

INSPECTION REPORT

**Great Linford Combined School
Great Linford**

LEA area : Milton Keynes

Unique Reference Number : 110366

Acting Headteacher : Claire Dunstan

Reporting Inspector : Mr Gary Smallwood
25457

Dates of inspection : 8th to 11th November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707007
OFSTED inspection number: 182411

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

8 Crown Copyright 1999

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated. Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education (Schools) Act 1992 and the Education Act 1993, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Combined
Type of control :	County
Age range of pupils :	4 to 12 years
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	St Leger Drive Great Linford Milton Keynes MK14 4BL
Telephone number :	01908 605027
Fax number:	01908 - 231672
Appropriate authority :	Governing Body
Name of Chair of Governors :	Mrs Mary Harley
Date of previous inspection :	November 1994

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr Gary Smallwood, Registered Inspector	Music Under fives	Attainment and progress Teaching
Mrs Ann Moss, Lay Inspector		Attendance Support, guidance and pupils= welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mrs Danice Iles, Team Inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Information technology	Leadership and management Efficiency of the school
Mr Henry Moreton, Team Inspector	Science Modern foreign language Physical education	Curriculum and assessment
Mr Michael Pye, Team Inspector	Art Geography History	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
Mrs Jill Forward, Team Inspector	English Religious education Special educational needs	Pupils= spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The inspection contractor was:

Salter Baker and Associates (Education) Limited
 Drayton House
 Oving
 Chichester
 West Sussex PO20 6EW

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints which are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
 The Office for Standards in Education
 Alexandra House
 33 Kingsway
 London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

Paragraph

MAIN FINDINGS

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

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school 1 - 4
Key indicators

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

Attainment and progress 5 - 18
Attitudes, behaviour and personal development 19 - 24
Attendance 25

Quality of education provided

Teaching 26 - 32
The curriculum and assessment 33 - 42
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development 43 - 47
Support, guidance and pupils' welfare 48 - 50
Partnership with parents and the community 51 - 55

The management and efficiency of the school

Leadership and management 56 - 62
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources 63 - 67
The efficiency of the school 68 - 71

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

Areas of learning for children under five	72 - 81
English, mathematics and science	82 - 120
Other subjects or courses	121 - 179

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence	180
Data and indicators	

MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

The quality of teaching in Reception Class and in Key Stage 2 is a strength of the school. It was good or better in the Reception Class in almost 63 per cent of lessons seen and very good in almost 38 per cent of lessons. Management of pupils in the Reception class is excellent. In Key Stage 2 teaching was good or better in almost 68 per cent of lessons.

?. Provision for the Reception class children and the quality and planning of the curriculum for under fives are very good.

?. The provision for pupils= moral development and for the development of their attitudes and behaviour is good.

?. The staff have worked hard to introduce the National Literacy Strategy. It has been effectively implemented and is having a positive effect on other areas of the curriculum.

?. The school=s extra-curricular provision is good.

?. The support and level of commitment of the Governing Body is a strength of the school and finances are well managed.

Where the school has weaknesses

Outcomes as determined by National Curriculum test results are below the national average in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2 and in English and mathematics at Key Stage 1. Teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 are also below the national average.

I. Management of the school lacks stability. The unfortunate outcome of a series of short term Headteachers over a short space of time. This has, until recently, not enabled the school to move forward as effectively as it might have done and created a climate of uncertainty.

II. The role of curriculum managers is not developed well enough. They are not effectively monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The school has already identified this in the School Improvement Plan.

III. Long term curriculum planning is not complete in some subjects and therefore staff do not have a complete over-view of the whole curriculum.

IV. There is a lack of challenge for potential higher attaining pupils, including a lack of opportunity to develop independent learning and research skills and to take on responsibilities.

The school has a number of weaknesses which are mainly a result of the period of uncertainty which has existed with several Headteachers over a short period of time and the long term absence of the last Headteacher. The current management team and the governors have worked hard to move the school forward in recent months and have appropriately identified priorities. The weaknesses identified will form the basis of the governors= action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made some progress in addressing the weaknesses of the last inspection but progress overall has been less than might have been expected. Not all weaknesses have been successfully addressed, mainly because of the period of uncertainty and lack of effective management. There has been a deterioration in outcomes of National Curriculum tests but the school is now working hard to address this. There has been progress in meeting the needs of children with special educational needs and in improving provision in the teaching of reading. The governors are effective in their support of the school and have themselves had concerns over the lack of stability in the school=s management. Their monitoring role has improved since the last inspection but the monitoring role of curriculum managers has not improved enough to enable them to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning. The School Improvement Plan is comprehensive and clearly identifies priorities for both the short term and the longer term. The staff and governors know what needs to be done and recent improvements suggest that, with effective and stable management, they will be in a better position to

remedy remaining weaknesses.

Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 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	? D		
Mathematics	D	D		
Science	E	E		

The information above shows that standards in English in 1999 National Curriculum tests were similar to the national average and below the average for similar schools. (Similar schools are those which have 8 per cent to 20 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals). In mathematics, standards were below the national average and below the average for similar schools. Standards in science were well below both the national average and when compared to similar schools. During the period of inspection, standards were judged to be similar to the national average in all three core subjects.

Standards in information technology are similar to national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2. Standards in religious education meet with the requirements of the Local Agreed Syllabus. Pupils who are under five make good progress in the Reception class. The oldest pupils, who have spent the longest period of time in school, achieve the required outcomes by the time they are five and many exceed them. The youngest pupils, however, who spend less time in school before entering Year 1 do not achieve the same standards and their skills and knowledge are not as well developed, particularly in language and literacy. Standards in most foundation subjects are about average throughout the school. Progress in physical education, music and history is good at Key Stage 2 and pupils in Key Stage 1 also make good progress in physical education. Standards in French at Key Stage 3 are average and at the end of Key Stage 2 they are above average.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Very good	Satisfactory	Good
Mathematics	Very good	Satisfactory	Good
Science		Satisfactory	Good
Information technology		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Very good	Satisfactory	Good

The quality of teaching in the Reception class and Key Stage 2 is a strength of the school. Overall the teaching was good or better in just over 48 per cent of the lessons seen. It was satisfactory or better in

almost 98 per cent of the lessons. At Key Stage 2, 66 per cent of the lessons were good or better and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching by the Reception class teacher is very good overall. Her management of the Reception class is judged to be excellent. At Key Stage 1, almost 16 per cent of lessons seen were good or better and almost 90 per cent of lessons were satisfactory or better. Two lessons were unsatisfactory. At Key Stage 3, 18 per cent of lessons were good and 82 per cent were satisfactory. The good quality teaching is characterised by very clear learning objectives in teachers= planning, which lead to well focused direct teaching; good management of pupils and a good pace to the lesson with activities well matched to pupils= needs. Expectations in terms of standards of presentation and the amount of work pupils produce are high. Where lessons are less successful, learning outcomes are less clearly defined. This results in pupils being unsure of what they have to do at times, a slow pace to the lessons and insecure management of pupils. Expectations in terms of the amount of work to be produced by some pupils is low and above average pupils are not challenged enough. A characteristic of the teaching throughout the school is that pupils, particularly the above average pupils, are not given enough opportunities to develop independent learning and research skills.

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 generally behave themselves well. They conduct themselves well both in and outside school and generally have positive attitudes towards their work.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The attendance rate has improved in the last year and is close to the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence is also similar to the national average.
Ethos*	Satisfactory. Opportunities to take full advantage of resources such as parents working in school and providing effective opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities have been missed. This has made the climate for learning less effective than it might have been. Pupils= attitudes to learning and their behaviour are good and make a significant contribution to their learning.
Leadership and management	Satisfactory. The governors have been very supportive of the school through recent difficulties and uncertainties. They have carried out their duties effectively and professionally, at all times taking advice from the Local Authority. Leadership and management within the school in the last two terms have been more effective in moving the school forward.
Curriculum	The Curriculum in Reception class is very good. The curriculum in the rest of the school is satisfactory. It is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. It is incomplete in some subjects and does not offer enough opportunity for pupils to engage in independent learning and research activities.
Pupils with special educational needs	Pupils on the Special Educational Needs Register receive good support and make satisfactory progress in Key Stages 1 and 3 and good progress at Key Stage 2.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Satisfactory overall but there is good provision for pupils= moral development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory overall. Resources for learning, however, are good and the accommodation is very good.
Value for money	The school gives 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	What some parents are not happy about
V. The school is open and approachable.	
VI. Children like school	X. The lack of a permanent
VII. The behaviour and attitudes of the pupils is good.	XI. The vertical grouping
VIII. Parents are encouraged to play an active part in school life	XII. Potentially high attaining
IX. Induction arrangements for pupils entering school and transfer arrangements to secondary schools were felt to be good.	XIII. Some parents felt
	XIV. Some parents felt

Inspectors' judgements supported parents' positive views with the exception of parental involvement in school life. Other than some parent support in games and musical activities there was little evidence of parents supporting in classrooms. The school is aware of this.

Inspectors understood the concern of parents about the lack of a permanent Headteacher. The Governors acted upon advice from the LEA in not informing parents of the circumstances surrounding the illness of the previous Headteacher. Inspectors also felt that a succession of Headteachers in a short time had not helped the school to move forward and had unsettled the teaching staff. Inspectors formed the judgement, however, that the current acting Headteacher and newly formed senior management team had made progress in moving the school forward over the past two terms.

The anxieties of some parents concerning the vertical grouping arrangements for Year 1 and Year 2 were understood to some extent by the inspection team. However, because of the number of pupils on roll in Key Stage 1, such grouping of pupils is unavoidable within the financial limits that the school has placed upon it and it is not uncommon for such grouping arrangements to work successfully. The way in which the vertical groups are managed in lessons, however, has not been entirely successful and the needs of pupils of different ages and experiences have not fully been met. The situation is not helped by the admission arrangements in the Reception class which are prescribed by the local authority. Some children do not experience any full time education before entering Year 1. Their needs are very different from the needs of older and higher attaining pupils in Year 2 who are more used to the requirements of the more formal curriculum at Key Stage 1 and who need to be more appropriately challenged.

Inspectors judged that homework provision was effective in literacy and in the provision of spellings to learn and reading books to be taken home. However, the school needs to review the homework policy to establish a consistency across the school which parents and children understand. This is already identified in the school's plan for improvement.

Inspectors support the views of some parents that potentially high attaining pupils were not being sufficiently challenged. This was evident in the lack of opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning and research skills and for older pupils to take on more responsibilities both within the school and in terms of their own learning.

The view of some parents that there was not enough information about children's standards and progress was supported by inspection findings. The end of year reports do not comply with statutory requirements in providing information about pupils' progress. Details concerning pupils' attainment does not give enough information for parents to be able to make comparisons with national levels of

expected achievement. Some of the good practice seen in the provision of information for pupils with special needs is not transferred to other pupils.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

The governors should now:

- P. Establish stability and effective management in the school by:
 - ? appointing a permanent Headteacher at a time in the near future which they, with advice from the Local Education Authority, consider to be in the best interests of the school;
 - ? informing parents and staff of the timescale for appointing a permanent Headteacher;
 - ? ensuring that the current acting Headteacher and Senior Management Team are fully supported in moving the school forward by the whole Governing Body and the Local Education Authority.
(paragraph 56)

- P. Improve standards in National Tests by:
 - ? continuing to improve the quality of teaching in the school particularly at Key Stage 1;
(paragraph 28)
 - ? setting challenging but achievable short term targets for pupils and communicating these targets to both pupils and parents; (paragraphs 31, 39)
 - ? providing opportunities for all, but particularly for potentially high attaining children, to develop independent learning and research skills. (paragraphs 29, 88, 153)

- P. Improve monitoring of the curriculum and ensure that all staff have a complete overview of the whole curriculum by: (paragraphs 36, 58)
 - ? developing the role of subject co-ordinators so that they have more opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school; (paragraphs 36, 58)
 - ? ensuring that all schemes of work and subject policies are completed; (paragraphs 36, 41)
 - ? identifying areas of good practice and ensuring that these are shared with all members of staff.
(paragraphs 28, 41)

In addition to the key issues, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the Action Plan.

- P. Provide structured opportunities for pupils to learn and develop a cursive style of handwriting in Key Stage 1. (paragraphs 14, 92)
- P. Ensure that lesson plans contain well-focused and clear learning objectives, particularly in Key Stage 1 (paragraph 28)
- P. Ensure that there is consistency throughout the school in the procedures for maintaining records of pupils= attainment and progress. (paragraphs 38, 41)
- P. Ensure that statutory requirements are met in reporting pupils= progress and in meeting requirements for fire regulations. (paragraphs 52, 49)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Great Linford Combined School provides education for boys and girls aged from 4 to 12 years in the village of Great Linford which has been subsumed into the north western part of the town of Milton Keynes. Pupils come from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. In recent years the intake of pupils from outside the immediate area has increased and the school admits 38 per cent of pupils from outside Great Linford, many of whom come from nearby Stantonbury. There has been an increase in the number of pupils coming from Local Authority and Housing Association properties and in the number of pupils with special educational needs. There are 365 pupils on roll, 183 boys and 182 girls. Ninety eight pupils (28 per cent) are on the Special Educational Needs register which is above the national average. Twenty three pupils are at Stage 1, 36 at Stage 2, 34 at Stage 3, three at Stage 4 and two pupils have statements of special educational need. There are 59 pupils (16 per cent) from minority ethnic backgrounds and nine pupils come from homes where English is not the first language. Forty one pupils (11.2 per cent) are entitled to free school meals. This is below average.
2. The school admits pupils into the Reception class in stages following the policy of the Local Education Authority. Children start to attend school on a part-time basis in the term following their fourth birthday. They attend during the afternoon sessions for their first two terms. Children who are almost five attend the morning sessions and children who are five attend full time. Some children only experience three part time terms before entering Year 1, others may have experienced one or two full time terms in addition to their three part time terms. Some pupils from a neighbouring First School enter the school at Year 4. As a result, the lower pupil numbers in Key Stage 1 have meant grouping of children in mixed age classes. Until this year this has involved grouping Year 2 and Year 3 children together. Because of the unsatisfactory nature of having to teach pupils in different key stages together, this year the school has grouped pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 together in three classes.
3. In recent years since the last inspection, a new Deputy Headteacher has been appointed followed by a succession of temporary and acting Headteachers. This situation has resulted in a lack of stability in the school and progress in carrying out the required developments following the last inspection has been less than might reasonably be expected. This instability has been exacerbated by the illness and subsequent resignation of the most recently appointed Headteacher of the school. The Deputy Headteacher, who has been in post for two years, has been the acting Headteacher for two terms and was holding the post at the time of the inspection. A newly appointed senior management team and the Governing Body, particularly the Chair of governors, have ably supported her.
4. The priorities of the Governing Body have been to improve the accommodation of the school, paying particular attention to matters of health and safety, to implement the National Literacy Strategy and to provide support for the school during a difficult period of change in management. The current priorities are to improve standards of attainment, particularly in outcomes of national tests and, in line with Government requirements, targets for improvement have been established.

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage ¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	9	8	9
	Girls	19	21	19
	Total	28	29	28
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	56%	60%	56%
	National	82%	83%	87%

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	9	9	13
	Girls	21	18	21
	Total	30	27	34
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	61(74)	55(82)	69(82)
	National	82%	86%	87%

Attainment at Key Stage 2¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	33	24	57

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	21	21	21
	Girls	20	15	16
	Total	41	36	37
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	72(64)	63(58)	65(69)
	National	70%	69%	78%

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	19	22	21
	Girls	10	10	15
	Total	27	32	36
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	65(56)	71(62)	62(72)
	National	68%	68%	75%

Attendance

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	5.98
	National comparative data	6.3
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.71
	National comparative data	0.7

Exclusions

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

	Number
Fixed period	0

¹ Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Permanent	0
-----------	---

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	14%
Satisfactory or better	98%
Less than satisfactory	2%

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

1. Children start school with levels of attainment which are below average and, according to Baseline Assessment results, which have recently been introduced, below the average for Milton Keynes as a whole. The older children, who experience one or two full-time terms in Reception class in addition to their three part-time terms, make good progress in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and in creative development. By the time they move into Year 1 and Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum, the majority of these children have achieved and often exceeded the desirable outcomes in the six areas of learning. Younger pupils, who have less time in Reception class because of the admissions policy, make satisfactory progress in the main but there are some who have not achieved the desirable learning outcomes and find it difficult to cope with the requirements of the more formal curriculum in Year 1. The school does try to meet some of the needs of these pupils by affording them some time to work on language and literacy with the oldest pupils in the Reception class.
2. Attainment in English in Year 7 is similar to that expected of pupils at the beginning of Key Stage 3. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are average and pupils engage in discussions and qualify their responses and answers. Attainment in reading and writing is also average. There is a high incidence of pupils with special educational needs in this class which partly accounts for the low test results in 1999 and such pupils do not always achieve average standards. However, all pupil, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress but there are not enough opportunities for extended writing and personal research.
3. Attainment in mathematics in Year 7 is just close to the expected level for average and above average pupils of this age and progress is satisfactory at best. There is a wide spread of ability in the class with a high incidence of pupils with special educational needs and this goes some way in explaining the low outcomes of 1999 National Curriculum test results.. The needs of the potentially high attaining pupils are carefully considered and the below average pupils are taught with patience and understanding.
4. Attainment in science in Year 7 is similar to that of pupils of the same age nationally and pupils make satisfactory progress. By the time they are 12 pupils use appropriate scientific vocabulary, carry out investigations and record their work in a variety of ways.
5. Results in the 1999 National Curriculum tests in English at the end of Key Stage 2 were better than the previous year and similar to the national average. Compared to similar schools, the results were also in line. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' speaking and listening skills are average and they make satisfactory progress. By the end of the key stage most pupils listen well, speak fluently and clearly and respond thoughtfully in lessons using a wide range of vocabulary. By the age of eleven, standards in reading are average and the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils read a range of fiction and non-fiction texts and most pupils discuss the plot, characters and other features of the text well. They understand reference and research skills but there are not enough opportunities for pupils, particularly the older and potentially higher attaining pupils, to develop independent learning and research skills. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported to meet their targets in reading. Attainment in writing is similar to the average and good progress is made through the key stage. They write in a range of styles and for different purposes such as stories, poetry, plays and reviews. They also write well in other subjects. Handwriting skills are well developed at Key Stage 2 where a cursive style is systematically taught. By the end of the key stage pupils write in a neatly joined style.

6. Attainment in mathematics in the 1999 National Curriculum tests showed an improvement over the previous year but was below the national average. Compared to schools with pupils from a similar background, results were well below the average. Inspection evidence showed that the attainment of present Year 6 pupils is about average and they are making satisfactory progress in mental arithmetic, number work and in data handling. Pupils plan surveys, construct and interpret bar charts, use averages and make predictions satisfactorily. Potentially higher attaining pupils think effectively and work independently. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and are well supported. Numeracy skills are used effectively across the curriculum, such as the use of bar charts in geography and the measurement of temperatures in science.
7. Outcomes of 1999 National Curriculum tests in science show that results were well below the national average and very low compared to schools with pupils from a similar background. Results were also lower than those achieved in the 1998 tests. Attainment at the higher Level 5 showed an improvement over the 1998 results but was still well below the national average. Inspection evidence shows that attainment of the current Year 6 is better than outcomes of National Curriculum tests suggest and is similar to the national average. Progress throughout the key stage is satisfactory and sometimes good. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
8. At the end of Key Stage 1 in the 1999 National Curriculum tests, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was very low compared to the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in reading was well below the national average whilst the percentage achieving the Level 3 in writing was similar to the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 3 in mathematics was below the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 and above in teacher assessments for science was just below the national average. Comparisons with 1998 results show a decline in the results in all areas. Compared to similar schools, results in reading, writing and mathematics were very low. The results of teacher assessments in science were also very low compared to similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving at higher levels in reading was well below the average compared to similar schools, in writing it was similar to the average and in mathematics it was below the average. Attainment at the higher level in teacher assessments in science was well below the average for similar schools.
9. Standards of attainment in English are average and pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported to meet the reading and writing targets in their individual education plans. Pupils listen well in most lessons and express themselves adequately. By the end of the key stage they speak with confidence and respond appropriately in discussions and in conversations with adults and other pupils. Higher attaining pupils build on ideas in stories and report accurately about events in class discussions. Attainment in reading is similar to the national average. Pupils read a range of books that are suitably graded to match their reading level. They also read a good selection of stories and non-fiction picture books from the early years library. They enjoy the guided reading sessions in the literacy hour using 'Big Books'. Pupils have a satisfactory sight vocabulary and can use picture cues and simple phonics to gain meaning from the print. Above average pupils are beginning to use the context of stories and letter blends to read unfamiliar words.
10. Attainment in writing is similar to that of pupils of the same age nationally. By the end of the key stage, pupils are using word banks to support them in their writing and are writing simple stories using capital letters, full stops and attempting to spell correctly. Handwriting skills are not developed well. By the end of the key stage the majority of pupils are not writing in a joined up script and many pupils form basic letters incorrectly, with limited understanding of the of the size and shape of different letters. Standards of literacy in Key Stage 1 are similar to the national average and do not reflect the outcomes of national tests of the previous year. This is partly because of the high incidence of special needs pupils in the cohort of the previous year

and the positive impact of the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, which is significantly helping to raise standards. The school has also placed an emphasis recently on improving the quality of teaching, particularly by increasing the amount of more direct teaching that takes place, and this has helped to raise standards .

11. Standards seen in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 were similar to the national average and progress through the key stage is satisfactory. Pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of number through practical activities and the use of apparatus. They measure using standard and non-standard measures and have a good understanding of simple addition of money. There was little evidence of higher levels of attainment, which, in part, explains why test results are below the national average. Above average pupils are provided with extension work in some lessons but the large classes of mixed age pupils and the limited support available does not make a positive contribution to pupils= attainment and progress.
12. Standards seen in science by the end of Key Stage 1 were in line with the national average and pupils make satisfactory progress. By the age of seven pupils have a basic understanding of how to carry out a fair test. They make predictions and record findings of their investigations in a variety of ways.
13. Standards of attainment in religious education are in line with those expected in the Local Agreed Syllabus at both key stages and at the end of Year 7. Throughout the school pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. They develop a satisfactory understanding of Christianity and knowledge of some aspects of other beliefs such as Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. Standards of attainment in information technology (IT) are broadly in line with national expectations throughout the school but, as yet, pupils have not had enough experience of control, monitoring or modelling to enable them to achieve higher standards. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school but IT is not used effectively in other curriculum areas to improve skills and enhance pupils= learning. Many pupils use computers competently because they have them at home and have a good understanding of the technology involved. Progress in other subjects is satisfactory overall. Good progress is made in Key Stages 1 and 2 in physical education and in Key Stage 2 in history and music. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and Year 7 and good progress in Key stage 2 as a result of well planned learning activities and good support. Pupils with English as an additional language are also well supported and participate fully in all class lessons. Their progress is satisfactory.
14. A concern of the last report was that pupils with special education needs did not achieve satisfactory standards in reading. This issue has now been addressed and they now meet the targets identified in their individual education plans.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

15. The pupils= good attitudes to learning are a credit to themselves and the school, and undoubtedly make a significant contribution to the standards they achieve.
16. Children under five are happy and secure in the Reception class and they respond to all activities with interest and enjoyment. Their attitude to learning is good, and they demonstrate this in the way they listen carefully and give thoughtful responses to questions. They have adjusted to the classroom routines and are well aware of the school=s expectations with regard to behaviour. They co-operate well with each other and relate confidently to adults. Relationships between the children and the adults are good. Overall their behaviour is very good and their personal and social development are good.

17. In all but a small minority of lessons, pupils' response is good and in Key Stage 2 often very good. Pupils listen carefully, concentrate well and show good work habits. They take a pride in their work and their achievements, with some very well presented work being produced. In all but a minority of cases, pupils are polite in class, eager to get involved and sustain concentration. They comment on how they enjoy school and how much they enjoy the work they are required to do. When set tasks, they are keen to get involved, work with purpose and show enjoyment in their work. However, a minority of pupils, usually in Key Stages 1 and 3 are restless in class, talk while the teacher is speaking and do not produce an acceptable quality or amount of work. In addition, some older pupils show a reluctance to become fully involved in their lessons through answering questions or giving their views.
18. The varied displays around the school are in good condition and a testimony to the respectful attitudes of pupils to the work of their peers. Similar respect is shown when pupils offer views and opinions. The majority of pupils work successfully whether in groups or on their own. When offered the opportunity, pupils show a good capacity for solving problems and making informed choices on how to go about their work and the resources they should use. The school does not fully maximise these positive attitudes through the provision of enough opportunities for independent approaches to learning.
19. Behaviour in and around the school is good overall and is very good throughout Key Stage 2. This supports pupils' learning and has a significant contribution to make to their progress. Pupils are courteous to each other and to adults. They are trustworthy and show respect for the views and property of others, taking appropriate care when handling apparatus, books and materials. The school has recognised and acted upon parents' concerns about the behaviour of a very small minority of pupils and during the inspection there was no bullying or insulting name-calling witnessed. There have been no exclusions from the school.
20. The quality of pupils' relationships and their personal development is good. They form constructive relationships amongst their peers and with adults. When pupils are given responsibilities, such as door, class and library monitors, they carry them out willingly and in a mature fashion. However there are not enough opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities or become engaged in effective decision making. This is particularly the case for older pupils. Pupils respond well to fund-raising activities for charity and choose the charities themselves at times. Most pupils enjoy group sessions where they can express feelings, although a significant minority lose concentration and become restless. Pupils respond well to the comprehensive range of extra-curricular activities on offer, participating in sport, drama and musical activities with enthusiasm. In all areas of school life there exist examples of consideration and concern for others being exercised. Inspectors witnessed pupils helping others without being asked and expressing a natural and genuine interest in the well being of a sick colleague. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are integrated well into the school and the quality of relationships between children of different groups is good. This not only demonstrates the maturity of the pupils, but also reflects the happy and caring ethos of the school to which the majority of pupils respond in such a positive way.

Attendance

21. Attendance levels are satisfactory. They remain the same as those at the time of the last report, and are broadly in line with the national average. The level of unauthorised absence is similar to the national average. The effect on continuity and access to the curriculum is positive, and lessons begin and end on time. Attendance figures are not reported in the current governors' report to parents, but a letter was sent to parents to put this matter right. Registration procedures are properly documented and effectively implemented, meeting statutory requirements.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

22. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 and in the Reception class is a strength of the school. Overall the teaching was good or better in just over 48 per cent of the teaching seen. It was satisfactory in almost 50 per cent of the lessons and just over two per cent of lessons (two lessons) seen were unsatisfactory.
23. In the Reception class, the quality of teaching was very good overall and the Reception class teacher=s management of the pupils was excellent. She plans a wide range of purposeful activities that are designed to meet the needs of the varying ages of the children who attend both in the morning and the afternoon. Her expectations and commitment to high standards are evident in the way in which children=s language skills and vocabulary are extended in many carefully thought out learning and play activities. Relationships are very good and children are encouraged to develop independence and take responsibilities in their learning by clearing up after themselves, which they do with great efficiency and no fuss. Very good use is made of support staff.
24. In Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Almost 16 per cent of lessons seen were good or better, almost 90 per cent was satisfactory or better. Two lessons were unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, there is a clear focus to the lesson planning and pupils understand what is expected of them. Management of the pupils, particularly some with short spans of concentration is good, and lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Work is usually well matched to the age and learning needs of the child. In the less successful lessons, there is a lack of clear learning objectives, which lead to inappropriate activities for children of different ages and levels of attainment. In a majority of lessons, older and above average pupils are not challenged enough and expectations in terms of the amount of work that is produced are not high enough. Management of pupils is unsatisfactory overall, with control of pupils being insecure and the pupils being too noisy. Classroom support assistants are not used effectively enough to support different groups of children in their learning. At times, in music for example, teachers= subject knowledge was insecure and there was a lack of expertise in teaching the subject. This led to lessons that lacked a clear sense of direction and pace. The emphasis on improving the quality of teaching in the school has not been as effective in Key Stage 1 as in other areas of the school and good practice is not shared well enough with all members of staff.
25. In Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is good overall and a particular strength of the school. Sixty six per cent of lessons seen were good or better and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. The school=s effort to improve the quality of teaching has been more effective in this key stage. The good teaching is characterised by clear learning objectives and a clear sense of purpose, which leads to the lessons moving at a good pace. There is an effective transfer of the skills developed within the National Literacy Strategy to other subjects. These involve well-focused, direct teaching and opportunities for children to engage in discussion, express opinions and ask questions. Teachers= subject knowledge is good and in the best lessons teachers convey an infectious enthusiasm for the subject which enables pupils to become highly motivated. There are high expectations of levels of pupils= concentration. Subject related vocabulary is emphasised and plenary sessions effectively reinforce what has been learned in the lesson. Resources are well prepared and effectively used to aid pupils= learning. Teaching of all pupils in Key Stage 2, but particularly the potentially high attaining children is also characterised, however, by the lack of opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning skills and to carry out their own research.
26. The quality of teaching of pupils in Key Stage 3 is satisfactory. Of the lessons seen 18 per cent

were good and 82 per cent were satisfactory. The best lessons contain clear well-focused learning objectives and pupils are suitably challenged with work being well matched to their needs. Resources are used effectively and pupils are encouraged to exercise self-discipline. Less successful lessons are not challenging enough. The lessons lack focus and the expectations in terms of pupils' work rate are not high enough.

27. The literacy hour has been successfully implemented. The teachers have considered this to be one of the school priorities over the last year. Good teaching was seen in literacy, particularly at Key Stage 2, and the effective direct teaching which is a feature of the National Literacy Strategy has been suitably transferred to other subjects in a number of classes, particularly at Key Stage 2. The National Numeracy Strategy is in its early stages of introduction into the school and will be one of the priorities during the coming year. As yet the impact of the strategy on raising attainment in mathematics has not been as significant as that of literacy in raising pupils' achievements in English. There was evidence of good use of homework but this is not applied consistently throughout the school. The school recognises the need to review the homework policy and has plans to do so. Although the school has set appropriate targets for attainment in national tests, the target setting process has not been developed enough to provide individual short term targets for pupils which would enable them to achieve a predicted target for the end of the Key Stage. The absence of such short-term targets does not enable pupils or parents to know what they need to be improving upon in order to move successfully onto the next stage of learning.
28. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, particularly in Key Stage 2 where well planned and supported learning activities link directly to the targets identified in pupils' individual education plans. The teaching of information technology is satisfactory overall but not enough use is made of information technology in other areas of the curriculum.

The curriculum and assessment

29. The school provides an appropriately broad curriculum for its pupils. All National Curriculum subjects and religious education are included. Balance is achieved through thorough medium and long-term planning for English, mathematics and science, and for most, but not all, other subjects. The curriculum is enriched by suitable provision for personal, health and social education. The school has successfully managed the implementation of the National Literacy, and more recently, the National Numeracy Strategy. The breadth of the curriculum has been maintained.
30. The curriculum for the under fives is very well planned to take account of the areas of learning for this age and of the National Curriculum. Assessment is used well to plan activities for all children under five and to monitor their progress.
31. The curriculum promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development well, and is accessible to all pupils. The level of challenge within the curriculum is appropriate for most pupils and opportunities to discuss issues and carry out investigations are developing satisfactorily. Information technology, however, is not used enough to support and enhance subjects across the curriculum. The effectiveness of the school's strategy for literacy is good, and it is satisfactory for numeracy. Both subjects enable pupils to apply basic skills across a number of different subjects. The curriculum fully meets requirements and includes drugs and sex education. Pupils with special educational needs have access to the full curriculum.
32. A useful long-term overview has been developed for most subjects, which provides a framework within which teachers plan their work on a termly basis. Policies and schemes of work have been developed in most subject areas, but many need to be updated to reflect current practice and to enable all staff to have a complete over-view of the whole curriculum. Teachers produce thorough and useful weekly as well as termly plans and this ensures that pupils receive

a balanced curriculum, which develops their skills in the different subjects. Many subject leaders monitor teachers' termly objectives, although outcomes are only monitored or evaluated in the core subjects. The School Improvement Plan identifies this as an area for further development.

33. Teachers' weekly plans for literacy and numeracy are good. They identify learning objectives and assessment opportunities, which form the basis of teachers' on-going assessment of pupils' work. The process of matching the needs of different groups of pupils to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory.
34. There are sound procedures in place for managing assessment across the school, and appropriate use is made of formal and standardised testing across the whole school, especially in English and mathematics. Teachers keep satisfactory records, which show pupils' progress, but this information is not maintained consistently. Neither is it shared enough with the pupils or their parents. Assessment in the Foundation subjects is not developed well enough.
35. The use of assessment information to plan for pupils' next steps in learning is generally satisfactory, although the results of pupils' assessments are not well used to set targets for individual pupils. However, test and teacher assessment results are analysed in order to make decisions about teaching and learning issues, and the school has determined appropriate and specific targets for standards in literacy.
36. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities through which the quality of pupils' educational experiences is enriched. Pupils of all ages have many opportunities to take part in a range of sporting activities including cross-country, football, netball, short tennis, and hockey. Sport is rightly regarded as a strong feature of the school's curriculum provision.
37. At the time of the last inspection, the quality of the curriculum was good, and it was judged to be effective overall. Progress has been satisfactory. Since then the school has successfully introduced both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and has completely re-organised its provision for information technology across the school. Following these major changes the school has yet to revisit its planning for the curriculum overall, or to restate its revised priorities. Plans to do so are identified in the School Improvement Plan. Its assessment, recording and reporting systems do not fully reflect the changes made, and all staff do not maintain their records in a consistent format. The good practice, which is evident in some parts of the school, particularly in Key Stage 2 is not shared enough with all members of staff.
38. The school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils on the special educational needs register. This is an improvement since the last inspection when there was not enough detail in pupils' individual education plans to meet the requirements of the Code. Provision for special educational needs is good and pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. The recently introduced modified individual and group education plans for pupils, including those with statements, identifies clear targets and strategies which teachers and support staff can follow. These targets are discussed with parents and pupils. The school offers equal access by all pupils to the full range of opportunities, regardless of ethnicity, gender, ability or age. There is an equal opportunities policy in place and it is implemented effectively.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

39. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is satisfactory overall. All adults in the school provide good role models for the pupils and there is a caring, supportive atmosphere within the school where all individuals are valued.

40. Provision for the spiritual development of all pupils is satisfactory and similar to that found at the last inspection. Daily acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements. Worship is conducted through school, year and class assemblies that regularly provide opportunities for prayer, moments of quiet reflection, and include worship through song. Within religious education and >circle time= pupils are given opportunities to discuss and explore their own feelings, values and beliefs. Older pupils reflect on their own lifestyle and the lives of others. They are beginning to develop some understanding of the life and work of famous people such as Charles Kingsley, through contrasting their own activities with that of some Victorian children. During religious education, art, music and literature pupils gain an appropriate understanding and awareness of some world religions, particularly Hinduism, Islam and Judaism.
41. Provision for the pupils= moral development is good and similar to that found at the last inspection. A detailed behaviour policy provides clear rules and strategies for appropriate behaviour and relationships in school. Class rules emphasise respect, courtesy and care for others and the environment. The pupils understand these rules and meet the expectations. Staff provide good role models of sensitive and supportive relationships with all the pupils and other adults. All work, effort and contribution to activities are valued and praised with a system for rewards. Well-chosen stories and discussion of issues teach pupils to respect others and know right from wrong. The oldest pupils engage in discussion about moral issues such as animal welfare and medical research.
42. Provision for pupils= social development is satisfactory and similar to that found at the last inspection. Many opportunities are planned for pupils to work in groups and co-operate with each other in lessons, especially in literacy, numeracy and physical education. They make visits to local areas of interest and older pupils have a residential visit to the River Dart. They participate in a range of extra-curricular sport activities with other schools and in the community. They are encouraged to share and help each other and participate in charity activities such as Red Nose Day and Poppy Day. They are given some opportunities to take responsibility. The older Year 6 and 7 pupils help with the overhead projector during assembly and are school librarians. The younger pupils regularly help to organise and tidy their own classroom resources and show concern for each other if hurt in the playground. However, there are not enough opportunities for the older pupils to develop a sense of citizenship or to contribute to the management of the school.
43. Provision for the cultural development is satisfactory and better than that found at the last inspection. There are some opportunities for pupils to explore their own culture during visits to local places and on visits linked to themes they are studying, such as St Albans for religious education and local historic buildings as part of history and geography lessons. Discussion and stories in religious education lessons and the study of famous artist and musicians provide many opportunities for pupils to develop an awareness and understanding of other cultures. Visitors, such as an African dance group and musicians, enrich the pupils= understanding of other cultures. Around the school colourful, well presented displays of work about religious festivals, often with artefacts, widen pupils= understanding of other cultures and contribute to racial harmony within the school and respect for the range of cultures that exist. Teachers provide an informative and unbiased approach to pupils= cultural development and value the contribution to lessons of pupils from other cultures and faiths other than Christianity.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

44. The provision for pupils= welfare, health and safety remains effective, and overall the school=s provision and quality of welfare and guidance is satisfactory. The school communicates effectively with parents who are very positive about the support that their children receive. However, there is a lack of challenge for the potentially higher attaining children, and marking in some areas is not constructive, and is not used to raise standards. There is also a lack of

opportunity for the children to develop independent learning skills. Support for children with special educational needs is good. The children are well supported by learning assistants in the classrooms and in withdrawal groups.

45. Procedures for monitoring academic progress and personal development are satisfactory for all pupils. Staff have high expectations for good behaviour and effective procedures are in place for promoting discipline. The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory, as are those for promoting and monitoring child protection and pupils' health and safety. Fire drills take place regularly, but statutory requirements regarding health and safety requirements are not being met because there are no emergency access doors marked. The staff receive appropriate training to enable them to keep up-to-date with aspects of care and welfare, and responsibility for health and safety is clearly defined. A designated member of staff is undergoing further training at the moment for all aspects of child protection, and a policy for this will be in place soon. Teachers and support staff all make a significant contribution to providing a caring atmosphere and a safe environment for learning. A good policy for personal, social and health education is in place, but it is not yet being fully implemented.
46. The pupils are confident in their dealings with each other and in approaching any member of the teaching and support staff. Emphasis is put on raising self-esteem and politeness, but the older children are not being given enough responsibilities to enhance their personal development. The quality of wall displays is high and this has a positive effect on children's learning. Their work is valued. Close liaison with parents has a positive effect on the quality of the induction of new pupils, and there is good preparation for transfer to secondary school.

Partnership with parents and the community

47. The effective links with parents at the time of the last inspection have not been maintained, but relationships with parents and the community are satisfactory. There is not much involvement in the children's learning in the school, such as helping in the classrooms, and the school recognises that this is an area for development and has plans to let parents know how they can help more. Parents know that they would be welcomed into the school where they could make an effective contribution to the children's learning. They take an interest in what the school has to offer their children. There is a small but very active Friends' Association, which has raised money for the library and information technology suite.
48. Parents speak highly of the systems of communication, but there is not enough information in the reports to enable them to have a clear understanding of their children's attainment and progress. The reports are not meeting statutory requirements in this respect, as they do not make any references to children's progress or levels of attainment. Parents have also been concerned over the lack of information concerning the absence of the previous Headteacher. The methods of induction of new children and the transfer of children to secondary school are highly valued. There is a new school prospectus, which will be published shortly, and this meets statutory requirements, but the governors' report to parents has some omissions such as the targets which have been set for pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2.
49. Staff are regarded as very approachable and their knowledge of the children thorough. The homework policy is being implemented and is soon to be reviewed, but some parents are still unhappy about the quality and quantity of homework being given. The inspection team felt that homework provision was effective in literacy and in the provision of spellings to learn and reading books to be taken home. However, it was felt that there was inconsistency across the school in homework provision and that there is a need to review the homework policy and ensure that it is clearly understood by children and parents. Parents involved with children with special educational needs are kept informed of their children's progress.

50. The school's work is satisfactorily enriched by links with the local community. They have close links with a local secondary school, a theatre, a multicultural centre and take part in the community festival. They also participate in the Milton Keynes Cross-Country Race, Athletics Championship, football leagues and cup competitions. The orchestra also performs outside of school. There are no formal business links.
51. Visitors are invited into the school to share their skills and interests, such as the local policeman, and pupils go on outings to, for example, Coventry Museum of Transport, to Sulgrave Manor, St. Albans for a pilgrimage, and a centre for teambuilding. Year 7 and some Year 6 pupils have a residential visit to the River Dart Centre. These visits are linked to class topics and play an important part in extending the curriculum. The quality of the work displayed on the walls of the school is good, and this contributes to the quality of learning and the pupils' standard of attainment.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

52. The leadership and management of the school have been challenging during the recent years when four different Headteachers, including the present acting Headteacher, have been in post. This has resulted in considerable instability and uncertainty for the school and, until recently, the school had not moved forward enough since the last inspection. The present acting Headteacher, who has been in post for less than one term, with the support of the Governing Body and a newly appointed senior management team, is providing effective leadership which is giving increasingly clear guidance and direction to the work of the school. Despite there being a period of uncertainty and lack of progress, the school has started to regain the positive ethos and shared sense of purpose which once prevailed. The governors and staff are to be commended for this. It is important now, however, that appropriate action is taken by the governors and the Local Education Authority (LEA) to establish long term stability in the school by the appointment of a permanent Headteacher. It is also important that the present management team continues to be well supported by the governors and the LEA, and that parents and staff are kept informed of the procedures and timescale for appointing a new Headteacher.
53. Recent pressures on the school budget have involved the acting Headteacher, the school bursar and the governors in financial concerns and difficult decisions but everyone has worked extremely hard to compensate for the difficult circumstances and move forward. The governors, Headteacher, teaching and non-teaching staff have a strong commitment to the aims of the school and its life and work. The recent changes in management are helping it towards more success in achieving its aims. Each member of staff has a clearly defined job description specifying their responsibilities as teachers and subject co-ordinators. Although many of them are new to their subjects, they are showing commitment and enthusiasm, are all united in their purpose and involved in the development and growth of the school. Daily routines and administrative procedures are well established and are effective in allowing teachers to teach. Updating work on policies and schemes of work is in progress but much remains to be done. There is a satisfactory appraisal system based on interviews with staff in place but this is awaiting further development.
54. Central to all policy decisions and future planning is the aim to raise standards and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been well implemented. The curriculum co-ordinators have taken their roles seriously and have been supported and enabled by the acting Headteacher and governors. The value of the monitoring exercises, which have been done as part of these strategies, has been recognised but overall they are not fully in place. The role of

the co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluation across the curriculum in order to raise academic standards has not been developed enough. This now has high priority in the school improvement plan, which is closely focussed to current needs. More testing is being put in place and analysis undertaken; there is an increasing emphasis on good practice at all levels. Regular staff meetings are held and minutes of the meetings are recorded efficiently.

55. As at the time of the previous inspection, the governors have a clear grasp of their strategic functions and an effective range of committees, including finance, curriculum, and premises. They take their responsibilities very seriously, have developed their capabilities and established their roles and are professional in their approach, following LEA advice at all times. They have a most determined and committed chairman and have been very supportive of the school through recent difficulties. Headteacher's and Governors' reports and minutes are efficient and informative, indicating a good working relationship. There is a school development plan written by the acting Headteacher in consultation with staff and governors which effectively itemises and prioritises future targets and outlines costs.
56. The day to day management and administrative skills of the acting Headteacher are good and she enjoys the loyalty and respect of staff and parents. There are good relationships and a concern for the pastoral care of the pupils. The school is an orderly and friendly community with a strong sense of purpose. This picture of the school equates with that of parents at their meeting and in their questionnaire answers. The staff and pupils are very proud of their school, parents are also supportive but not used as effectively as they used to be. They have also been concerned that they have not had enough information about the prolonged absence of the previous Headteacher. The classroom displays are attractive and informative, wall space in corridors and communal areas is put to good use and high standards are expected throughout the school. The children have a pleasant and effective learning environment created by their teachers.
57. The school offers equal access for all pupils to the full range of opportunities, regardless of ethnicity, gender, ability or age. There is a good equal opportunities policy in place and it is implemented effectively. The provision for special educational needs is a strength of the school and its management by the governors and the co-ordinator is good. The co-ordinator and the Headteacher have established comprehensive procedures and structures, which work well. Records and correspondence are effectively managed, regular meetings are held and a close liaison with outside agencies is maintained. All documentation is efficiently presented to meet statutory requirements.
58. Despite problems and concerns over the last two years, a positive ethos has been maintained and there have been many improvements in the environment for staff and pupils. The governors and senior management team have held fast to their belief in the school and the values which are important to them and there is a shared determination to succeed.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

59. The school continues to have an adequate number of appropriately qualified teachers to teach the curriculum. There is still a satisfactory match of number, qualifications and experience of support staff, who work closely with teachers and make an effective contribution to the progress of all pupils, especially those with special educational needs.
60. Arrangements for the professional development of all staff are satisfactory. In-service training is now linked more closely with areas for development in the school development plan and is

matched to both the curricular needs of the school and the professional needs of the staff. A system for the induction of new staff includes good support from experienced colleagues. However, the policy for appraising teachers is to be further developed.

61. The adequacy of the accommodation for the effective delivery of the curriculum is very good. It remains well managed, clean and generally in a good condition. The outdoor areas are spacious and well kept, with well marked playgrounds and a large, level field which enriches games activities. However, the outside area for the Reception class pupils is small and not developed well enough. The Reception class teacher is well aware of this and hopes to improve the area when funds allow.
62. There are two light and airy libraries, and a very well equipped information technology suite. The school is also fortunate to have a music room, a special educational needs room, boys= and girls= changing rooms, a large hall and a spacious area for the children who are under five. There are good displays around the school and in the classrooms, providing information for current topics, and these have a positive effect on the pupils= learning.
63. The range and quality of educational resources has improved since the last report, and are now good overall. Resources are clearly labelled and are readily available to staff and pupils. There is now no shortage of artefacts and resources to support the pupils= research and investigative work. Good use is made of a range of resources beyond the school to extend learning, such as the swimming pool in the local secondary school, and visitors make an effective contribution to various curriculum areas. Pupils go on appropriate educational visits, and Year 7 pupils participate in a residential visit which broadens their outlook and experience.

The efficiency of the school

64. The school is run efficiently, financial planning and administration of the budget are good. The school is working within a development or school improvement plan which is driven by the needs of the curriculum and indicates a programme of priorities for action, personnel involved, the timescale for implementation and evaluation.
65. The Headteacher and finance officer plan the budget which is approved or adjusted by the governors' finance committee before being presented to the Governing Body and the local authority for approval. Income and expenditure figures per pupil are low compared to the average. As at the time of the previous report, the school's finances are well ordered; there is good and careful financial planning and effective management and control of the current budget by the Headteacher and governors. Frequent monitoring of the budget takes place, a monthly reconciliation is received and updates of the budget are regularly available. The governors have been very involved and much thought has been given to the extra costs of putting into place the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The bursar, Headteacher, chairman and chairman of the finance committee meet regularly and modelling exercises have been valuable to enable them to judge the cost effectiveness of decisions, especially those concerned with the financial implications of the long-term illness of the previous Headteacher.
66. Effective use is made of staff time, including special educational needs support and non-teaching staff. The use of accommodation and learning resources is planned to benefit the children and there is monitoring by the governors of teaching and curriculum development to ensure that provision is always used as cost-effectively as possible. The curriculum committee considers the deployment of staff and support staff; teachers are generally well assisted by the support staff.
67. School administration is efficient with systems in place to provide effective day to day organisation. The recommendations of the most recent audit have all been implemented. Parents raise substantial amounts of money for the school, most of which has been spent on additional resources. The socio-economic circumstances of the intake are at present about

average; attainment on entry is below average and attainment at the end of the Key Stage 2 in the core subjects, English, mathematics and science, is about average. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good and the quality of the teaching provided is also good. The total income and expenditure per pupil are low in comparison with national and local average figures. The school is providing satisfactory value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

68. Children enter the Reception class the term after their fourth birthday which means a staggered intake over the school year. There are 28 children on roll forming three part time groups that operate in separate morning and afternoon sessions. The oldest children attend the morning sessions and are joined by some pupils from Year 1 for language and literacy. Attainment of children on entry is below average and below the average for Milton Keynes as a whole according to the recently introduced Baseline Assessment.
69. The reception class teacher provides a very well structured programme of activities for children in both morning and afternoon sessions. Planning is related directly to the desirable learning outcomes of the six areas of learning for pupils under five. The well planned and often challenging activities enable children to work towards the more formal curriculum that the school offers in Key Stage 1. The majority of the older children who have had more time in school attain the expected learning outcomes by the time they are five and often exceed them. Younger children, who do not experience any full time education in Reception class, enter Year 1 with less well developed skills, particularly in language and literacy, and some are not ready for the more formal curriculum at Key Stage 1. This is recognised by the school and these pupils currently in Year 1 have an opportunity to return to the Reception class for literacy and language sessions. This arrangement works well.

Personal and social development

70. Children's personal and social development flourishes in the Reception class. The Reception class teacher knows her children well and provides a stimulating, safe and happy environment for children to work and play in. The majority of children feel confident and secure in the classroom, understand what is expected of them and have good attitudes to learning. They work and play well together both in groups and independently. Their independent and social skills are developing well and this was very evident in the way in which they tidied up after themselves at the end of a session and in the way in which they supported and helped each other. Children move round the room sensibly, they take turns, share resources willingly and show a great deal of respect and affection for the adults working with them. Their behaviour was very good and this was evident in the way in which groups worked together with a minimum of supervision when the teacher was engaged with another group of children. No inappropriate behaviour was seen during the inspection.

Language and literacy

71. Teaching of the key skills in language and literacy was consistently good for both the afternoon and morning sessions. Tasks are carefully matched to children's needs and there are constant opportunities for children to engage in discussions which are designed to extend their vocabulary and language skills. Children listen attentively to stories and discuss characters and make simple predictions about what might happen next in a story. They handle books carefully and particularly enjoy the stories in the big books which are used for shared reading times. Older children read simple stories and younger ones can tell a story using pictures as cues. They also join in with reading the stories in shared reading activities using the big books. Their writing skills develop well with younger children starting to copy letters correctly and attempting to write their own names. Older children write simple words and sentences independently.

72. By the time they are five most children know many letter sounds and recognise rhyming words. Some also write words which they come across in their reading and poetry sessions. Attainment overall is about average and progress is good for all pupils. However, for younger pupils who spend less time in the Reception class attainment is not as high.

Mathematics

73. Children develop their mathematical skills very effectively through a range of well-planned activities and first hand experience. The teaching of mathematics is good. With adult supervision and independently, children play number games and sing number songs and rhymes. Many recognise, count and sequence numbers up to ten and older children do so up to 20. They are beginning to add on numbers within ten and count and sort objects, such as sources of light, into sets. Mathematical language is developing well. Children know the names of shapes and can recognise shapes such as circles, squares and triangles. They record their work in a variety of ways including art work and simple picture graphs following surveys that they have carried out such as finding out which is their most favourite fruit. Attainment in mathematics is about average and pupils of all ages make good progress. Again, however, the youngest pupils do not achieve as well as the older ones as they spend less time in the Reception class.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

74. Children are effectively developing their understanding of the world through well planned topic work and science. During the inspection period, children were studying light and sources of light. Some had brought different sources of light from home and these along with sources provided by teacher provided opportunities for investigations and discussions. Children were seen building simple circuits to make a bulb light up. They knew the word circuit and battery and that a circuit had to be complete before the bulb lit up. They knew the differences between sources of light that had to be >plugged in= and those that operated from batteries. They also knew the rules about health and safety when using electricity. They gain a good knowledge of the world around them through topic work in history and geography. They make comparisons between objects that we use in every day life, such as sources of light, and what was used a long time ago. Children have many well-structured opportunities to use play and construction materials, enabling them to develop making skills to a good standard. They have access to two computers and use simple computer programs to support their learning. Children were often seen working independently on the computer. They have developed good control over the mouse and appeared to use the computer with confidence. Attainment in this area is above average and they make good progress.

Physical development

75. The children were not seen taking part in a physical education lesson although they use the school hall for lessons at least once a week. Discussions with the teacher and a review of her planning indicated that children=s physical development is considered a very important aspect of their time in the Reception class. Physical development is also supported through the very good play opportunities presented in the classroom and in the outside play area, which, although small, offers the children a small climbing frame and toy vehicles. These together, allow children valuable opportunities to explore and develop their physical skills. Opportunities to develop fine motor skills were in plenty with a wide range of manipulative activities involved in working with different tools and materials in painting and modelling, using playdough and clay and in both sand and water play.

Creative Development

76. The Reception class teacher uses the class topics and work in other subjects such as mathematics and language to plan a range of stimulating experiences in art, craft and music. Children make good progress and achieve above the expected standards in this area and their work is valued. This was evident in the number of displays of children's art work which covered a range of subjects and represented a wide variety of different techniques being taught, such as sponge printing, >feet= printing and marbling. Children use paint and craft materials appropriately, though some of the younger pupils have not yet mastered the use of all the tools and resources available. The children sing a wide range of songs and say rhymes from memory. Some children are confident enough to sing them as solos followed by much applause from their classmates.
77. The quality of teaching in the Reception class is very good overall and never less than satisfactory. The Reception class teacher provides a very good range of well-planned stimulating activities that cover all the areas of learning. Lessons are planned well for the morning and afternoon sessions and the Reception class teacher has a very good understanding of the needs of young children. She is committed to early years teaching and has high expectations of the children, constantly providing challenging activities and extending their language as much as possible in all areas of learning. Through carefully planned routines, children are encouraged to be independent and self-reliant and the management of children and the different groups is excellent. Relationships too are very good and the children work and play in a secure and happy environment. Resources are generally good but the small playground area available limits the opportunities for outdoor activities. The Reception class teacher is aware of this and would like to develop the area further when funds allow.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

78. Inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment are satisfactory overall at the end of both the present Key Stage 1 and 2. The standards of literacy seen at Key stage 1 do not reflect the outcomes of National Curriculum tests in 1999. This is partly because of the high incidence of special needs pupils in the previous year and the positive impact of the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. At Key Stage 3, pupils are achieving standards in line with the expectation of pupils in Year 7.
79. The 1999 National Curriculum test results in reading and writing were lower than the previous year and show that pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 were below the average compared with all schools and well below the national average for similar schools. However, the percentage of pupils= achieving the higher Level 3 in writing is similar to the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 for reading is well below the national average. The high percentage of pupils on the special needs register for last year explains, to some extent, the results achieved.
80. The 1999 National Curriculum test results at Key Stage 2 were better than the previous year. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 or 5 was similar to the national average. Results were below average when compared to schools with pupils from a similar background. The effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, the setting of pupils across the year band for literacy and focussed teaching in Key Stage 2 are making a positive impact upon pupils= attainment at this key stage and standards were seen to be similar to the national average.

81. At the end of both key stages and in Year 7 pupils= listening and speaking skills are average. Pupils listen well in most lessons and their listening skills are developed well through the planned activities. They respond to teachers= questions and many pupils express themselves adequately and use a wide vocabulary. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils speak with confidence, respond appropriately in conversation and enjoy discussing their work with adults and other pupils. The above average pupils build on ideas in stories and report accurately about events in class discussion. At the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils listen well, speak clearly and fluently and respond thoughtfully in lessons using a wide range of specific and appropriate vocabulary. During lessons, Year 7 pupils reason, discuss and qualify their responses and answers. All pupils are given opportunities to speak and participate in a range of group and role-play activities and major drama productions. Pupils enjoy these and develop their speaking and self-presentation skills. They participate in and present these major school productions to live audiences. Recent productions include The Wizard of Oz, Bugsy Malone and excerpts from Carmen and Cats.
82. At the end of both key stages and in Year 7, pupils= attainment in reading is average. All pupils, including those with special educational need, make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and Year 7 and good progress in Key Stage 2. Where good progress is seen there is detailed planning with clearly focussed lesson objectives and direct teaching of basic reading skills and phonics, as in Year 3. High expectations of pupils, contributes to the higher attainment and better progress in this key stage. However, the higher attaining and eldest pupils are not always challenged enough in their reading tasks and by the range of reading texts available to them.
83. At Key Stage 1 most pupils read a range of reading books that are suitably graded to match their reading skill and a good selection of story and non fiction picture books from the well organised early years library. Pupils enjoy the class >literacy hour= reading sessions and enthusiastically join in class reading sessions with the >Big Books=. They understand how to use words they have learned from sight, simple phonics and the pictures in books to gain meaning from the print. The higher attaining pupils are beginning to use the context of the story and letter blending as they attempt to read unfamiliar words. Most pupils talk adequately about the storyline and the characters in their reading book and are familiar with the terms author and illustrator. They know how to find and use the contents page and simple index in reference books.
84. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read a range of fiction and non fiction texts and most pupils discuss the plot, characters and other features of the text. Most pupils express opinions about the style of several authors and the books they enjoy. Pupils make appropriate use of the middle school library and locate and research information using CD-ROMs. They understand reference and research skills. However, this activity is underdeveloped for the higher attaining and oldest pupils. This limits opportunities for the development of the pupils= independent learning skills and preparation for the next stage of their education.
85. Throughout the school, nearly all the pupils read at home regularly. Homework is given to learn key words from sight, spellings and sometimes reference activities. This support from home is a valuable contribution to the pupils= attainment, attitude to learning and enjoyment in reading.
86. At the end of both key stages and Year 7 attainment in writing is average. Progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and Year 7 and good at Key Stage 2. Where progress is good across Key Stage 2, teachers set high expectations for the pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs, and use individual pupil records and weekly evaluations of specific lesson objectives effectively in their planning. Progress is supported by the good practice seen at the end of the key stage where the constructive marking of pupils= work and the setting of individual targets helps to raise standards. This is not seen across the whole school.

87. At the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils are beginning to use word banks and attempt their own correct spelling. Key words are taught and often set for homework. At the end of the key stage many pupils write several simple sentences for a story. They appropriately use a capital letter and a full stop and attempt correct spelling. However, some teachers' expectations for the higher attaining pupils are often too low.
88. Most pupils are not writing in a joined up script at the end of Key Stage 1 and many pupils form letters incorrectly with limited understanding of the size and shape of the different letters. At Key Stage 2 pupils are systematically taught a cursive script and at the end of the key stage all are writing in a neatly joined style. They write in a range of formats and adapt their writing for various purposes, for example in writing appropriately for story, poetry, reports, reviews, play writing and letters. They write well in all other areas of the curriculum.
89. Spelling is systematically developed and pupils regularly use dictionaries to support their work. At Key Stage 1, however, even above average pupils are not confident in using dictionaries. Pupils understand and use basic punctuation appropriately. Pupils often draft their work and redraft to improve it. However, there is limited opportunity for extended writing and personal research, particularly for the higher attaining pupils. By the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 7, they are maintaining the average attainment achieved in Year 6 and most write with fluency and competence.
90. Throughout the school pupils enjoy English and most concentrate on their tasks and contribute to the lessons. At Key Stage 1, most pupils listen carefully to stories and respond adequately to teachers' instructions. They are generally eager to ask questions and express opinions. Most pupils work well independently and in groups. The concentration span of some pupils, however, is limited and they have difficulty in remaining focused on the tasks they have to do. There is also a tendency for these pupils to talk when the teacher is talking and to call out answers instead of putting their hands up. At Key Stage 2, children listen well and respond well to teachers' questions. Groups working independently do so with little fuss and sustain their concentration on the task at hand. Pupils are usually confident in making suggestions and contribute enthusiastically to discussions about poetry or the effective use of words. Pupils in Key Stage 2 show positive attitudes to learning; their work is usually completed on time and well presented. In Key Stage 3, a few of the oldest pupils are not as positive about their learning as most. They do not make positive contributions to the lessons and do not remain focused on the work at hand. Teachers intervene appropriately to reduce any disruption to the lesson and to focus attention on the tasks.
91. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and in Year 7 and good at Key Stage 2. The national Literacy strategy is effectively implemented throughout the school and teachers' planning is generally detailed and thorough. Where teaching is good appropriate tasks match the attainment of each pupil and challenge the higher attaining pupils. Where there is good quality teaching staff use questions to enable pupils to express and develop their thoughts, they set high expectations for the presentation and content of work, and resources used are appropriate and interesting. Where the teaching is less effective in Key Stages 1 and 3, objectives are less clearly defined, especially for pupils of different ages and abilities in Key Stage 1. At times, pupils with short concentration spans are required to sit listening for too long and not enough use is made of setting timed targets for children to meet. Expectations in terms of the amount of work pupils produce over a period of time are not high enough and support assistants are not always used effectively.
92. The co-ordinators, one recently appointed, give sound leadership to the subject. A considerable amount of in-service training has been completed for introducing and developing the National Literacy Strategy. The expectations of content for the literacy hour have been modified to support those pupils in Year 3 with special educational needs in literacy, and is being implemented well in Year 7 in conjunction with the local authority curriculum guidelines for

pupils at this age.

93. The policies for English are in need of review and development. The school is aware of this. Co-ordinators monitor weekly plans and there is some monitoring of pupils' work. It is the intention of the co-ordinators to develop and extend monitoring of pupils' work and classroom activities. There is inconsistency across the school in the way teachers make use of ongoing records, marking of pupils' work and assessment to support planning. Data from standard assessments are studied and used for identifying some areas for development, such as writing and setting pupils for learning.
94. Resources are satisfactory for the literacy hour activities and effectively support teaching and learning. The two libraries are well organised and contain a wide range of books. These are in good condition and regularly changed through the library loans service.

Mathematics

95. Attainment in mathematics is average overall in both Key Stages 1 and 2 and in Year 7. In the 1998 National Curriculum tests, results at the end of Key Stage 1 were close to the national average and performance in mathematics from 1996 to 1998 has been close to the national average. In the 1999 Key Stage 1 test and assessment results the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 or above was very low in comparison to the national average and significantly lower than the previous year. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 3 was below the national average and slightly lower than the previous year. Pupils' performance in the mathematics tests was very low in comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Attainment from 1996 to 1998 improved for boys but declined for girls. Performance by boys from 1996 to 1998 was slightly above and by girls was well below the national average.
96. In the 1998 Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 was close to the national average. The percentage achieving Level 5 was well below the national average. In the 1999 Key Stage 2 test results, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above was slightly higher than last year. However, the 1999 results are below the national average. Only 18 Year 6 pupils attended voluntary booster classes in the Easter 1999 holidays, under a Government grant scheme to improve the attainment of Level 3 pupils. Boys performed slightly better than girls and in comparison to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' performance in the mathematics tests was below average.
97. In Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils at all levels of attainment are making satisfactory progress although there are times when group work tasks are not understood, resulting in time being wasted and little progress made. In Key Stage 2, progress is at least satisfactory and in the majority of lessons seen it was good or very good. In Key Stage 3 lessons, progress is satisfactory.
98. Standards of numeracy are close to national expectations and progress is sound overall. There are some effective links between mathematics and other subjects. Understanding of number, shape and space is reinforced by work in areas such as science, art, design and technology and geography. In science, charts and tables are being used; in design and technology, accurate measurement is required and in information technology there are examples of good use of graphs and charts.
99. The major emphasis during the inspection week was on number work and shape, space and measurement, although there was data handling in Year 6 and in displays. Year 1 and 2 pupils are being given practical experience in their work on number. However, the classes of mixed age and mixed ability pupils result in time being wasted in groups which do not have the teacher's direct attention or when additional support is not available. Above average pupils who are capable in number work are given extension work in some lessons and below average

pupils are given additional explanations or different worksheets to help in their understanding but unless they have someone with them to explain and help they become confused. In Key Stage 1, the pupils' acquisition and consolidation of knowledge about number and the development of their skills and understanding is being limited by the classes across two year groups and at times when there is no extra help available.

100. In Key Stage 2, Year 3 were working in ability groups on two and three-dimensional shapes; there was careful differentiation of work and all ability groups made satisfactory progress. In Year 4, the pupils persevered, applying themselves with great diligence until they began to understand how to put fractions in order. In Year 5, the pupils understood the difference between instruments and units of measurement and also conversion and abbreviations for units of length, they are working at expected levels. The majority of Year 6 pupils are making sound progress with mental arithmetic; in their number work and in data handling, the above average pupils think effectively and work independently. They are familiar with planning a survey, constructing bar charts, different averages, prediction and interpretation. Lessons observed in Year 7 indicated a spread of ability but the needs of the above average pupils are considered in this subject and the lower ability groups and special educational needs pupils are taught with much patience and understanding.
101. Pupils in all years settle down to work well. Behaviour varies with the teacher and the tasks set and is not consistent in Key Stage 1. Reception class children are co-operative and well motivated but in Years 1 and 2 the pupils are less able to settle quietly to their tasks. Behaviour is usually good in Key Stage 2 where the pupils, especially the older ones, are positive, attentive, interested and concentrate well. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are good. Pupils respond well when they are asked to combine to work in groups, they do so efficiently and effectively and they move about the classroom quietly and purposefully, willingly giving out or collecting in books and equipment. They are co-operative and kind with each other, sharing ideas and are generally confident to answer in class in the oral and mental sessions and in the main activity.
102. Teaching is mostly satisfactory and often good in Key Stage 2. Classes are generally well managed and organised; although few are specialists, most teachers have a reasonably secure knowledge and understanding of the work being taught. Some have high expectations, confidence and enthusiasm which enhance the achievement of their classes. Some staff are skilled at questioning and posing challenging mathematical problems for their pupils, enabling them to describe and discuss their tasks. There is good use of praise and encouragement and in several classes in Key Stage 2 teachers and pupils appear to be enjoying mathematics and effective learning is taking place. Some lessons observed in Key Stage 2 were very well structured and differentiated, pupils were clear about what they were doing, pace was well suited to the particular groups, resources were available and used effectively on the whole, including information technology in some instances. There is good emphasis on using correct mathematical language and on presentation.
103. Methods and strategies are generally effectively matched to the ability and needs of the pupils. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has brought an increased emphasis on mental and oral work and the learning objectives for each lesson provide a clear understanding of what pupils are to achieve. This enables the final part of the lesson to be of value and enables pupils to evaluate their success. Some work is marked with the pupils in class, homework is returned with encouraging comments or the plan for the following lesson is adapted if the previous lesson has not been understood. Records of everyday progress and of assessment tests are kept in the teachers' planning files. Teachers are expected to evaluate their weekly planning but this aspect is not being fully addressed.
104. The amount of curriculum time allocated to mathematics is satisfactory. There is an awareness of the needs of the pupils as they transfer between key stages and there is good contact with the

two main secondary schools. The scheme of work is based on the Numeracy Strategy which is currently being introduced into the school. It is supporting teachers and helping to build confidence in non-specialists. Planning is detailed at the medium term level.

105. The new co-ordinators are leading the subject well. There is commitment and a determination to improve standards from the senior management as a whole, with plans to extend the monitoring and support, which has already proved invaluable. The teaching is in sympathy with the overall aims of the school and an effective learning environment is provided in the classrooms with some good subject displays and number squares and lines. Gaps in staff knowledge are being identified and addressed, support staff are also receiving helpful guidance. Learning resources, text books, work sheets, materials, equipment for the subject curriculum and range of pupils are in good supply and well organised, efficiently stored and easily accessible in the classrooms. There are several educational games and a reasonable supply of software. Information technology is beginning to be used and overhead projectors are used to advantage in lessons.

Science

106. Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that attainment is in line with the national average by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, and by the time pupils leave the school. The evidence from the observation of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and talking to them and by scrutiny of teachers' planning and records, is that attainment is better than the recent National Curriculum test and assessment results indicate. Standards seen are very much similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection.
107. In the 1998 teacher assessments for seven-year-olds, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above was below the national average. Pupils' performance was well below the national average in their experimental and investigative science, and in their work on materials and their properties. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 3 or above was broadly in line with the national average in all of the areas of science. The performance of pupils was very low in comparison with similar schools. In the 1999 assessments, standards remained well below schools nationally, as well as for similar schools, at both Level 2 and Level 3.
108. Pupils' attainment at the age of 11 has been broadly in line with the national average over the three-year period 1996 to 1998. In the 1998 National Curriculum tests the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above was close to the national average, though the percentage of pupils reaching Level 5 or above was below the national average. The performance of boys was above the national average, while the performance of girls was below the national average. However, pupils' performance in the science tests in 1999 was well below the national average. Their results were very low in comparison with the national average for similar schools. The percentage achieving Level 4 or above in the 1999 science tests was lower than it had been in 1998. The percentage achieving Level 5 was double that of the 1998 figure, but still well below the national average.
109. The progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. The progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs is satisfactory, and sometimes good, at Key Stage 2. Progress in Year 7 is satisfactory.
110. By the age of seven, pupils have a basic understanding of how to carry out a fair test to which of five magnets is the strongest. They make predictions using their sense of smell and sense of taste, finding out how accurate they were. They draw and label a skeleton, and make observational drawings of a hand, linking well to their work in art. Pupils have a good idea of the materials that houses are made of, and can record their observations on charts or match

objects to materials. In their work on forces they sort different objects according to whether they are pushed or pulled. They understand what plants need in order to grow and can draw accurately the life cycle of a plant. They also correctly sequence the life cycle of a frog.

111. By the time they are aged eleven pupils conduct a number of experiments with water, using thermometers accurately. They recognise the range and properties of materials and carry out experiments to separate solids. They also conduct tests to see if the paper towels used by the school are the strongest, and on the malleability of plasticine. They know the functions of plants and categorise the different types of pollination. They understand the importance of photosynthesis. Many pupils illustrate their work to a high standard, and the subject makes a good contribution to the development of their writing. They observe and record, and know what key terms such as reversible and irreversible mean. They know that weight is a force and that gravity makes things fall. They continue to find out about forces, and understand that friction can act between any two surfaces no matter how smooth they are, and that friction is a force that acts against the direction of movement of an object across a surface. They use information technology to record their temperature work on graphs, and use word-processing in their work on the beginning of life.
112. By the time they are twelve pupils know the correct vocabulary to use in their work on forces, and consider the effect of streamlining on different objects. In writing and by using diagrams they describe the different forces acting on a range of objects, and carry out tests to measure force. They also conduct experiments to find out what travels faster, light or sound. They test to prove that different materials react with light in different ways, and know that when we see an object we are actually seeing light that is coming from that object.
113. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are well behaved and are very supportive of each other, though at times some are too noisy when left to work independently or in small groups. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are well behaved, and display interest and curiosity in their work. For example, in Year 4 they listen carefully and are confident in explaining their views and opinions. In Year 5 they cooperate with each other when carrying out tests. They are keen to show their work to others and treat the equipment with care. The behaviour of pupils in Year 3 is satisfactory, but some pupils are not able to sustain their concentration when working in small groups. All pupils, including those in Year 7, take pride in their written work.
114. The quality of teaching is sound overall. It is good at Key Stage 2. Sometimes it is very good at this key stage. Teachers emphasise key points and scientific language well. They quickly get pupils' attention, sometimes by novel means as when feigning to drink from a glass of muddy water to introduce the lesson on separating solids from liquids. Pupils are given good opportunities to work in small groups, arranged so that pupils can help each other. Management of pupils is usually secure, which means that little time is wasted. Some teachers use their own time more effectively than others do. Teachers plan a series of activities, which helps to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding in a series of small, manageable steps. They plan well for the different abilities, and for the most effective use of key pieces of equipment. Handouts are used with discrimination and they are invariably of a good quality, especially those that guide pupils' recording of their tests and experiments. The lengthier lessons are well used, giving pupils plenty of time to complete tasks, and to a good standard. Assessment of pupils' progress is good, with teachers insisting that pupils give reasons for their explanations, and all pupils are encouraged to have their say. Good emphasis is given to the standard of pupils' written work, often making effective use of drafting and rough work. Little use is made of target setting for individual pupils and even the higher attaining older pupils are not clear how to improve their work further.
115. Since the previous inspection the school has made little progress in raising standards as measured by national test and national assessment results. Then the substantial majority achieved the national expectation in all key stages. In a high proportion of lessons the quality

of teaching was good or very good. The teaching is still good in a high proportion of lessons at Key Stage 2. Sometimes it is very good. However, many pupils are still not reaching expectations in their end of key stage tests and assessments, even though their work in lessons and over time shows that many are capable of producing work of average standard and above.

116. The school has recently appointed two new co-ordinators for the subject who are quickly coming to terms with the challenges they face. They do have key strengths to build upon. The quality of teaching, which is never less than sound and often good at Key Stage 2, and the positive attitudes of the pupils, again notably at Key Stage 2.

OTHER SUBJECTS

Information technology (IT)

117. There were some opportunities to observe information technology (IT) in lessons during the inspection and further evidence was gained from displays, pupils' work, planning and discussions. Standards of attainment in all the key stages, as in the last inspection, are broadly in line with national expectations; individual pupils are achieving higher levels in some areas but, as yet, pupils have not had sufficient experience of control, monitoring and modelling. Although the confidence of teachers varies, efforts are being made to give all pupils experience of a range of IT work. There is now software and equipment available in school to give the pupils experience across the curriculum in word-processing and graphics, modelling, control and data-handling. IT is used to support some topic work, science, mathematics and English and computer provision is now generous. There are twelve computers in the impressive new IT suite, sufficient for either half a class group or a whole class group with two pupils per machine. There is access to the Internet from two machines but this has not been developed yet. Many pupils use computers competently because they have their own at home and they have a good general understanding of the associated technology. The use of IT across the curriculum is being addressed and planned but is not developed well enough as yet. There are plans to reorganise the provision of computers in Key Stage 1 but these have not been finalised yet.
118. The younger pupils use the keyboard, space bar and the word processing facility to produce short pieces of writing, older pupils enter text into a word processing package and are learning to edit; they are also producing and interpreting pie charts and bar charts from data they have collected. Progress through Key Stage 2 is sound as pupils become familiar with the use of the computers and begin to develop confidence. Classes use IT constructively in literacy and in science there is an impressive collection of CD-ROMs. The pupils are working with increasing levels of skill, knowledge and understanding. Year 4 are learning to sort data and in Year 5 and 6 especially good progress is being made with the use of spreadsheets to generate sequences in mathematics number investigations.
119. Pupils are well motivated and willing to apply themselves and learn; they work independently when required are aware of and using IT with increasing confidence and enjoyment and developing very positive attitudes. They work on their own or in pairs or groups and are trusted to do so.
120. Some competent teaching was observed; clear and helpful explanations were given, with extra help as necessary or further challenges for the more skilled. Objectives were clear and shared with the pupils. In the best lessons there were good, clear explanation with initial revision and effective use of time. Tasks were usually well structured, discussed and explained and there was a sense of involvement and satisfaction. Overall, relationships are good. There is much careful encouragement and sound leadership by the curriculum co-ordinators. The use of IT across the curriculum is continuing to be developed at all stages in response to the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidelines

which are reflected in the scheme of work and the medium and short-term planning. Assessment is at an early stage but there is the intention to develop a monitoring system to list and check skills attained by the pupils. Staff are in general very positive in their attitude and have received some in-service training to develop their confidence; they have benefited from this and are very well supported by the co-ordinators. At present IT is not used consistently across the curriculum and therefore it is necessary for staff to have clear guidance on the use of IT in all subject planning and to have appropriate training in the use of IT skills. Further training using government grant funding is planned.

121. A carefully calculated major investment has been made in IT provision after thorough research by one of the curriculum co-ordinators and the overall facilities are exemplary.

Religious education

122. Attainment at the end of each key stage and at Year 7 is in line with that expected in the Local Agreed Syllabus for pupils at this age. All classes follow the Agreed Syllabus for their planning; this is an improvement since the last inspection.
123. Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their understanding of Christianity and are developing a sound knowledge about some aspects of other beliefs; Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. The previous inspection found that Religious Education was satisfactory at all stages except Key Stage 2, it is now satisfactory overall.
124. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils know some stories from the Bible and the main Christian festival associated with the life of Jesus. They participate in school activities to celebrate these such as the making of a Christingle and participating in a Nativity drama. Festivals of other religions are also recognised, such as Divali and Hanukkah, and pupils know about the celebrations that take place at these times. Pupils are developing a sound understanding of other faiths.
125. Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils are beginning to discuss the rules and customs associated with religions and are sensitive to the beliefs and values held by others. They consider and contrast the different ways of celebrating the celebrations and >rites of passage through life= in their study of Christianity and Islam and are aware of different places for worship. During thoughtful discussion by the older pupils in Year 5 and 6 they consider social issues. They share opinions and reason whether there is always fairness in life and how to react to it, and contrast the plight of homeless and jobless people in the past and today. They discuss feelings and attitudes and are developing respect for moral and acceptable social values, particularly with regard to their own behaviour and attitudes. They know about Charles Dickens and Charles Kingsley as famous literary people who contributed to social reform.
126. Across the school pupils show a caring attitude to others, their community and the environment. They visit a local place of worship, record their experience and make careful drawings of religious artefacts. Visitors from the community and pupils share their beliefs and information about their own festivals. These opportunities make a valuable contribution to the subject, however this are limited opportunities for this at present. In collective worship pupils actively experience being part of a caring community. During collective worship there are many appropriate opportunities for moments of reflection, prayer, thanks and hymn singing.
127. The teaching of religious education is satisfactory and staff has a sound knowledge of the subject. There are clear policies that support planning in religious education and collective worship. Where teaching is good teachers provide a positive ethos for the lesson, learning objectives are clear, teachers use questions that allow pupils= to develop their own views and the lesson content is appropriate for their age.

128. Many lesson activities contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and supports staff well in the provision of resources and planning. There are more resources than at the last inspection and are sufficient to support the curriculum.

Art

129. Pupils make satisfactory progress in all key stages. They work effectively, using a range of media mainly in two dimensional work. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have sound painting skills and knowledge of the mixing and use of colour. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use a mix of media and techniques to good effect and have a wide knowledge of the work of a range of artists. They produce a good range of imaginative drawings, paintings and collage work. In Key Stage 3 they choose suitable images to use in animations and draw them in their sketch books.
130. Lesson observations and surveys of pupils' work on display about the school show clear progress in pupils' control of media, increasingly becoming more complex in interpretation and imagination. In Key Stage 1 pupils paint faces in the style of Picasso and make silhouettes of the London skyline during The Great Fire of London. Key Stage 2 pupils make sound progress when drawing in the style of such artists as Lowry and some good progress when they make detailed drawings of bicycle parts. Pupils in Key Stage 2 also sketch designs based on roman jewellery before making good progress in the use of clay to model their designs. In Year 7 pupils make sound progress in the handling of cutting tools and in the use of colour when they produce 'stained glass' work using card and tissue paper. Higher attainers produce windows that reflect good design skills as well as the careful cutting out of some complex shapes. Other pupils work with less complicated designs and silhouettes. The processes of design, critical evaluation and redrafting are not consistently reinforced throughout the school and consequently attainment and progress in these areas are less marked.
131. Pupils' attitudes to their work in art are mostly sound and sometimes good. They are keen to get started and enjoy the opportunities to explore and to create, which the lessons provide. Pupils are quick to settle to work, and treat resources and equipment with care. Obvious care and pride is shown in the pupils' work around the school. Pupils in Year 7 express their enjoyment of the subject.
132. Teaching across the school is satisfactory and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The best lessons seen were characterised by teachers' planning being clearly focused on the development of art skills. In the more general theme lessons in Key Stage 1, teachers miss opportunities to reinforce artistic skills. Sound subject knowledge enables teachers in the best lessons to challenge pupils constantly through the use of probing questions. Lessons are well organised and the management of pupils is generally sound. At times, in Key Stage 2, it is good. However, there is an inconsistent approach to providing opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work and the work of others. Similarly, teachers do not make the best use of pupils' drafting books as a way of recording the process of design and re-evaluation. While work is set for pupils of differing abilities, the nature of the activities is not always challenging enough for all pupils.
133. Although the school delivers a sound art curriculum, there are areas that are not developed well enough. For example, there has not been enough development of three-dimensional work since the last inspection or enough attention paid to the development of skills in using textiles. Where art is delivered as part of the Key Stage 1 topic approach there is not enough focus on the specific skills to be learned and the level at which they should be taught. Assessment that tracks the progress of pupils is unsatisfactory across all key stages.

134. The contribution of art to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspect in the school is satisfactory overall. Pupils are provided with numerous valuable opportunities in art to share ideas and to work together. However, art lessons do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to stop and appreciate the wonder of human endeavour. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' cultural development. Pupils learn of the styles of a good range of British and foreign artists, including Monet and Degas. They also experience African and Indian art forms.
135. The co-ordinator provides a satisfactory level of direction for the subject and there are plans to establish more contacts with the local artistic community. There are no formal opportunities for the co-ordinator to track the standards of teaching and learning in the subject. Teachers' planning is inspected but formal evaluation, that may inform teaching and learning, does not take place. Resources are adequate for the delivery of the subject but there is a shortage of suitable brushes.

Design and technology

136. Only a few lessons could be observed, therefore the evidence was gathered from photographs, displays and from discussion with pupils and teachers. There is evidence of at least satisfactory progress across the ability and age levels. Pupils develop satisfactory knowledge and understanding and are aware of the importance of the skills they are developing and the links between the designing and making elements of design and technology. Younger pupils have a range of basic skills and measure, cut, join and decorate with a good degree of accuracy. Year 5 pupils involved in the preparation of biscuits for a celebration can give reasons for their choice of design and decoration, consider their work and suggest ideas for improvement. The policy and scheme of work link in well with cross-curricular medium and short term planning and there is evidence of design of models or items associated with the topic or subject work and examples of the pupils' implementation. The samples of slippers on display in Year 6, together with their written work, illustrate the pupils' ability to select methods and resources, to design, to evaluate and to solve problems. In Key Stage 3, design and technology work has a cross-curricular focus; as part of their work on Medieval Realms, the pupils design and make a stone throwing weapon.
137. From the limited examples and discussion of pupils' work, sound progress is being made in the use of materials, tools and equipment and progress over time is satisfactory. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have had experience of working with food, fabrics, paper, card, constructional toys and recycled materials. Projects are planned to take account of designing and making skills and are well matched to the ability of the pupils who can then take pride in their completed work. The response of the pupils is good. In lessons, all ability groups work hard with enthusiasm and enjoyment; they were interested in their tasks and also describe and discuss their previous work. Teaching is at least sound and teachers are enabled and given confidence by the detailed and helpful scheme of work; the co-ordinators have worked very hard to adapt the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidelines to the needs of the school. The curriculum has been very successfully developed and organised to provide continuity and progression and equality of access and opportunity. There is evidence in work folders of very clear learning objectives and good examples of self and teacher evaluation. The assessment of skills is the responsibility of the individual teacher. Resources are generous, efficiently and safely stored. The subject is efficiently organised, with due regard to health and safety. Standards have risen since the last inspection.

Geography

138. During the inspection there was no geography being taught and, consequently no teaching was observed. Evidence has been gathered through talking to pupils, examining samples of work

and looking at teachers= planning.

139. Pupils= progress through all key stages is satisfactory. At Key Stage 1 pupils learn about their locality and are beginning to use appropriate geographical language to describe weather and the seasons. They learn about the points of the compass and use simple maps of the locality to develop mapping skills on local walks. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have widened their knowledge and understanding of places such as Egypt and the contrasting locality of Flatford and the Isle of Anglesey. The pupils make particularly good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of areas such as the River Severn valley, extending their knowledge to include river systems in Europe and South America. In Key Stage 3 the pupils extend their knowledge by examining the reasons why settlement develop in different locations such as hilltops or by water crossings. Their experience of maps includes work on Ordnance Survey maps and using grid references to six figures. Although pupils do identify similarities and differences between their own locality and places further afield such as an Indian village, this approach is inconsistently followed. The overall rate of progress is limited at both key stages by the inadequate development of pupils= questioning and self-evaluation skills.
140. Pupils adopt a positive approach to their work in geography. They show an interest and enjoyment in their work. There are good examples of well-presented work illustrating the pride that pupils take in their work. On occasions, there is not enough work completed.
141. The best teaching plans are detailed and have defined learning objectives that give a sharp focus to the teaching. This is particularly important when the geography is taught as part of a more general theme approach and when subject-specific skills may not be sufficiently emphasised. Teachers are designing work for different abilities but at times the activities are not sufficiently challenging for higher attaining pupils. Marking is supportive but only occasionally gives enough direction about how the pupils may improve their work.
142. The present curriculum is sound, but planning to ensure that all aspects of geography are taught in enough depth across the key stages is not detailed enough. This is particularly relevant in the more general topic based approach in Key Stage 1. The school has recognised the need for further development of the scheme of work, which will identify exactly what is to be taught at each level in each year. Assessment is unsatisfactory. There are not enough strategies in place for the formal tracking of pupils= progress through the school.
143. The co-ordinators provide sound direction for the subject but their role in monitoring the standards of teaching and learning across the school are not developed well enough. At present they do not have enough time or opportunity to do more than check year group planning and there are no systems in place for the formal evaluation of the way in which teachers implement these plans.
144. Resources for the subject are just adequate. There is a lack of information technology software for geography and of text books for older pupils, as well as Ordnance Survey maps, the availability of which would make a valuable contribution to the development of pupils= investigative and questioning skills.

History

145. Pupils make satisfactory progress through Key Stages 1 and 3, and good progress through Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1 pupils demonstrate a satisfactory sense of chronology through their work on their own and their family=s lives. They learn about and retell the lives of such famous people as Guy Fawkes. Key Stage 2 pupils extend their knowledge and understanding

of periods in history and can explain in good detail the lives of Tudor children and aspects of the Roman invasion of Britain. They learn about local history by visits and by examining written materials. In Key Stage 3 pupils extend their historical knowledge through studying the reasons behind King John's dispute with the barons, and the resulting signing of the Magna

146. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in developing their historical vocabulary and in extending their knowledge of life in Ancient Egypt. They identify the pharaoh as ruler, the position of slaves and explain about the mummies of the pyramids. Through the walks about the locality they learn about the passage of time when they identify old and more recent buildings and artefacts. A satisfactory response to the reasons behind Remembrance Day was in evidence.
147. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils of all abilities have made good progress. They not only extend their knowledge about what resulted from the invasions of the Romans and the development of Britain in Victorian times, but also in their ability to identify the similarities and differences between life then and now. Similar good progress in pupils' ability to analyse historical evidence is made when pupils use Tudor toy artefacts to make simple deductions about the life of children in Tudor times. They then identify the differences and similarities between how children played then and how they play in modern times. Potentially high attainers react to the challenge by identifying in detail the particular circumstances of the young Tudor King, Edward VI. In Year 7 the pupils make satisfactory progress when they examine more difficult written information about the Magna Carta and the events of 1066. In all key stages there is not enough progress in the development of skills associated with identifying the different ways that the past can be represented and in asking historical questions.
148. Pupils adopt a positive approach to their work. They are eager to get involved in lessons and show an enthusiasm for the subject. They make comments and give opinions freely, show respect for the views and opinions of others, and work together well. In Key Stages 1 and 3 there is evidence of some loss of concentration by a minority of pupils and some unsatisfactory levels of quantity of work produced.
149. The overall quality of teaching is good. At Key Stage 1 teaching is sound, while at Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is good with evidence of some very good teaching being observed. In Key Stage 3 the teaching is satisfactory. Teaching is at its best, as in Key Stage 2, when consistently high expectations are adopted, and when good levels of subject knowledge exist. This enables probing and questioning to take place which challenge pupils' understanding and enables them to explain their ideas. The lessons are well planned taking into account the effective use of resources and teaching methods and learning objectives and assessment criteria are clearly identified. Teachers have made progress since the last inspection in planning activities for different ability groups, but such activities are not always challenging enough for some pupils, particularly those of potentially higher attainment. Whilst there are some opportunities for independent research work, such opportunities are not consistently used throughout the school. Teachers mark work regularly and write encouraging comments but do not give enough direction to pupils on how to improve their work. Classroom support assistants are not always used to greatest effect.
150. The curriculum is satisfactory but does not ensure the teaching of history skills in the topic areas at Key Stage 1. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. There are procedures, which identify the areas of work that will be taught, and there is an end of year attainment and effort grade provided for each pupil. There is no system, however, whereby the progress of pupils is tracked and related to the development of history skills as well as knowledge. At present, there is very little evidence of assessment informing future planning or the next stage in pupils' learning.
151. The co-ordinator inspects subject planning but there is no formal system in place for evaluation

after the unit of work has been completed. The role of the co-ordinator in monitoring the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils is not developed enough. There are few opportunities to work alongside colleagues and support them. Resources are satisfactory with some good use of artefacts taking place. Sound use is made of trips into the local area and to places such as Sulgrave Tudor manor and the Coventry Transport Museum. Visitors into the school include an archaeologist and such activities undoubtedly enhance the delivery of the curriculum and add to the attainment and progress of pupils.

Modern Foreign Language (French)

152. Pupils= standards of attainment are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 7. All pupils in Year 6 also benefit from weekly lessons in French.
153. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Year 7 and good progress in Year 6 and develop their confidence and vocabulary. Pupils listen and respond to questions in French, such as when giving their names ages and numbers of brothers and sisters. They know numbers to a hundred, and some every day words and phrases, such as how to exchange simple greetings and months of the year.
154. Pupils= attitudes to learning are good and they behave well in class. They enjoy the subject and are comfortable in participating in discussions in front of the class.
155. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The activities planned offer a structured approach over the course of a lesson. Teachers adopt a variety of suitable strategies. For example, at the beginning of one lesson pupils throw a ball to each other, with the recipient each time saying, in the French language, the next number in the sequence 1 to 100. Pupils enjoy this especially when an element of competition is introduced, and they all try to improve on their previous performance against the clock. Appropriate focus is given to the development of pupils= confidence in listening and speaking. Effective use is made of information technology including the listening centres. Teachers= attention to the quality of pupils= written work is good, as is marking, which is detailed. More challenging work is set for the higher attaining pupils. Homework is well used to support pupils= learning.
156. At the last inspection standards were good, and the quality of teaching was good. Progress since then has been satisfactory. There has been a change in staff which has meant the school has had to reconsider how it continues to teach the subject to Year 6 as well as to Year 7. All teachers in Years 6 and 7 now teach the subject instead of there being a specialist teacher. However, their confidence is developing well.

Music

157. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in all areas except in the development of listening skills. Pupils clap rhythms and begin to understand pitch. They sing together and sing simple rounds, though not always tunefully. They are beginning to understand elements of simple composition by adding instruments to their singing and music making to create mood and effect. Listening skills, however, are not well developed, as there are not enough opportunities for pupils to listen carefully to each other or to evaluate the effects they are creating.
158. In Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress. Year 4 pupils have a good understanding of pitch and know that shorter lengths of tubing will produce a high pitch. They understand simple notation and successfully compose and produce their own graphic notation. They sing with enthusiasm and are confident when performing. Year 5 pupils recognise that different instruments can add different effects in their creative music making. The successfully experiment in putting different sounds, both instrumental and body sounds, to add mood and

effect to poetry. Year 6 pupils know a range of songs from memory and successfully add instruments to their singing. They sing with confidence and in tune and attempt challenging two and three part songs with confidence. They listen carefully and are confident when performing to each other. There was no music seen at Key Stage 3 during the inspection.

159. Pupils in Key Stage 1 respond enthusiastically to music. They are happy to perform and do so with confidence. Their interest wanes, however, when the pace of lessons is slow and there is not enough variety in the activities that they are required to do. Pupils at Key Stage 2 respond well in their music lessons. They listen carefully and tackle even the most challenging activities with enthusiasm. Their behaviour in lessons is very good. They respond well to questioning, handle instruments with care and readily applaud each other's performances.
160. The teaching of music at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Music is taught by class teachers, some of whom lack confidence and expertise in teaching the subject. Opportunities for extending pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are sometimes missed as a result. Pupils' listening skills, for example, are not developed well enough as they are not encouraged to listen carefully to or evaluate their own performances in order to improve them. Learning objectives at Key Stage 1 are not always clearly defined and this results in lessons lacking a sense of direction and pace. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching seen was consistently good. Teachers have a good subject knowledge and identify clear and specific learning objectives. Sequences of a variety of learning activities are well planned and enable lessons to proceed at a good pace. There is a good balance and variety of activities, which include elements of performing, composing, listening and evaluating each other's work. Teachers are confident in teaching music and have high expectations, at times, providing challenging activities for pupils to engage in. Pupils are encouraged to discuss their work and to make choices about the kind of instruments they will use in their creative music and compositions. Although there are no formal assessments of attainment in music, some teachers do audio recordings of the compositions and performances that their pupils make. This method of assessment is not consistent throughout the school.
161. The scheme of work for music is not completed but the enthusiastic co-ordinator is working on this. The absence of a complete scheme of work, particularly in Key Stage, 1 does not ensure that there is an appropriate balance of musical activities taking place or ensure good progress from one key stage to another. There is a number of peripatetic music teachers visiting the school and this provides opportunities for over fifty children to learn musical instruments such as violins, cellos, brass and woodwind. All children are given an opportunity to learn to play the recorder in Year 4 and there are recorder groups held as extra-curricular activities for pupils who wish to continue playing the recorder. The school provides a number of opportunities for groups, such as the school orchestra, to perform both in school and at venues outside the school. There are also opportunities to hear live music performed by professional musicians who visit the school from time to time. The quality and quantity of resources for music are good and they are efficiently stored; mainly in the well equipped and furnished music room.

Physical Education

162. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall by the ages of seven and eleven. They plan and carry out activities safely and in gymnastics and dance show control when developing a sequence of moves. As they move through the school, their level of skill, poise and control increases at a good rate. For example, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils carry out their tasks and show appropriate levels of control of their movements. By the time pupils are in Year 6, their skills have deepened, such that they move with increasing confidence and develop more sophisticated routines, particularly in dance. In games, pupils in Key Stage 2 practise and improve their performance, skills and understanding so that they can play recognised competitive games, such as soccer and netball. They make

judgements about their own and others= performance, use this information well to improve their level of attainment and work safely alone, in small groups and as members of a team. Pupils in Year 4 benefit from the school=s provision for swimming and many make good progress. Most develop a competent stroke, are confident in the water and reach the expectations of the National Curriculum for swimming.

163. Pupils in Year 7 make satisfactory progress in gymnastics. They successfully sequence events and movements and develop a range of their movements using apparatus. No games lessons were observed in Year 7.
164. The pupils= attitudes to physical education are good across the school. In Key Stage 2 they are very good. They behave well and listen attentively to their teacher. They respond quickly to instructions and enjoy their work. They wear appropriate clothing and are mindful of health and safety issues. They sustain high levels of activity, and work very well together in groups, such as when performing sequenced movements on large apparatus.
165. The quality of teaching is good. At Key Stage 2 it is sometimes very good. Teachers have a sound understanding of the National Curriculum requirements and several have a good knowledge of the subject. Teachers plan their lessons well and lessons begin with an appropriate >warm up= activity, and end with a good >cool down= exercise. Discipline is well maintained and teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can do. Teachers clearly explain what is expected and stop lessons at appropriate times in order to emphasise a particular point or technique. Good use is made of time, and little time is waste in changing into kit. Teachers encourage pupils to assess their own performance and to build upon their level of skill. Apparatus is well used. Many teachers have a real enthusiasm for the subject, and they organise the activities to promote good progress and high levels of motivation amongst the pupils. Good links are made with literacy, such as when poetry is used to stimulate pupils= ideas about a dance activity.
166. The range of extra-curricular activities is good. All pupils are able to take part in some sporting activities. These include cross country, football, netball and short tennis. Many pupils are involved in these activities at lunchtimes, after school and sometimes at weekends. Parents and past pupils play an important part in this provision, which is well managed by the subject co-ordinator, as is the subject generally. Pupils are involved in local competitions, which supports not only their physical attributes, but also their personal and social development.
167. The school has successfully maintained its standards in physical education since the last report. Standards are still good. The quality of teaching remains good. Pupils now come to physical education lessons appropriately dressed. The high standard of accommodation, as well as good and well cared for resources, contribute positively to the subject.

Swimming

168. The inspection of the school included a focused view of swimming, which is reported below.
169. The standards of swimming achieved by pupils by the end of KS2 are in line with national expectations. Pupils go swimming in Year 4 only and not all achieve the minimum national requirement of being able to swim 25 metres by the end of the year. In 1998, by the end of Key Stage 2 approximately 97 per cent of pupils were able to swim the minimum statutory requirement and just over 95 per cent of pupils achieved this standard in 1999. There is no provision for non-swimmers after Year 4. At the time of the inspection the pupils in Year 4 all showed confidence in the water and could enter and leave the pool unaided. Lower and average ability pupils could perform a front glide for two metres without a float and could swim five

metres using a float. Higher ability pupils could perform a front glide for 10 metres using a float and swim for ten metres using a float. They could also perform the front crawl leg kick.

170. The quality and effectiveness of the teaching and instruction is good. A qualified swimming coach assisted by the class teacher who has no swimming qualifications provides the teaching. The swimming coach provides detailed guidance to the teacher so that she can teach skills to her group. Organisation at the poolside is good and no time is wasted in the water with lessons having a brisk pace to them. Both teacher and instructor provide pupils with lots of praise.
171. Good support is given to non-swimmers and poor swimmers within the swimming curriculum. They receive priority, since the arrangements mean that not all pupils can participate every week.
172. The curriculum in respect of swimming is sound. Year 4 pupils only benefit from the provision for swimming. At any one time only 20 pupils are able to enter the pool. For each swimming session only two groups of 20 can be catered for. There are about 60 pupils in the year, in two mixed ability classes, and so every week about 20 pupils are not able to swim.
173. In deciding which pupils shall swim, the school using a questionnaire completed by parents, gives priority to the non-swimmers and poor swimmers. Those pupils who are not classified as in either of these two groups do not go swimming as much over the course of a year. Depending on the ability of pupils it also means that even by the end of the year, some pupils may still not be able to swim. No further provision is made, and so arrangements in respect of the whole school curriculum are satisfactory rather than good.
174. Because only 20 may enter the pool at any one time, time is not well used by those who do not go swimming. Since they come from both Year 4 classes they remain behind with one of the Year 4 teachers, but 20 of them leave after about half an hour to replace the 20 who spend the first session in the pool. The school has identified this as a problem and is trying to identify a local pool that will take whole classes.
175. Assessment is good. Pupils receive appropriate records of achievement.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

176. The team consisted of six inspectors, including a lay inspector, who spent a total of 24 inspector days in school. The inspection team:
- ? .spent 86 hours observing 87 lessons and reviewing children's work
 - ? . attended a sample of registration sessions attended assemblies and a range of extra-curricular activities and observed pupils having lunch in classrooms on several days
 - ? . observed pupils' arrival at and departure from school
 - ? . observed all teachers at least once and most several times
 - ? . had discussions with the Headteacher, teaching and non-teaching staff, the Chairman of Governors and other governors
 - ? . reviewed all the available written work of a representative sample of three pupils from each year group
 - ? . held informal discussions with many pupils
 - ? . analysed a large amount of documentation provided by the school both before and during the inspection, including:
 - ? .the school prospectus
 - ? .school policies
 - ? .the Governors' Annual Report to Parents
 - ? .minutes of governors' meetings
 - ? .financial statements
 - ? .the School Development Plan
 - ? .subject policies and planning
 - ? .pupils' reports and records, including special educational needs records
 - ? . held a meeting attended by 22 parents and considered 51 responses from parents to a questionnaire asking about their views of the school.

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
Y1 B Y7	379	2	97	41

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (Y1 B Y7)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	15.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.6

Education support staff (Y1 B Y7)

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked each week	82.25

Average class size:

27.1

Financial data

Financial year:	1998/1999
-----------------	-----------

	'
Total Income	634696
Total Expenditure	645954
Expenditure per pupil	1482
Balance brought forward from previous year	37860
Balance carried forward to next year	26582

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

393

Number of questionnaires returned:

51

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	13.7	66.7	9.8	9.8	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	23.5	68.6	2.0	5.9	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	11.8	47.1	27.5	11.8	2.0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	11.8	58.8	9.8	19.6	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	15.7	47.1	15.7	17.6	3.9
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	15.7	52.9	15.7	15.7	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	13.7	56.9	21.6	7.8	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	7.8	62.7	13.7	15.7	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	5.9	60.8	19.6	11.8	2.0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	7.8	49.0	25.5	13.7	3.9
My child(ren) like(s) school	33.3	52.9	9.8	2.0	2.0

1. Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year