

INSPECTION REPORT

Crowton Christ Church CE (Aided)

Primary School

Northwich

LEA area: Cheshire LEA

Unique reference number: 111336

Acting Headteacher: Miss R Walley

Reporting inspector: Janet Johnson
17711

Dates of inspection: 17th – 18th January 2000

Inspection number: 182533

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Kinglsey Road
Crowton
Northwich
Cheshire

Postcode: CW8 2RW

Telephone number: 01928 788230

Fax number:

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of Chair of Governors: Rev. R Gilpin

Date of previous inspection: 31.10.1995 – 2.11.1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	
Janet Johnson	Registered inspector
David Jones	Lay inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Network Management Services

Fron Dirion annexe
Star Farm
Llangynhafal
Ruthin
Denbighshire
LL15 1RU

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London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Crowton Christ Church, Church of England (Aided) Primary School is a small village school situated on the outskirts of Northwich town. There are 64 boys and girls on roll. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is low and does not reflect the comprehensive socio-economic background of pupils. There are no pupils from ethnic minority groups, refugees or with English as a second language. There are 15 pupils on the register of special educational needs and this percentage is above the national average. The majority of these pupils require some level of additional support. There are no pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need. Most pupils have attended some form of pre-school facility prior to entry to the reception class and their attainment on entry is variable but overall average and broadly typical.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Crowton Christ Church, Church of England (Aided) Primary School is a happy and very effective school at the heart of its community. The curriculum is challenging and the school is an interesting place for the children to be. It consistently achieves well above average standards, which are a result of the high quality leadership, management and teaching provided. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- National Curriculum test results at both key stages confirm consistently high standards over time.
- The high expectations of teachers and careful, well-structured assessments of what pupils know and need to learn enables them to move forward quickly in their learning.
- The school has been and is very effectively led and managed by all with management responsibility.
- Literacy and numeracy are well taught within a broad and well-balanced curriculum, which provides worthwhile and stimulating opportunities for pupils to learn.
- The school's ethos of strong Christian care provides a secure anchor from which pupils' may grow spiritually, morally, socially and culturally; learning to be responsible citizens of the future.
- The school is popular with parents from a wide area. Many parents are particularly pleased with the relationships in the school, which are excellent.
- Pupils enjoy school, they are enthusiastic and their attendance is very good. The pupils' behaviour and attitudes, particularly their positive work ethic, contribute to their good progress.

What could be improved

- There is much good work in information technology, however, by the age of 11 pupils do not attain in all aspects of the subject as expected. The school has already identified the need for improvements to this subject prior to the inspection.
- There is scope to raise standards in writing even higher. The school's own development plan echoes this issue.
- The recording of judgements about strengths and what needs to be done next when tests and assessments are analysed.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1995 and was judged to be a good school overall which gave sound value for money. Since that time the school has gone from strength to strength. The school has addressed the issues identified by the previous inspection with considerable success alongside introducing national initiatives such as the literacy and numeracy hours. Schemes of work have been developed; coordinators have monitored their subjects and identified strengths and areas for improvement; the development plan has been improved and focuses on reviewing and evaluating performance and raising standards with identified success criteria, this has been very effective and is evidenced in the high numbers of pupils attaining above national expectations by the time they leave the school. The teachers' assessments now drive the planning of work to cater for the wide range of ages and abilities within the classes. Within its tight resources the school has provided additional support for pupils with special educational needs. The improvements to the accommodation are very good and have eased organisational and teaching constraints.

Since the last inspection the curriculum for information technology (IT) has broadened for all schools and information technology is now a core subject. These changes and the ever-increasing resource demands have been difficult for the school to keep pace with, in spite of considerable effort. Parental support in fund raising has proved helpful. The school, like many others, has still some way to go until it can meet the full requirements of the statutory curriculum for information technology.

THE SCHOOL'S CAPACITY TO DEVELOP FURTHER

The school ethos is built on firm foundations. It has the necessary ingredients to sustain success; not least the team spirit, commitment and skills of the Acting Headteacher, staff and governors who are the cornerstones to continuing improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	B	A*	A	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A	A	A	A*	
Science	A	B	A	A	

** Where the comparative grade is A* or E* the school's performance is in the highest or lowest five per cent nationally. N.B. Cohort sizes are small and different groups of pupils are being tested each year. This could account for slight fluctuations in performance in some years.*

The results show an impressive picture with a consistent trend of high standards in English, mathematics and science for 11 year olds. The picture is equally favourable when results are compared with similar schools and shows that pupils at Crowton Primary School attain well above average. Standards in mathematics are a real strength of the school. Analysis of results shows no significant differences between boys and girls. Test results for seven year olds also show a positive

picture when compared nationally and with similar schools. The school's targets are generally accurate and for the current Year 6 pupils show even higher expectations.

In the work seen during the inspection standards were good in most aspects of English, and high in mathematics and science by the age of 11. Seven year old pupils attain well in reading and numeracy. There is scope to raise standards in writing even further for both infants and juniors. In information technology most pupils attain as expected in communication skills but standards in the other aspects of the subject are not yet high enough although pupils' progress is often good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils work well under their own initiative and show interest in their work. Most concentrate very well indeed.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	In both lessons and around the school the pupils' behaviour is of a high standard.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. The relationships within the school are a good mirror of its Christian care. There is a strong family atmosphere and older pupils are watchful for the younger ones.
Attendance	Very good. Well above national average. Pupils enjoy school and are keen to settle to lessons, which start promptly.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses. During the inspection the oldest pupils were taught by a supply teacher.

The very good teaching has a positive impact on the standards achieved by pupils. The teachers know their pupils well and a key factor of success is the high expectations set for pupils to learn. Knowledge of the National Curriculum requirements is secure. The teachers' assessments and support for the range of ages and abilities within the classes focus the lesson planning, grouping and match of work for pupils so that the needs of all are well met. Literacy and numeracy skills are very well taught. Time is precious and not wasted. The teachers are thoughtful about how to link the subjects together to make learning interesting and meaningful for the pupils.

Only a small number of lessons were seen but 100 per cent of teaching was at least satisfactory. Seventy one per cent of teaching was very good and on occasion excellent. The remainder of lessons were good or satisfactory. Scrutiny of work reveals that although never less than satisfactory there is scope to raise all marking and target setting to the excellent levels seen to aid pupils in improving their own work; and to capitalise further on opportunities to extend pupils' writing skills to make full use of their acquired literacy skills.

The broad curriculum enables pupils to acquire a very good range of knowledge, skills and understanding. The extensive range of complementary activities and educational visits stimulates

their interests. In lessons most settle quickly to their work and achieve a good amount; they can readily explain what they have to do. Most concentrate very well and show independence in finding out for themselves and turning to aids such as dictionaries and spellcheckers to support their learning. Only a small number of pupils require the teachers' guidance in ensuring they keep pace with the work expected of them.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum is challenging and planned to capture the pupils' interests. Links between subjects are very well made and make learning meaningful for the pupils. In spite of the good work seen the requirements for the delivery of information technology are not fully met.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good, teachers match work well and set suitable targets.
Provision for pupils' personal, incl. spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good, broadens the pupils' perspective of the world and prepares them well for life and the next stage of learning.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Exceptionally well. Records of achievement are informative and well maintained. Pastoral care is excellent. Governors give very good attention to security and health and safety.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the Headteacher and other key staff	This aspect has been and is very well established and is equally well sustained by the Acting Headteacher and staff.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Governors are actively involved in the school. They have clear strategies for knowing what is going on. With the exception of the full delivery of the curriculum for information technology they fulfil their statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school knows itself well and reviews its performance regularly. Improvements are well focused on raising standards. The recording of succinct judgements following analysis of tests and assessments to safeguard continuity and ease of communication is not yet firmly in place.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes the best use of the resources available to it. Governors are acquainting themselves well with the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The standards achieved and the progress by their children especially in literacy and numeracy. • The efforts the school makes with information technology. • The receptiveness of the school to discuss pupils' progress. • The quality of information in reports about their children's progress. • Homework provision. • How well the school supports pupils' skills and attitudes, particularly confidence building. • The pupils' behaviour in and out of school. • The quality of relationships. • The broad range of additional activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about how their child is getting on. • The homework provision. • Information about progress of children with special educational needs.

The inspection agrees with the positive points raised by parents. Standards are good but there is scope to raise standards even higher in writing and, in spite of the school's best efforts, standards in all aspects of information technology are not yet as expected. In relation to areas parents would like to see improved, the inspection finds that the school has an open door policy where parents may freely make appointments to know about their child's progress and in addition the quality of annual reports to parents is exceptionally good. The school has already recognised gaps in communicating with parents about pupils with special educational needs and has imminent plans to address this. Homework provision is good, and suitable in the amount and the range given to support classroom learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

National test results at both key stages confirm standards well above average in English, mathematics and science.

1. The very good results of the 1999 national tests for 11 year old pupils are a reflection of the school's success in placing the raising of standards as high priority. The school exceeded both its own and national targets in all three subjects, including the proportion of pupils attaining at the higher Level 5. Not only does the school perform well within the national picture but also when compared with similar schools the results remain well above average. The pupils' performance in mathematics was particularly outstanding and in the top five per cent nationally. The pupils are used to success and this is confirmed by the performance of the seven year olds in the national test results for 1999 showing well above average results in reading and good results in writing and science. When compared with similar schools these pupils' performance is also above what is usually found in reading, writing and mathematics.

2. Analysis of the trends of the school's results over time shows an equally positive, if at times fluctuating picture, which can be easily explained. The performance of 11 year old pupils has been consistently above the national average in English and science, at times peaking to very high in English and showing constancy in well above average scores in mathematics. Seven year olds' results were well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics up to 1999 when reading remained high but writing and mathematics fell marginally but were still above national averages. This was due, in writing, to no pupils attaining at the higher Level 3 and in mathematics the school achieved about the same proportion of pupils at the higher level as others. There is no doubt that the school is consistently successful in taking pupils on to achieve good standards and these slight variations in performance need to be seen in perspective. The size of the groups taking the tests are small and often one child can represent a ten per cent shift upwards or downwards in overall results. This could mean significant differences in final scores. For example, in writing, statistically less than one child would need to have attained Level 3 in writing to meet the national average and shift the school's results from above to well above average. The important factor to bear in mind is that in spite of minor differences year on year, which must take account of the fact that different groups are being tested, the school manages consistently to support its pupils in performing at higher than expected levels.

3. The school sets targets based on rigorous analysis of a very comprehensive range of on-going tests and assessments and this is at the heart of identifying what works well and what needs improvement. The targets are realistic and are supported by the generally good match in how the teachers feel the pupils will fare and the actual results. The school exceeded its targets for 11 year olds this year. The targets it has set for the current Year 6 pupils are even higher and this is reflective of the pupils' abilities and the school's drive to set itself high but attainable goals. Underpinning the target setting are the incisive assessments and evaluations of what pupils know, understand and can do in their daily work which then drives the teachers' planning and adaptation of future work. From these assessments the teachers working with the literacy coordinator have already identified that there is scope to raise standards even further in writing. To further support literacy teaching the school has weighted additional time in favour of teaching early reading skills and this has paid off enormously as pupils' progress in reading is striking.

4. The school has higher than average levels of pupils with special educational needs and many of these require additional support in their work. The teachers work well together and are regularly discussing pupils' progress and adapting and supporting the work to suit the broad age ranges and abilities within the classes. As well as providing different, carefully matched work the teachers are skilful at probing and extending pupils' ideas and giving them confidence to attempt new work. This high quality support for special educational needs by class teachers is another

factor in measuring the school's success and recognising that pupils of all abilities do succeed with the right support.

5. In the sample of lessons and books seen during this short inspection, work was mainly good quality and pupils achieve well. Most pupils have highly developed speaking and listening skills by the time they leave the school, although this is not so when they begin their school career as a number exhibit speech difficulties and others are passive. However, it is no wonder that the reception children show such enthusiasm for reading or that seven year olds can read and discuss their books so well given the excellent teaching they receive in literacy. Pupils quickly learn the conventions of reading and show an excitement to know what is going to happen when they read the playscript of Little Red Riding Hood. Central to their ability to read is the broad range of reading cues which the teacher regularly identifies, for example, looking at initial letters, spotting unusual punctuation marks such as exclamation marks and looking for words within words. The sense of awe and wonder created by the teacher when a letter arrives from 'Mr Wolf' for the pupils to read and reply to was tangible and motivated the pupils to *fire* ideas without being prompted. The school is well resourced for reading material and pupils have the chance to read a good range of stories and information books. By seven, most make at least satisfactory and at times good efforts at writing independently and they can generally read back their own work. Spelling skills are sound. By the age of 11, pupils have a good grasp of the conventions of using Standard English, write for a range of purposes, read fluently and expressively and have a broad knowledge and understanding of how to find things out for themselves. They mainly use their literacy skills well in the other subjects.

6. Pupils' knowledge, understanding and use of numbers are markedly good. Most have an affinity with and confidence in mathematics and when asked, 'what do you like to do best at school?' 'Maths' was often the answer. The range of mathematical activities is broad and the amount of work completed by even young pupils is surprising. Mental calculations are given high priority and pupils demonstrate their abilities well. They make rapid responses of their tables up to five in the lower juniors and by the time they are 11 the swiftness of their recall up to their 12 times table is staggering. Pupils' work in mathematics shows evidence of plenty of challenge to use their basic skills to solve problems and investigate.

7. In science, young pupils can sort materials according to characteristics and describe how they feel and look. Keen attention to developing their vocabulary and supportive questioning by the teacher helps them to verbalise their ideas. When asked for one difference between natural and man made materials a young child *says 'if it's natural then God must have made it and if it's man-made a machine might have made it'*. The pupils in Year 2 can recognise that some materials have more than one property, for example, '*shiny and smooth*' or '*it's natural but people have made it into something*' when describing a woollen sock. The oldest pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 have a good knowledge through regular experimentation of electrical circuits, friction, magnetism, and types of rocks.

The high expectations of teachers and careful, well-structured assessments of what pupils' know and need to learn enables them to move forward quickly in their learning.

8. Teaching has a very positive impact on standards. The most striking feature is the consistently high expectation for pupils to listen, understand and make progress in their work. The teachers know the pupils well. They have kept themselves well up to date with national initiatives and they understand how the curriculum fits together; using this knowledge to make learning relevant and meaningful. For example, in the work on the Vikings in Years 3 and 4 the pupils had researched the Vikings, written letters to their mothers from the perspective of a Viking warrior settling in England and drawn up and recorded their designs for making clay coins. They had been encouraged to use what they knew about the characteristics of materials from science when fashioning their artefacts.

9. The very sound standards achieved in the basic skills enable pupils to cope well with their other work and move forward in their learning even when not directly supervised by teachers. Given their generally average attainment on entry to the school their progress is good and at times very good. This is due to the atmosphere in which they learn and the intense focus on acquiring basic skills, gaining confidence and being encouraged to think for themselves. Teachers expect the most from pupils and work hard to help them achieve. They are not often disappointed as the results confirm.

The school has been and is very effectively led and managed by all with management responsibility.

10. The situation at the time of inspection was unusual in that the most recent Headteacher had retired at Christmas after 29 years service and a new Headteacher will not take up post until May 2000. The Key Stage 1 coordinator fulfilled the role of Acting Headteacher during the inspection. The effectiveness of the school rests on the quality of commitment and expertise of all those associated with its direction. There are secure procedures in place to ensure its smooth running. The governors are actively involved in the life of the school and they contribute significantly to the management of finance and buildings. They know what is happening through regular visits, from receiving reports from the Headteacher and through their awareness of the challenges and demands placed upon staff. Coordinators have informed governors about the progress in subjects and most recently governors have monitored the work in literacy giving them an insight into the effects and impact of this national initiative. Statutory responsibilities are met in most respects with the exception of the full delivery of the curriculum for information technology. The recently appointed Chairman leads the governors in their work very well. Of late, the governors have been acquainting themselves with the principles of 'best value' and this is adding to their ability to make critical decisions about spending, developing the school and working with other agencies. The governors realise that the size of a school can affect its viability and to secure its success they have focused their attention on providing quality of education and achieving high standards. This is most effective and the results speak for themselves as many parents understandably travel from other areas to place their children at the school.

11. The school development plan is rightly and properly directed at improving standards. The success of this is evident in that the school was already aware of the areas which are in need of further development prior to the inspection starting. Another priority within the plan has been the attention given to monitoring, albeit within budget and staffing constraints. This focus has enabled personnel to become better informed and supportive. Whole school review and planning is a strength. Considerable attention has been given to the analysis of test and assessment information. Governors have been involved with target setting under the guidance of the previous Headteacher. The school is recognising the importance of this process and has incorporated it into its review and development programme. There is some scope to refine this process to safeguard continuity of information passing and for ease of reference and use.

12. The school knows itself well. This is in great part due to the team spirit which pervades the school. Staff have common beliefs and they work well together; doing the best for the children drives their sense of purpose. This is best illustrated by the excellent ethos within the school. During the inspection, at a time of significant management transition, expectations and morale might have been lowered but the opposite was true. Even when at the eleventh hour a member of staff was absent a supply teacher stepped in and was fully supported by the Acting Headteacher and staff who all worked as one to ensure pupils' education was not disrupted. The acting Headteacher is making a very good job of sustaining the ethos, vision and quality of education provided. She has already begun to address improvements to communication about special educational needs provision. Governors have kept parents well informed about progress in appointing a new Headteacher and have been rigorous in their decision making to secure and

sustain the high quality of leadership and management to which the school has been accustomed.

13. The school operates within tight budget constraints but nevertheless ensures that the very best use is made of resources. Given the pupils' attainment on entry, the good and at times very good progress made by them resulting in high standards supported by very good teaching balanced by its high costs, the school gives good value for money.

Literacy and numeracy are well taught within a broad and well-balanced curriculum, which provides worthwhile and stimulating opportunities for pupils to learn.

14. The effectiveness of the school's strategies for literacy and numeracy is very good. Teachers have become quickly acquainted with the philosophy of the 'hours' and show real confidence and competence in their teaching. This security of subject knowledge is well transferred to pupils through direct, well-structured teaching and central to promoting standards. The curriculum is broad and well balanced with the exceptions of some aspects of information technology. The classrooms are well displayed and reflect a lively and interesting spectrum of work. Planning covers all National Curriculum subjects both statutory and non-statutory. The school places considerable value on providing pupils with creative and physical experiences as well as academic. Pupils participate in regular sporting competitions and achieve reasonable success. They have good access to music, drama, role-play and to a plentiful supply of educational visits including residential. This school is very much at the heart of the village and it draws on the community regularly. Parents and other villagers often support in school, the pupils use the village hall for physical education and the links with the church are strong. One excellent example of the school's commitment to developing all aspects of pupils' learning is the activities week held in the summer term when members of the community come into school and share their talents and skills with the pupils. The pupils talk animatedly about the week and look forward to it.

The school's ethos of strong Christian care provides a secure anchor from which pupils' may grow spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, learning to be responsible citizens of the future.

15. The school aims are very well met and its ethos is excellent. There is a strong sense of community spirit and a family atmosphere. The assembly room where pupils come together for lunch is well ordered, welcoming and presents a strong picture of the school's Christian character. It represents the heart of the school and is dominated by a superb embroidered cross, made by the oldest pupils, which is used as focus for reflection during worship. In the worship observed, pupils showed a sense of occasion when they come in quietly listening to music by Beethoven. They listen well and have ample opportunity to consider their place in the world and the importance of their family to them. Pupils are well used to listening to stories from the Bible and considering how they might reflect their lives today, when asked they are thoughtful about the messages given. Throughout the curriculum pupils learn about the values, beliefs and culture of themselves and others, now and in the past. They have studied the major world religions and often complement their knowledge and understanding through visits for example, to the Jewish Museum in Manchester. In science, pupils learn about human achievement when they research electricity and acquaint themselves with the work of Michael Faraday, they study the work of artists such as Gordon Beningfield and young pupils produce some very good representations of his work in colour wash which are well displayed in the hall. Poetry, pupils' own autobiographical accounts and history studies give pupils insight into their own thoughts and feelings, and help them to empathise with how others have felt.

16. Pupils are well aware of right and wrong and demonstrate this in their conduct. They move about the school sensibly, show respect for their classrooms and the school environment and have a sense that the school belongs to them. This was well illustrated when Year 3 and 4 pupils animatedly describe the organisation of their classroom, how things work and why they do things as

they do. They show a great sense of pride in what they have accomplished. At break sessions older pupils happily talk to and care for younger ones. Some very incisive written work on Millennium wishes highlights the pupils' social responsibility and they regularly support charities.

The school is popular with parents from a wide area. Many parents are particularly pleased with the relationships in the school which are excellent.

17. Parents travel from beyond the immediate locality to place their children at the school. The majority of parents who responded to pre-inspection information gathering were very complimentary about the school. They particularly value the standards, not only academic but social and personal, which the school achieves and the excellent relationships which set the tone for learning. The school often takes in pupils mid way through the school year, particularly at Years 2 and 3; they are swiftly gathered into the school family and well supported.

Pupils enjoy school, they are enthusiastic and their attendance is very good. The pupils' behaviour and attitudes, particularly their positive work ethic, contribute to their good progress.

18. Parents are quite clear that their children enjoy school. This is very evident in practice and in the attendance figures which are well above average. There is a happy buzz in lessons during discussions, and when required to settle down to work almost all pupils do so without fuss. From the youngest to the oldest pupils they are able to explain their work and readily share what they have to. For example, in a literacy lesson in Year 3 and 4 pupils were working independently in groups to research facts about 'Space'. They worked in two's or three's and were anxious that no one was left without a partner. When searching for information they cooperated very well. Only a small number needed the teacher's quiet guidance to keep pace with the learning. The oldest pupils showed good knowledge of their routines when taught by a supply teacher. They were mainly very well behaved and showed responsibility and maturity. About the school and in lessons pupils' behaviour is of high quality. They show a very good level of self discipline, for example when changing for after-school activities they chat together, organise their belongings and are happy to offer information to visitors. The atmosphere and work ethic, which prevail in the school, are the result of the high expectations of staff, the positive values laid down and the excellent pastoral care available. All of these factors contribute to pupils feeling safe and secure in school and ready and receptive to the very good teaching, which ensures their successful progress.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

There is much good work in information technology, however, by the age of 11 pupils do not attain in all aspects of the subject as expected. The school has already identified the need for improvements to this subject prior to the inspection.

19. Within its development plan the school has already recognised that it needs to raise standards in information technology. It has applied for National Grid for Learning funding, already improved hardware and software resources and begun to use the widely recognised scheme of work designed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Parents have been supportive in assisting with funding for computers and they feel that information technology education in the school has improved in recent years. This is so, but the pace of change in this subject and the demands of other more pressing national initiatives in literacy and numeracy have limited progress. A significant feature in the school's own evaluation of what needs to be improved is the recognition for staff training to keep pace with changes and the need to purchase more resources to use information technology to support literacy and numeracy.

20. The school has already made some significant strides in improving information technology

provision and these are evident in discussions with pupils about what they know and can do. Most pupils can use communication technology as expected for seven year olds. Year 2 pupils can write a simple letter, use the space bar and delete keys and print out their work. They are also able to move objects around the screen and select features. By the time they leave the school pupils are able to support their listening skills; they know how to operate tape recorders and listening centres, to use a keyboard, arrow keys and a mouse control device to input text, edit, save and retrieve it. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are able to word process their work on favourite pets and organise the print effectively on the page. Some pupils were seen using headsets competently to listen to information about 'Space' using a CD-ROM and they could also follow the text and illustrations on screen. In Years 5 and 6 pupils have experimented with various fonts, colours, and styles to present their 'Magic Box' poems effectively. Pupils in Key Stage 2 also use spellcheckers, both desktop and on Windows, to help them improve their spellings and correct their work. Within geography they have used programs about 'Exploring world maps' and 'Word and Number Shark' which are games to support reading and writing and solve number problems using up to six digits. Pupils do not attain as expected in all aspects of data handling and interrogation or control and modelling, although there is evidence that they are acquiring more skills and making better progress in these aspects. For example, they have used a database to collate information about magnetism and interrogated it to produce information and also on 'favourite crisp flavours'. Spreadsheets have been used to gather information on 'table points' for good work. Pupils say they have carried out a small amount of Internet work and used a CD-ROM to research information about rocks and crystals. In relation to control they can recall work completed on a program called Dart which supports building shapes and developing direction and angle work in mathematics.

21. Teachers are working hard to keep pace with initiatives but more time is needed to focus on the subject. The increased use of technology to support literacy and numeracy are valuable steps in the right direction. In spite of the useful experiences, the flaw in provision is about insufficient regular access and time allocated to the direct teaching of subject skills, and there being not enough computers for pupils to practise their skills in a systematic and structured way where gains in learning can be regularly assessed and gaps remedied.

There is scope to raise standards in writing even higher. The school's own development plan echoes this issue.

22. Standards in writing are at least satisfactory and at times good but there is scope to raise standards even higher as the school recognises from its own analysis of test results and scrutiny of pupils' work. The areas for improvement should be seen in the context that most work was appropriate and the goal is to strive for greater consistency, depth and quality to move from what is generally good to make even better use of skills and time. The main focal points for consideration are to move pupils more quickly into using a joined script to support their spelling, fluency and speed in writing. Pupils are taught the basic skills of reading and writing well but more regular reminders at the start of lessons and encouragement for pupils to stop and check their own work for correctness could afford them more time to focus on improving the quality and depth of their work. At times worksheets are used when the task involved could better be completed by the pupils using their own well-acquired skills. These sheets do little to challenge pupils' thinking and their use diminishes the opportunities for pupils to think creatively. Finally there is some excellent and always never less than satisfactory marking of pupils' work with targets set for improvement. The staff could do well to share this practise and set the highest standard as the model to follow. Pupils are well equipped by teachers to work independently and to think for themselves; their learning could be better served by placing more onus upon them to check their own work and reflect on 'What do I need to do to make my work better?'

The recording of judgements about strengths and what needs to be done next when tests and assessments are analysed.

23. A very considerable amount of time and effort has been given to testing, assessing and analysing information about pupils' progress. The process is effective in setting targets for future learning and recognising areas for improvements. To ensure that the benefits of this valuable exercise are not lost and are readily available to a range of audiences, the school would do well to consider succinctly recording the evaluations made for future use, reference and information passing.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

The governors, Headteacher and staff should include the following matters in their post inspection action:

Raise standards in information technology by:

- ensuring that the full National Curriculum Programmes of Study are systematically developed;
- reviewing the time allocated for the direct teaching of skills and pupils' access to computers;
- continuing to improve the teachers' confidence and competence to teach the subject;
- improving resources as funding allows.

Reference to these matters can be found in paragraphs 19 - 21

Raise standards even further in writing by:

- reviewing the allocation of teaching time to handwriting and spelling skills to aid fluency and speed in recording ideas;
- ensuring pupils transfer the skills which they have been well taught in literacy to all subjects;
- reducing the number of worksheets used for recording work;
- extending opportunities for pupils to write independently and creatively;
- developing pupils' abilities to self check their work for improvements;
- ensuring greater consistency in marking of work and target setting to make clear to pupils what is good and what needs to get better;
- sharing the excellent practice which already exists in the school.

Reference to these matters can be found in paragraph 22

Record agreed evaluations about strengths and what needs to be done next when tests and assessments are analysed to ensure that:

- the very valuable information which has been gained is readily and quickly available for future reference and use.

Reference to these matters can be found in paragraph 23

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	6
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
17	50	17	17			

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	64
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR- Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	15

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	199	5	6	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	4	5
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	11	10	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100	91	100
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	4	5	5
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	10	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91	100	100
	National	82	86	87

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	7	2	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	5	6
	Girls	2	2	2
	Total	7	7	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78	78	89
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	6	5
	Girls	2	2	2
	Total	7	8	7
Percentage of pupils	School	78	89	78

at NC level 4 or above	National	68	69	75
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Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	100
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.3:1
Average class size	19.3

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/9
	£
Total income	136119
Total expenditure	140726
Expenditure per pupil	2166
Balance brought forward from previous year	13501
Balance carried forward to next year	8894

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	64
Number of questionnaires returned	15

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	27	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	33	0	0	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	33	7	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	27	7	7	7
The teaching is good.	60	40	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	20	27	0	7
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	20	13	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	33	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	47	33	20	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	60	33	7	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	53	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	53	0	0	0