure framework from which teachers build sets of lessons. The framework ensures the appropriate development of pupils' skills and understanding. The work is assessed very simply using a skills check sheet, which is in the early stages of development. Individual work is reviewed through a process of shared assessment in class when finished items are compared with the original planning and design sheets and pupils share in discussion and the evaluation process. Resources are well chosen to meet the requirements of the curriculum. They are organised in a safe and well ordered manner. Health and safety issues, including food hygiene and safe use of tools, are included in the teaching programme.
162. **Geography**
159. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2 and achieve standards commensurate with their age. All pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress and most achieve standards above those expected for their age.
160. Pupils gradually extend their knowledge from familiarity with the local environment to the study of comparative locations both near and far. In Year 1, the majority of pupils know the countries of the United Kingdom and can identify them on a map. They begin to develop simple data handling skills by illustrating a weather diary. By end of Key Stage 1, most pupils can draw an accurate plan of the classroom. This is further developed on a local map where they mark such landmarks as the playing fields, local church and the main roads. From this they can find the school. Particularly good progress comes from the comparative work about the island of Shapinsay. Significant gains are made in the knowledge and understanding of physical and human characteristic of Irlam and the island. These are enhanced by the development and use of observational skills, most particularly when viewing the slides of the island. In Year 3, pupils identify mountains, rivers and capital cities of the United Kingdom. Higher attaining pupils produce sensible, adequately argued letters for a local

councillor, regarding improvements for the area. Pupils know the main points of the compass and are beginning to use a simple key for a local map. Progress is less marked than it ought to be because of the over use of worksheets. Older pupils in Key Stage 2, show sound knowledge of the various locations they study. They compare and contrast aspects of climate, housing and transport in Irlam with those of Kenya. Map reading skills develop satisfactorily and include attention to scale, latitude and longitude. The majority of pupils are aware of recent changes to the map of Europe and are developing an understanding of the variety of functions maps have. For example, the use of political maps to illustrate levels of population.

161. Pupils' responses in lessons are good at both key stages. They show good concentration and contribute to lessons by answering questions and sensibly joining in discussion. Behaviour is good and pupils co-operate with their teachers and each other. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils responded particularly well because the teaching was of a high standard. For example, pupils were extremely interested by the home made slides, were well motivated and related well to the teacher and to their classmates.
162. The quality of teaching is good in 80 per cent of lessons. It is never less than satisfactory. In Key Stage 1, good pupil progress is directly related to good and, sometimes, very good teaching. In this key stage, teachers plan well to ensure progression in learning and have particularly high expectations of what pupils can do. Throughout the school, teachers have satisfactory knowledge and understanding, use resources well and maintain firm control. In a good lesson in Key Stage 2, the strengths included the high quality of questioning, the appropriate match of worksheets to pupils' prior attainment and the good use of a television programme to provide images of Egypt.
163. The curriculum provided is satisfactory and follows the scheme of work provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. This is occasionally improved upon when teachers take the basic framework from the guidelines and then improve on it, for example, the work in Year 2 comparing Irlam and Shapinsay. The teacher's development of discrete resources alongside the use of a piece of fiction, enhanced pupils' learning and provided very effective motivation for them. Subject management is good. The co-ordinator has a deep interest and respect for the power the subject has for the pupils and their understanding of the locality. Resources are adequate but there are no aerial photographs of the locality to provide pupils with a better understanding of its key features.

167. **History**

164. During the inspection, lessons were observed in Key Stage 2 only. Judgements about Key Stage 1 are based on additional evidence gathered by talking to pupils as well as scrutinising teachers' planning, pupils' work and displays. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in both key stages. They achieve standards commensurate with their age and demonstrate that standards have been sustained since the last inspection.
165. In Key Stage 1, pupils begin to develop a satisfactory sense of the passage of time and know how things change over a period. For example, the younger pupils know that in the past, trains worked by steam, and they looked different from present day trains. Pupils are developing sound knowledge of people and events beyond their memory. For example, they know something about Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot. They can describe what he looked like and explain what he wanted to do.
166. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of events and aspects of life during the Tudor period. They know that the Church of England was established because of a dispute between Henry VIII and the Pope. Pupils have a sound knowledge of Roman times. They know how important education was in Roman society and that only privileged children attended school. Good work has been done on World War 2 and pupils have learned that many families endured great hardship and personal loss during the war years. They are developing a sound understanding of the different ways of gathering evidence and learning to distinguish between fact and opinion. For example pupils in Year 4 know that drawings, story- passing tales, remains, artefacts and written texts provide clues about aspects of the past. They use some of these sources effectively to reach decisions about life in Tudor times.

167. Pupils' attitudes to history are good. They listen carefully to their teachers and give a variety of sensible answers to questions. They show great interest in all topics studied and use resources carefully. The presentation of work in exercise and topic books, while satisfactory, is not consistent. In a few classes, pupils take less care over the neatness of their work and present their findings in a haphazard way. Most pupils concentrate on their work well throughout lessons, and in general, behaviour is good.
168. No teaching was seen at Key Stage 1. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory and in 14 per cent of lessons it is good. Pupils are presented with clear information to help them study a topic and the purpose of a lesson is explained well. However, while resources for history are generally adequate, the range provided to gather information about a topic is sometimes too narrow. For example, in Year 5 lessons where pupils compare and contrast school rules in Victorian times with the present day school life, pupils' investigations are confined to worksheets. Some higher attaining pupils find such activities too easy, requiring involvement in more challenging investigations. A particular strength in several lessons is the quality of questioning which encourages pupils to explore their ideas and develop their use of historical language. For example, when discussing evidence, pupils are pressed by the teacher to use appropriate language such as artefacts, remains, sources, opinion and facts. In a lesson on the Tudors good links are made with mathematics as pupils are asked to record their information on Tudor royalty using a matrix.
169. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. However, although the co-ordinator sees teachers' planning, she is unsure of pupils' attainment in the school and has not had the opportunity to check on the quality of teaching in the classroom.

Music

170. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. However, in singing, progress is good. This strength in singing results from good quality teaching. Pupils sing clearly and in tune. They perform well together in lessons and choir practice. By Year 2, pupils are able to sing simple songs with changes in pitch and tempo. For example, they can sing songs in time, remembering that the chorus is repeated after each verse. By Year 4, they sing a greater variety of songs, with changes in tempo and style. By Year 6, pupils sing in 2 parts with good expression, clear diction and improved voice control. Pupils make satisfactory progress in listening skills. In Year 1, when listening to Delius' 'On hearing the first cuckoo in spring', pupils are able to identify the main instruments playing and recognise when the music gets louder and quieter. By Year 2, many pupils have a developing awareness of how sounds are used to represent characters in a musical composition. For example, they can identify the sounds representing dragons and knights. By Year 6, pupils refine their listening skills to understand how major and minor keys and different instruments are used to create moods. For example, a Year 6 class, while listening to Gershwin's 'Rhapsody in Blue', can identify the melancholic mood created by the clarinet and use of a minor key. When playing together in class performances, pupils develop a strong sense of rhythm and beat. However, from discussions with pupils and teachers, pupils have more limited experiences and skills in composing, and are given insufficient opportunity to make the same level of progress in this aspect of the subject. A number of the older pupils are developing skills in playing tuned instruments, such as the recorder, clarinet, violins and a range of brass instruments. They perform together with confidence and are able to read traditional notation accurately. Since the last inspection progress has been maintained at Key Stage 1 and improved in Key Stage 2.
171. Pupils' attitudes to music are good. They listen carefully to their teachers and are keen to take part in all the musical activities. A notable feature throughout the school is the enthusiasm and vitality shown by pupils when singing. They enjoy working with instruments and exploring the sounds they make. Behaviour is good. For example, while listening to pupils attempts to produce sounds from a trombone, the rest of the class shows enjoyment and an appreciation of their efforts. Pupils are confident when asked to perform in front of an audience and secure in the knowledge that their contributions are valued. Music makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

172. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In 23 per cent of lessons it is good and in 10 per cent of lessons, very good. Where teaching is good or very good, teachers emphasise the need for control and for improvement. Clear explanations and instructions guide most lessons and the management of practical activities is sound. Where teaching is most effective, the teacher uses her very good subject knowledge effectively to plan a good range of experiences for pupils. For example, in Key Stage 1, the teacher, through skilful questioning brought out pupils' feelings about the different sounds heard in the music. In a Year 6 lesson the teacher played the trombone to demonstrate to great effect a 'glissando'. Teachers ensure that pupils learn the correct names of instruments and the different families of the orchestra to which they belong. They consistently use an appropriately wide range of musical vocabulary, which helps pupils to acquire an understanding of musical language such as pitch, composition, staccato and crescendo in addition to the names of major notes. Singing is well taught in both key stages. The teachers' own knowledge and singing skills are well used to raise the pupils' level of singing competence.

173. Pupils benefit from the high profile given to music in the school in a variety of ways. Significant numbers take part in extra-curricular activities such as the Key Stage 2 choir, the recorder group and a range of instrumental tuition provided by the Local Education Authority's music service. There is a sound policy and effective guidelines for the subject. Leadership is good. However, the considerable expertise of the co-ordinator is not yet being used to support teachers in the classroom in order to build up the skills of those who are less secure. Resources are satisfactory, well organised and used appropriately.

177. **Physical education**

174. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and achieve the standards expected for their ages. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Work was observed in gymnastics, games and dance. Throughout the school year swimming is taught to pupils in Year 3 and Year 4. By the time they leave the school, most pupils can swim at least 25 metres.

175. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 competently perform a sequence of movements including rolling, jumping and balancing. They show satisfactory control of their bodies and make good use of space. They work safely when using apparatus and, in one lesson, Year 2 pupils demonstrated that they could carry apparatus correctly. Pupils improve their sense of balance and poise as a result of evaluating their own and others' performances. In Key Stage 1, they develop good games skills. The majority of pupils in Year 1 can throw a large ball accurately and catch it with both hands.

176. In a good dance lesson in Year 4, pupils responded well to a lively 'pop' song, showing confident rhythmic movements. They also refined their movements after discussing how they might improve. In Year 5 they make very good progress in games skills. In one lesson both boys and girls showed very good skills in throwing and catching a rugby ball and are developing good tackling techniques. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils demonstrate improved hand and eye co-ordination skills and abilities to work in teams.

177. Pupils display good attitudes towards their work. Their behaviour is good and they pay due regard to safety. They respond well to their teachers, showing great enthusiasm and generally react positively to teaching points. Changing for physical education is done in an orderly fashion with the majority of pupils wearing the correct clothing. When working in pairs or groups, pupils co-operate well with each other and play fairly in competition. They show a good awareness of themselves and others. These aspects of physical education make a good contribution to pupils' moral and social development.

178. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and in 33 per cent of lessons it is good. Teaching has improved since the last inspection. Most lessons are planned carefully and include suitable warm up and cool down activities. The better teaching is characterised by high teacher expectations of what pupils can do, and their effective management of the class. A significant element of the teaching in both key stages includes effective feedback to pupils on their performances and using pupils' work as examples of good practice. For example, pupils are shown how to improve their passing and tackling skills in the games lesson by evaluating each others' skills, and in Year 3 gymnastics, by evaluating each other's sequences of jumping movements. In the satisfactory lessons, there is often insufficient focus on refining pupils' skills and challenging those who are able, to push themselves harder in order to make better progress.

179. A good range of range of extra-curricular activities are provided for pupils, including football, netball, rugby, cross-country running and athletics. All activities are open to both boys and girls and are well attended by both. The staff involved in these activities show great commitment. They are very well organised and popular.
180. The previous inspection found that lessons were too short. This is still the case and the findings of this inspection are that the length of lessons is often insufficient for pupils to refine and extend their skills sufficiently. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership but has not had the opportunity to observe teachers teach or to support them in lessons. Resources are satisfactory and the accommodation for physical education is good.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

1. The inspection was carried out by six inspectors, one of whom was a lay inspector. During the inspection week; they spent a total of 24 days in the school. The following information shows the amount of time spent observing in classrooms, inspecting pupils' work, talking to pupils about their work and hearing them read:

Key Stage	U5s	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4	Post-16	Total
Total Hours	9.08	22.24	54.92				86.24

A further 22.6 hours were spent interviewing staff, governors, parents and helpers in the school with regard to their roles and responsibilities.

- 96 lessons or parts of lessons were inspected with a priority given to literacy and numeracy.
- During the inspection it was possible to see very little direct teaching of information technology throughout the school, and no history or art was observed in Key Stage 1. Where only limited observations were possible, judgements are firmly based on discussions with pupils, scrutiny of their work and teachers' planning and records.
- A representative sample of work from all across all classes was formally inspected and discussed with pupils to ascertain levels of attainment and progress.
- Additionally, because of the time of the year, a scrutiny of work from the previous year was undertaken to ascertain coverage of the curriculum, standards achieved and progress made.
- 45 pupils were heard to read and reading skills were tested in a number of lessons involving subjects other than literacy. Extended discussions about reading habits also took place.
- All assemblies were attended. A sample of registration periods, break times and lunchtime arrangements was observed, and attendance registers scrutinised.
- A large amount of documentation was inspected and used to help prepare inspectors. This included the School Development Plan, policies and schemes of work.
- The previous inspection report, its summary and the action plan produced by the governors were also used as part of the inspection process to assist judgements on school improvement since the previous inspection.
- Teachers' planning files and samples of pupils' progress and record files as well as annual reports, were scrutinised.
- Interviews were conducted with the headteacher, all teachers with management responsibilities, the school secretary, support staff, the school nurse, the caretaker and several members of the governing body. Matters discussed included their roles and responsibilities in the school and the contribution they made to pupils' attainment, progress and well-being.
- In addition, a discussion took place to ascertain the suitability of arrangements for preparing pupils for the next stage of their education.
- Responses made by parents to the questionnaires and issues raised at the parents' meeting were received, analysed, considered and checked out in school. Further discussions took place with parents as they brought their children to school or were in school during the inspection.

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	385	0	20	34
Nursery Unit/School	24	0	0	0

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked each week	41

Average class size:	27.5
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Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24

Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked each week	32

Average class size:	24
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Financial data

Financial year:

1998/99

	£
Total Income	612,580
Total Expenditure	598,512
Expenditure per pupil	1,385
Balance brought forward from previous year	26,908
Balance carried forward to next year	40,976

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

433

Number of questionnaires returned:

100

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	7	68	13	7	3
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	16	65	6	10	1
The school handles complaints from parents well	8	50	21	13	6
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	14	70	8	6	2
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	13	71	9	7	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	27	66	5	1	1
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	16	55	16	6	6
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	14	67	8	6	5
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	16	69	10	4	1
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	19	68	11	1	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	39	56	3	1	0

NB Percentages of responses are rounded to nearest integer, sum may not = 100%
Percentages given are in relation to total number of returns INCLUDING nil replies

Other issues raised by parents

Parents raised several issues via their letters to inspectors and in their discussions at the meeting prior to the inspection. In addition, several parents visited the school during the inspection to speak to the inspectors. The inspectors' findings can be found in the Main Findings, and in the section entitled "Links with parents and the community".