

INSPECTION REPORT

Brough Primary School

Church Brough, Kirkby Stephen

LEA area: Cumbria LEA

Unique Reference Number: 112177

Headteacher: Mrs L. Pawley

Reporting inspector: Mrs A. Soper
OIN 18148

Dates of inspection: 19th – 21st June 2000

Inspection number: 182610

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior and Infant

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Church Brough
Kirkby Stephen

Cumbria
Postcode: CA17 4EW

Telephone number: 017683 41284

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr D. Bury

Date of previous inspection: 9th May 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject Responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs A. Soper	Registered inspector	English	What sort of school is it?
		Art	How high are standards?
		Geography	How well are pupils taught?
		History	How well is the school led and managed
		Physical education	
		Equal opportunities	
		Special educational needs	
Mr P. Oldfield	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents
Mr J. Pryor	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
		Science	
		Information technology	
		Religious education	
		Design and technology	
		Music	
		Under fives	
		English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Brough Primary School is situated in the village of Brough, in Cumbria. It is smaller than other schools, with 79 pupils on roll. All pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds. The school serves the immediate small rural community but also admits pupils from a more transient population. Recently, it has had a large influx of pupils from a nearby area. An additional class is to be built and a new teacher appointed for the next academic year to meet the increasing demand for places. There is a much higher than average percentage of pupils with special educational needs, some of whom require considerable individual support. Attainment on entry is below average overall.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that has successfully established a good climate for learning since the appointment of the headteacher. There is good teaching and there are very good relationships that promote enthusiasm for the school. From below average attainment on entry, pupils make good progress, achieving at least satisfactory standards by the time they leave the school. Leadership is very good and governors are actively involved in the overall management of the school. The school provides good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- ◆ Standards are good in information technology and science by the end of Key Stage 2.
- ◆ The quality of teaching and learning are good.
- ◆ Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
- ◆ Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall.
- ◆ Partnership with parents is very good and they have a strong impact on the work of the school.
- ◆ The leadership is very good and there is good management and support from the governing body.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- ◆ Provision of outdoor play with large outdoor play equipment for children under five.
- ◆ The arrangement of the school library and some class libraries.
- ◆ The amount of secretarial time to support the headteacher.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been a very good improvement since the inspection in 1995 and the school has made a further good improvement since the subsequent inspection in 1997. All issues have been addressed and the school has now devised its own development plan for further improvement. Pupils now receive a good quality of education and make good progress.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The table shows that pupils' attainment in the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 was good and above average in English and science, but below average in mathematics. There has been a steady improvement in English since 1997 and in science since 1998. Performance in mathematics has been more varied over the same period. The table shows comparisons with schools in similar contexts, though the criteria used to determine similar schools is unreliable in this context. The trend in the school's results is upward, with overall performance being above the national trend by the end of Key Stage 2. This is reflected in the performance seen in the current inspection, where standards are good in science. Standards are satisfactory and in line with nationally expected levels in English and mathematics. This does not indicate a downward trend but reflects the prior attainment of pupils at the end of the key stage. Pupils are making good progress. Many more pupils than average have special educational needs and when the impact of this is taken into account, pupils are attaining satisfactory standards. Good standards are achieved in science and information technology. Standards are satisfactory in design and technology. Pupils make good progress in most subjects, though there are some limitations to progress in physical education due to the lack of accommodation and some resources for gymnastics.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good attitudes. The school creates a very positive ethos.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are polite and courteous.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils take responsibility and show appreciation for others.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils enjoy school.

These aspects are strengths of the school. There are very good relationships. Some pupils new to the school are sometimes reluctant to forge effective relationships.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5 – 7 years	aged 7 – 11 years
Lesson seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. During the inspection, 13 per cent of lessons were very good, 71 per cent were good and the remainder was satisfactory. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good. The particular strengths of the teaching are teachers' good subject knowledge and effective teaching of basic skills. Methods ensure that a wide range of strategies is used to interest and motivate pupils. Most pupils show good concentration and work at a good pace. Pupils with special educational needs develop increasing independence. There is very good use made of time, support staff and resources. The detailed planning provides work that is usually well matched to pupils' prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. In a very few instances, some work insufficiently challenges pupils with higher prior attainment.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory at Key Stages 1 and 2, but children under five lack a full range of experiences with no outdoor play.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The teaching assistants are experienced and provide effective support. Individual education plans are good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Provision is planned and delivered effectively across the curriculum and in religious education. There is a strong focus on raising pupils' self-esteem, relationships and their social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Assessment and monitoring procedures are very good, both in pupils' personal and academic development.

There is a very close partnership with parents, who have very positive views of the school. Apart from the lack of outdoor play for children under five, the curricular opportunities provide a broad and balanced education. Good time is set aside for circle time, to support pupils' personal development and to foster good relationships, particularly for those pupils who have recently come to the school. There is a sensitive awareness of all pupils' needs and teachers and other staff value all pupils equally.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. There is clear vision for the school. The development plan has concise and relevant priorities. Staff are fully committed to achieving the school's aims.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its	Good. The governing body has a good understanding of its responsibilities and of the strengths and weaknesses

responsibilities	of the school.
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The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There are effective monitoring and evaluating procedures that inform future planning.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. All money is spent wisely and resources are used efficiently and effectively.

Overall, there is adequate staffing, accommodation and learning resources. Leadership provides clear direction for the school and promotes collaboration and high standards. The governing body provides active support in the management of the school. The principles of best value are used satisfactorily, though there is insufficient administrative time to use these principles fully when seeking best value for purchases.

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 school is well led and managed. ◆ Expectations are high. ◆ The teaching is good. ◆ The information they receive is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The provision of an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors fully agree with parents' positive views. They disagree with a number of parents who feel the school provides an insufficient range of activities outside lessons. There are many visitors and visits to places of interest.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In the 1999 National Curriculum assessments, there was a marked difference in performance at the end of both key stages. Overall, pupils attained better standards by the end of Key Stage 2 than at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils' performance in English and science was good and above average, but unsatisfactory and below average in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. In the same year, performance at the end of Key Stage 1 was unsatisfactory and below average in reading, with poor and well below average performance in writing and mathematics. At Key Stage 1, pupils' performance has been consistently at least below average in reading and writing over the last three years. A similar result is seen for mathematics, though there was satisfactory performance in 1997. At Key Stage 2, there has been a steady and significant improvement since 1996, where the school's average National Curriculum results for all core subjects was above the national trend.

2. The school has carefully analysed pupils' performance as part of its drive to raise standards. It has identified major factors that influence overall performance figures, particularly for Key Stage 1. It has compared performance with similar schools, where Key Stage 1 pupils' performance was well below average in reading and writing and very low in mathematics in 1999. Taking into account the below average attainment on entry to the school and the much higher than average numbers of pupils with special educational needs, along with the school's own revised data about the school's socio-economic circumstances, the comparisons with similar schools are not fully valid. In addition, small numbers of pupils undertake national assessments each year, which greatly affects the reliability of performance data.

3. Whilst comparisons may be unreliable, the school has identified the need to increase pupils' rate of progress at Key Stage 1. Effective measures have been established to raise standards, through detailed curriculum planning and refined assessment procedures. Targets and predicted standards are set for pupils and individual education plans provide clear details of pupils' requirements. Additional literacy support is provided and teaching assistants play an important part in helping pupils with special educational needs, including those with Statements of Special Educational Need. The school has also had a considerable influx of pupils during the academic year, many of whom have not thrived in other schools. In some cases, their integration into classes requires considerable skilled support. Commendable support is provided for autistic pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need.

4. Following the 1995 inspection, the school was made subject to special measures because it was judged to be failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. The school's marked improvement was reported on in the 1997 interim report, following the appointment of the present headteacher. Pupils were judged then to be making good progress and this continues to be the case. Standards in both key stages are good overall and above levels expected nationally in information technology. They are good in science by the end of Key Stage 2. They are satisfactory and in line with those expected nationally in English, mathematics and design and technology. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages. Insufficient evidence was available to judge standards in all aspects of geography, history, music and

physical education. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show good observational skills in art. Work seen in geography was of a high standard at the end of Key Stage 2. Progress is good in most subjects across the school. In physical education, the oldest pupils' performance in games indicated some lack of collaborative skills. This was to some extent influenced by the nature of the group, several of whom have difficulty in establishing new relationships. A few pupils lacked stamina and concentration. In history, the widespread use of worksheets sometimes presents insufficient challenge for some pupils.

5. The school has successfully focussed on improving standards in the core subjects. The literacy and numeracy strategies are providing enhanced opportunities for pupils to make good progress. Literacy and numeracy feature highly in the curriculum and good links are often made within other subjects to enhance these skills. Speaking and listening skills, which are often poor when children begin school, have a strong focus. Not only do teachers and teaching assistants provide clear models for these skills, but they actively encourage opportunities for speaking and listening in all lessons. Pupils are encouraged to enquire, answer and make suggestions. Circle time is provided to enable pupils to discuss their feelings and ideas and teachers encourage the use of appropriate vocabulary in different subjects. Good support is provided for pupils with lower prior attainment in literacy and for those with special educational needs. The needs of those with communication difficulties are often skilfully met.

6. The youngest children quickly learn to recognise print and to handle books correctly. They make good progress in forming letters and writing their names. Writing is developed well, with most pupils forming words correctly and using joined handwriting by the end of Year 1. Reading is encouraged by the provision of a range of books and other materials, though, in a few classrooms, these are not always organised in attractive and efficient ways to enable pupils to select and browse. The library is used by pupils but does not fully assist them in their growing understanding of how books are classified. The impact of the school's provision for English is reflected in pupils' increasingly well presented work, in which they take pride.

7. Pupils' mathematical progress is good. They acquire sound understanding of number, shape, space and measurement. The use of information technology promotes good understanding of processes and methods of recording work. The systematic development of skills, knowledge and understanding ensures that pupils use their prior learning to reinforce their understanding of new work. Similarly, pupils make good progress in scientific thinking by the time they leave school. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn to investigate and experiment, using these skills effectively when learning about new subjects. They develop confidence in carrying out tasks, recognise a fair test and work well collaboratively.

8. Teachers' good knowledge and understanding in information technology has had a significant impact on the greatly improved standards in the subject since the last inspection. The subject is well organised and pupils develop confidence in using the computer and other equipment. Teachers make good use of information technology across subjects, providing a wealth of opportunity for pupils to learn how to use equipment effectively and efficiently. Pupils show confidence and respond well. Standards in technology, including information and design technology, have greatly improved since the 1995 inspection. Pupils have clear understanding of the processes involved in design and technology, including evaluation of their work.

9. Standards of work seen in art are often good, particularly where tasks have involved close observation. For example, still life sketches and paintings of fruit in the oldest class

were of a high quality. The balance and breadth of the subject now provide a range of experiences, including the appreciation of work by famous artists. This contributes well to pupils' cultural development.

10. History and geography, which are incorporated into topic work, contribute well to pupils' knowledge of the world, its past and to their literacy development. Good use is made of information finding tasks to support pupils' research skills. Pupils show good understanding of the links between the two subjects, such as when studying ancient and modern civilisations and societies. In some cases, there is a lack of appropriate challenge for some pupils in the mixed age classes, where the completion of worksheets requires insufficient thought for those with higher prior attainment.

11. Pupils make good progress in singing, supported by teachers' expertise in the subject. Other aspects, such as playing musical instruments, are included and pupils have opportunities to perform in school concerts. Satisfactory progress is made in physical education. The school is acutely aware of the limitations caused by the lack of a school hall and large apparatus, but makes best use of its available resources. Whilst progress in all aspects of the subject is maintained by using outside facilities, the performance of some of the oldest pupils reflects some underachievement in terms of their stamina and concentration in games.

12. Overall, the school has successfully raised standards, many considerably, since the 1995 inspection. The commitment of the headteacher, staff and governors is reflected in their continual drive to further improve the quality of education provided.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils are eager to come to school. They have positive attitudes to learning. Questions and requests are answered enthusiastically and pupils are pleased to talk to visitors. Where offered, pupils willingly take on responsibility, such as in collecting and recording school meal requirements. The Year 6 boys who undertake this task maintain daily records and inform the school cook of numbers. The school ensures that many such opportunities are allocated time and that pupils do not miss out on their lessons whilst undertaking these tasks.

14. Behaviour is good. Pupils play well together, such as before the school day, when a large number of pupils gather to play football in the yard. They behave well in lessons and most work well together. An example of their willingness to co-operate was seen during a drama lesson, where small groups rehearsed their plays. They discussed their performance ideas sensibly and showed appreciation of others' views. Similarly, in a circle time, pupils openly discussed school issues, as a prelude to the establishment of a school council. They expressed their views and listened to others. A pupil acted as chairperson, another as secretary, recording pupils' suggestions. Pupils respond well to school rules, to which they have contributed their own ideas. There was one temporary exclusion of one half day for one pupil.

15. There was no oppressive behaviour seen and pupils who talked to the inspector informally did not believe this was a concern. Many pupils arrive by coach and they travel well together. The supervision given to pupils is good. The school values each pupil and constantly seeks ways to raise and develop their self-esteem. Pupils' respect for feelings, values and beliefs is satisfactory. Teachers provide good role models and encourage pupils

to appreciate and value the beliefs and faiths of others in the wider community.

16. Whilst relationships are very good overall, a very few pupils have yet to establish a good rapport with others and the school has made a concerted effort to ensure that these pupils become successfully integrated into school life, maintaining the school's good ethos. Pupils' personal development is of prime importance to the school and most pupils make good progress as a result of the many opportunities provided for them to become increasingly independent.

17. Attendance at the school is very high and above the national average. The incidence of unauthorised absence is very low. Parents inform the school of most absences and many send letters to inform the school about their children's absences. Generally, the registers are marked well.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is good and has a significant impact on the quality of education provided. Teaching was very good in 13 per cent of lessons observed. It was good in 71 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the 1995 inspection and since the report of 1997 where good or very good teaching was seen in over half the lessons. In part, significant improvement has been made in curriculum planning and delivery of lessons. The monitoring and evaluating systems are effective and ensure consistency of approach in many aspects, including expectations of what pupils can achieve. Planning is good, showing clear objectives, and teaching methods are often imaginative, promoting pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Pupils are generally managed well and very good use is made of time, support staff and resources.

19. There are very good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and these are used very effectively to inform future teaching. Lesson plans contain opportunities for ongoing assessment and the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are concise. Close observations are made of pupils' response and progress and teachers carefully monitor and record this information. Teachers have good subject knowledge and prepare lessons well. They make good use of questioning to encourage pupils to reason and contribute to discussions. Teachers show sensitive awareness of those pupils with reluctance or difficulty in communicating their ideas. Their sensitive approach is appreciated and used as a model by other pupils, which creates a supportive learning environment for those with lower prior attainment and those with special educational needs. All staff, including teaching assistants and other volunteers, collaborate well to the very good relationships that exist.

20. The teaching of children under five is good. The teacher and support staff have good relationships that enable children to make good progress. Children feel secure and their personal development is well provided for. Planning and expectations are good and children are managed well. The broad range of children's prior experience is taken into account when planning activities and additional support is carefully organised where required. The only main weakness in the quality of provision relates to the lack of provision for outdoor play with large play equipment.

21. Teaching elsewhere in the school is good overall. Basic skills are taught well, planning, methods and organisation are good and there is very good use of time, support staff, resources and assessment. Good examples of whole class teaching were observed

and teachers carefully built on pupils' prior learning to ensure good progress over time. In the very good lessons, such as in a Key Stage 2 literacy hour, teaching strategies effectively promoted discussions about different types of writing. Time was used efficiently and pupils were keenly challenged. By the end of the lesson, pupils showed good understanding of different formats, using terminology well. For example, they knew about "discourse, bias, factual, instructional" and "informal" writing. This resulted in good achievement for their age.

22. In a few lessons, some small organisational limitations were seen. These included the way in which resources sometimes distracted pupils when they listened to the teacher. In another instance, pupils were inappropriately asked to write their responses whilst seated on the classroom floor. In a very few instances, pupils with special educational needs received worksheets that were too difficult for them to read.

23. The quality of marking is good, with constructive comments provided to help pupils to improve their work. Homework is used effectively to support learning and follows the clear guidelines in the school policy.

24. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is particularly good. There is a much higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs, including Statements of Special Educational Need. The range of learning difficulties is wide and, with the considerable movement of pupils into the school during term time, the school has to manage its budget well to cater for some of these pupils' learning difficulties. The quality of the experienced teaching assistants' work with these pupils is often very good and has a significant impact on the progress achieved. Pupils with higher prior attainment are challenged and have good opportunities to extend their learning in most subjects, with the exception of some work in history.

25. The headteacher has created a very good climate for teaching and learning. All staff and governors collaborate well and are committed to further raising pupils' self-esteem and achievement. Policies, plans and assessment systems provide good guidance, but their practical application often outweighs what is written. The commitment of staff and governors is justifiably rewarded by parents' very positive views of the school and its aims for their children.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

26. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 with appropriate time allocations for all subjects. Statutory requirements are met. The breadth and balance of the curriculum has been a significant factor in the marked improvement in standards since the school was made subject to special measures in 1995. To raise pupils' self-confidence and esteem, some time is allocated for circle time, when pupils are enabled to discuss personal issues and matters of interest. In the early part of Key Stage 2, the use of drama is included to support teamwork and the development of positive attitudes. There is strong focus on developing pupils' personal and interpersonal skills which enhances the provision.

27. The provision for children under five is generally sound, though there are no opportunities for children to have regular outdoor play, in a designated area. The school lacks adequate large play equipment and apparatus for these children.

28. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. There is a much higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs, including several who have recently come to the school from other schools. Skilful adaptation of work is undertaken to ensure their many varied needs are met. Individual education plans are detailed and concise. They fully inform planning and teaching. There is a generous number of support staff, many of whom have good experience in working with pupils with specific difficulties.

29. The curriculum includes well-organised literacy and numeracy hours that are taught well. The school has established its planning and methods of delivery effectively. During these periods, time is used well to ensure all components of the hours are included. This is having a positive impact on raising standards and improving the rate of progress. Additional literacy is provided for pupils who undertook national tests last year, following analyses of their performance.

30. Planning has recently been tested by the recent, rapid changes in the school's population. The problems of maintaining regular progression in planning are made more difficult as a result of the large number of pupils who join the school in their primary years. Some pupils arrive at the school with little information about their prior attainment. The careful recording and assessment procedures are commendably effective in ensuring all pupils continue to have equality of access to the curriculum and make good progress.

31. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. The school has previously provided after school clubs but due to declining interest, along with pupils' transport facilities after school, these have been reduced. The school takes part in inter-school netball and football competitions and regularly takes pupils on visits to places of interest, such as theatres and museums. Pupils also benefit from visitors with expertise in subjects, such as art and music.

32. The school is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all pupils. This is reflected in good policies, where all have statements regarding equality of access and opportunity. The particular needs of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need are met well to ensure they play a full part in the life of the school. Those with less secure confidence and self-control are sensitively encouraged to participate in all activities. All pupils receive their full entitlement to all subjects of the National Curriculum and work is carefully adapted to meet their differing prior attainment.

33. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. There is a consistent approach to developing pupils' personal skills, through effective teaching strategies that often skilfully include all pupils in, for example, discussions about their feelings and everyday issues. Pupils are encouraged to use their imagination to predict how they might react in certain situations, such as, in drama, when placed in a haunted house! They are encouraged to look after one another and to respect others' feelings and beliefs. Classroom and school rules are devised in consultation with pupils to ensure they develop personal responsibility. Sex education and education on the misuse of drugs is provided and the school benefits from supplementary support when required.

34. There is a good contribution of the community to pupils' education. There are good links with the police and with local church groups. There is a strong community support group and a Christian support group occasionally helps with collective worship. There is close co-operation with the nursery school which is housed on the same site. There is a very

good working relationship with the secondary school, which lends its expertise and resources, such as computers.

35. The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is a strength of the school and contributes to the very good quality of relationships. The development of circle time makes a significant contribution to the quality of the provision. Here, pupils are encouraged to talk about their feelings and to reflect on issues about life. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 discussed aspects of belonging to a community, using the commandment of "Love thy neighbour" as a topic to be re-enacted. This effectively promoted pupils' spiritual understanding and their moral development and enabled pupils to conclude that rules in life are necessary to help people live together. The school has as its major aim the development of pupils' sense of personal worth to help improve their academic standards. This is having a good effect. Very good attention is paid to relationships between pupils and adults and this has played an important part in helping pupils to understand right and wrong.

36. Work across the curriculum contributes well to pupils' cultural development. Pupils learn about famous artists and composers, such as Vincent van Gogh, Picasso and Bach. During collective worship, for example, pupils learned about Bach's, "While Sheep May Safely Graze", as part of the theme of co-operation. They learn about different lives, beliefs and faiths. For example, pupils look at the culture of Ancient Greece, myths and legends and religions, comparing the past and the present. Topics ensure that spiritual, moral, social and cultural development opportunities are included, following the school's clear policy. For example, Key Stage 2 pupils have visited a Hindu temple in Leeds to learn about the religion and cultural aspects. The school is still looking for further ways to enhance pupils' understanding of the cultural mix of contemporary Britain.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The school has good arrangements for the care and protection of its pupils. There is a sensitive awareness of pupils' needs and a high regard for pupils' welfare, health and safety. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and specialist teachers and support staff have a positive impact on their learning. Health and safety procedures are good. Where appropriate, regular checks have been made to all fire fighting equipment and portable electrical apparatus testing and risk assessments have been conducted. Appropriately trained staff are first aid representatives.

38. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. The school builds carefully on information provided by the nursery, baseline assessments and early years' checklists of what children can do. Pupils' performance is regularly recorded and monitored and targets are set for future improvement. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. Strengths of the school's assessment procedures are the individual analyses that are made of pupils' strengths and weaknesses. These are used effectively to inform planning and teaching and to predict future achievement. Pupils' achievement is carefully monitored and compared with that of other schools. Governors are fully involved in evaluating performance.

39. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. Teachers have a good knowledge of all pupils. Regular assessments of behaviour are undertaken. Rewards and praise are given for good behaviour, effort and collaboration and the school sensitively guides pupils in developing self-control and independence. Where necessary, appropriate agency support is provided. For example, the school has

contact with the educational welfare services, police and social services, as well as a behaviour support team and clinical psychologists. The good arrangements for dealing with child protection issues are vested with one teacher who undertakes these duties in a professional and sensitive way, following the local authority's procedures. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. All adults supervise pupils well and rewards and sanctions are used consistently.

40. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Statutory requirements are met. Registers are generally marked well. In a few isolated cases, authorised absence was insufficiently distinguished from unauthorised absence. Parents are provided with clear information about attendance issues and the requirements concerning absence.

41. Of some concern during the inspection week was the fact that the school coach bringing pupils to school had to park some distance from the school gate. There is no designated parking area for the coach. Some pupils arrive earlier than advised at the school and play football. There was concern about the football being kicked into the road at a time when many parents were parking cars nearby.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. The great majority of parents are very supportive of the school. They are appreciative of the education provided for their children. They are especially pleased with the leadership and management, the good teaching and the quality of information provided. Many of those interviewed during the inspection period indicated their satisfaction with homework. They appreciate the opportunity for them to comment in the home-school reading diary. A few parents indicated concerns about the amount of homework, though this is carefully used to reinforce learning and contributes well to pupils' progress. Parents give very good support for pupils' homework. A very high return of home-school agreements shows that most parents are satisfied with homework.

43. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is very good and has a significant impact on pupils' learning. Parents have a good impact on the work of the school. A number of parents regularly help in the school and there is an active support group which has organised a programme of community, social and fund-raising events, giving considerable help to the school. The support group has provided a computer and books and supports swimming tuition and visits. Parents value the school community and are very supportive. They feel welcomed at the school and enjoy very good relationships with the school staff. The strong partnership with parents is a strength of the school and enhances pupils' learning and progress.

44. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. Generally parents are very pleased with the full information about school life conveyed to them in the comprehensive school brochure and the very full report of the governing body. They receive regular letters about events and are very aware of all events at the school. Pupils' annual reports to parents are comprehensive and give good information about progress. Parents' meetings to discuss progress are held in the autumn and spring terms and if there are any concerns following the receipt of the annual report, teachers may be seen on the Open Day held in the summer term. Parents are fully aware that they may discuss their children's progress or other concerns at any time.

45. A significant number of parents had concerns about the range of activities provided outside lessons, as seen in their responses to a questionnaire for the inspection. Inspectors disagree with parents' views that there are insufficient activities outside lessons. Most pupils travel by school coach or by car. The extra-curricular events organised by the school in the past were not been consistently well supported. A recorder club is held once a week at lunchtime, but is very poorly attended. The school provides a wide range of visits to places of interest and makes good use of a sports centre to ensure pupils have their full entitlement to physical education. Visitors, such as artists, theatre groups and musicians are actively encouraged to enhance pupils' education. Netball and football teams play in local school leagues. The school intends to establish recorder lessons as an additional activity.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher provides strong leadership and a clear sense of direction. There are good relationships and equality of opportunity for all pupils. The headteacher, governors and staff have a shared commitment to improvement and good capacity to succeed. This was seen in 1997, when the school received a further inspection, following the concerns raised in the inspection in 1995. Significant developments had been made since 1995 in teaching and planning due to the constructive teamwork led by the headteacher and the chair of governors, with the full support of all members of staff.

47. There is a good ethos that has had a significant impact on standards, especially by the end of Key Stage 2, where pupils' attainment is at least satisfactory in all subjects. Subject responsibilities are suitably delegated and co-ordinators have been empowered to develop areas of the curriculum and to lead school development in these areas. They have clear roles of monitoring and evaluating standards and teaching, along with the headteacher, who maintains a close overview of the school. For example, the school has identified the need to enhance the rate of progress in Key Stage 1 through a detailed target setting process to which all staff contribute. There are positive attitudes to monitoring and evaluating and staff willingly share best practice.

48. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities effectively. Members meet regularly and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They take an active role in all school matters and have a clear vision for the school's educational direction and development. Governors evaluate standards, taking an active role in monitoring work in classrooms and the school's results in the National Curriculum assessments. They are fully involved in determining priorities for development and their costs.

49. The headteacher effectively monitors and evaluates teaching and learning across the school. With an almost full-time teaching commitment, she reads teachers' plans every week to ensure there is appropriate content and that work matches the needs of all pupils. The headteacher regularly monitors planning, teaching, assessment and learning and she and the staff determine areas for action.

50. There are very effective procedures for monitoring attainment throughout the school. Pupils' performance is carefully analysed and the school has recently begun to project pupils' potential achievement, using baseline and Key Stage 1 assessment results. Staff are fully included in analysing performance to identify strengths and weaknesses.

51. There is a good system for inducting new staff, including a useful guide for temporary staff. Students are welcomed and the school has good potential to be an effective provider of initial teacher training. Major priorities for the next academic year include implementing new staff development and appraisal in line with government initiatives.

52. The school has identified good priorities for development. Having addressed all issues of the previous inspection, the school has now determined these for its future development. Appropriate targets have been set for raising standards further in literacy and numeracy. It also plans to continue to develop information technology and the Internet within the curriculum. The increasing request for places has resulted in plans to integrate a new class into the school in the next academic year. Along with these, the school recognises the need to plan ways in which new pupils can be successfully managed, to ensure the existing good ethos is maintained. The further development of community links and development of

the

school grounds is also planned to ensure good provision for all pupils. Very effective evaluation systems exist regarding improvements. Regular reviews of progress are undertaken and recorded.

53. Financial planning is effective. Good use is made of grants and other money. For example, good use is made of money designated for pupils with special educational needs and those with Statements of Special Educational Need. The school has significantly improved its resources for information technology, which has had a strong impact on raising standards. The budget is regularly monitored by the headteacher and by the governor responsible for finance.

54. The school uses the principles of best value by comparing itself with other schools and taking into account the very high numbers of pupils with special educational needs. The leadership and management of the school have agreed that good staff and pupil ratios are important in meeting the needs of these and other pupils. A good number of experienced teaching assistants are successfully deployed to support pupils' many differing needs.

55. Parents are being increasingly consulted about their views on the school, through a range of consultation methods. Their impact on the school is improving. For example, one result of consultation has been the school's successful application for funding for a fourth class for the next academic year. One principle of best value is used less successfully. This is in regard to tendering for its services. The headteacher's high teaching commitment and the lower than average administrative support make this process difficult in a small school.

56. The school development plan is very detailed, showing clear priorities for development and that are carefully linked to the budget. Pupils benefit from wisely targeted spending, such as that for information technology, additional support and increased resources to meet the needs of new national initiatives. Standards have improved greatly since the 1995 inspection as a result of the school's clearly identified priorities for improvement.

57. Effective use is made of new technologies by the headteacher, staff and office staff. Most information, such as planning, newsletters, policies and accounts are undertaken using information technology systems. The Internet is established and there are good plans to extend its use across the curriculum.

58. There are sufficient qualified and experienced teachers and a good number of support staff. The accommodation is adequate and has been improved since the last inspection. There are some aspects of the accommodation that are of concern. These include the low height of the perimeter wall and the lack of safety barriers at the school gates. There is no suitable space for indoor physical education, though the school makes good use of facilities at a sports centre. Resources are adequate overall. The wild garden and pond are good resources for science.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to further raise standards and the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- ◆ improve the range of experiences provided for children under five by:
 - *providing regular opportunities for children to experience play outdoors, using large apparatus and wheeled toys;*
 - *setting aside a designated area for children to undertake these activities;*

(paragraphs 20, 27, 58 and 67)

- ◆ improve the range of books and their arrangement in some classes and in the school library;

(paragraphs 6, 77 and 85)

- ◆ increase the amount of administrative time available to fully implement the principles of best value when making purchases.

(paragraph 55)

In addition to the key issues above, the school should include the following less important weaknesses for improvement. These can be found in paragraphs 41 and 59:

- ◆ review the organisation of arrivals at school by encouraging some parents to bring their children to school later and discouraging football at this time;
- ◆ agreeing a suitable place nearer to the school for pupils to disembark from the school coach.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	24
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	13	71	16	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	79
Number of pupils eligible for free school meals	13

Special educational needs	No of pupils
Number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	23

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

Pupils mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Due to the small number of pupils being assessed at both key stages, only percentage results are shown.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	5	11	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (100)	69 (60)	63 (100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	56 (100)	56 (80)	63 (80)
	National	82 (80)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	6	5	11

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (67)	64 (100)	91 (100)
	National	70 (64)	69 (58)	78 (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (67)	73 (100)	100 (100)
	National	68 (64)	69 (64)	75 (70)

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	70
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)	3.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25 :1
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	117

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	141,690
Total expenditure	138,739
Expenditure per pupil	1,850
Balance brought forward from previous year	12,793
Balance carried forward to next year	15,744

Results of the survey of parents' and carers'

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out:

79

Number of questionnaires returned:

45

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to Agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school	64	33	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school	60	36	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good	29	67	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	18	71	11	0	0
The teaching is good	56	44	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	62	31	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	73	27	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	76	22	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents	51	44	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed	78	22	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	44	56	0	0	0
The school provides as interesting range of activities outside lessons	4	54	30	0	12

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

59. No specific issues concerning the provision made for children under five was made in the previous inspection report. However, the general comments about teaching, learning and leadership would apply. In all respects, there has been marked improvement and with the exception of the provision for ready access to outdoor play with large play equipment, the education provided for the children under five is now satisfactory overall with some good and very good features. The curriculum provided for the children under five lacks sufficient provision for regular and easily accessible outdoor play with large wheeled and other play equipment.

60. Many of the children who start in the school under the age of five have previously attended the nursery school, which is accommodated in a building adjacent to the school. The baseline assessments administered soon after the pupils begin school indicate that the levels of attainment and social and personal maturity are generally below average. There is a higher than average proportion of pupils with identified special educational needs, both academic and behavioural. By the time the children reach the age of five, they have made good progress and have achieved the desirable learning outcomes for their age. This enables them to quickly move on to the National Curriculum programmes of study. The children settle into the class very quickly and the transition to the more structured work for five year old pupils is accomplished smoothly.

61. The very careful and close attention paid to the pupils' personal development throughout the school is very successfully initiated with the children under five. They are encouraged to relate to one another and to the staff with consideration and care for their feelings. The younger children are included in the circle time activities and develop a good level of sensitivity towards other people's feelings, as well as a growing ability to talk about their own. There is a lack of opportunity for children to develop social skills through outdoor play with large apparatus.

62. The well planned activities provided for the younger children develop their confidence in speaking and listening, through play as well as in more formal conversations with adults and each other. They share equipment, learning resources and toys with increasing willingness. Many of the learning and creative activities involve them in co-operating with one another, such as working in pairs to create patterns with blocks or shapes or sharing in games. They learn how to take turns. The well-planned and managed behaviour policy emphasises the need for all children to think about other people's feelings. It effectively establishes the basis on which behaviours are judged to be right and acceptable and which are wrong and unacceptable. The recently introduced work in circle time and in religious education gives very good opportunities to the youngest children to express their feelings and to share in those of others.

63. The class teacher and the other adults successfully encourage the children under five to talk clearly and to listen carefully to what other children and the adults say to them. Both formal and informal conversations are encouraged through imaginative play in identified and constructed corners in the classroom. An example is the 'railway' where dressing up and stimulating objects encourage play and imaginative talk. The staff regularly encourage clear speaking. They develop the children's vocabulary well through their conversations with the children in a variety of ways, in both serious and light hearted situations. This approach

increases the children's confidence in speaking in class and before the whole school in assemblies.

64. The younger children are encouraged to begin the process of writing and reading, though there is only a limited supply of pre-reading books for the youngest children. They recognise their names and learn how to handle books. They recognise letters and understand that words convey meaning. All are ready to embark on more formal reading activities by the time they are five, though some begin to do so before then.

65. Children's mathematical understanding is successfully developed through sorting and counting objects and recognising, naming and understanding numbers up to 10, as well as larger ones around the school. They successfully join in number games and songs. They recognise and name simple two-dimensional shapes such as squares and circles, as well as three-dimensional ones such as balls and bricks. Games and other planned activities establish their understanding of terms such as "in front of" and "behind" as well as comparative sizes. They add and take away simple sums and record the results of counting or subtracting activities. They sing number rhymes and counting songs to develop their knowledge and understanding of numbers.

66. The younger children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world as they join in with work planned for the older pupils in geography, history and science. They look at various kinds of houses. They meet with people from the community, such as the local clergy and look at the surroundings of the school. They look at the plants and creatures to be found there. In "share and tell" sessions they are encouraged to bring things of interest into the class and to talk about them to the others.

67. The school is limited in the space available for physical education, though space in a local sports centre is hired for several weeks in the year. This does not satisfy the needs of the youngest children for regular outdoor play using a variety of wheeled toys as well as climbing apparatus to stimulate their co-ordination and adventurous activities. They play games outdoors with the older pupils when the weather allows, so that they learn to run, jump and hop and to use a variety of large and small balls.

68. The provision for children's creative development is satisfactory. They experiment with colour in painting, draw and make three-dimensional shapes and models in malleable materials. They cut out and colour shapes. They make and decorate objects out of card, learning to cut and stick a variety of materials. They make good progress in learning to express their own ideas creatively. They join in singing energetically and make music with obvious enjoyment.

69. The quality of teaching is good overall. The school has established a good system for the introduction of the younger children into the school. The class teacher makes visits to their homes and careful provision is made for the new children to visit the school. The ethos of the school is such that the older pupils consider the welfare of the younger ones. There is a generous supply of teaching assistants, parent and governor helpers, as well as students on placement from schools and colleges, in the class. The level of partnership between the class teacher, support staff and helpers is very high and is effective in raising standards and providing a supportive environment for all the children. Parents are very appreciative of the ease of access they have to the headteacher and teaching staff. This is seen as being particularly important in the early years of schooling. In turn, the parents are very supportive of the school.

70. The provision for the children under five enables them to make a good start in the

school, to make good progress and quickly become members of a well founded educational community.

ENGLISH

71. In the 1999 National Curriculum assessments, pupils' performance at the end of Key Stage 2 was good and above average. Performance at a higher level was close to the national average. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance at the end of Key Stage 2 was above average. There has been an underlying trend of good improvement in standards over the last four years. Key Stage 1 results were below average in reading and well below average in writing in 1999. Over the last four years, pupils' performance in reading was below the national average and was well below the national average in writing. These results tend to show a trend of below average attainment in reading and well below average attainment in writing. The number of pupils who undertake national assessments varies from year to year and are often less than 10. Statistics are unreliable when small numbers are involved. In addition, much higher than average numbers of pupils with special educational needs have a significant impact on the school's average results.

72. The school has carefully analysed pupils' performance in the National Curriculum assessments over the years. Specific factors influencing performance have been identified. These include the considerable influx of new pupils to the school and the increasing number of pupils with special educational needs. Boys' lower performance than girls' in Key Stage 2 was highlighted in 1997 and 1998, though by 1999 there was no significant difference. Evidence from the current inspection shows that in the present Year 6 group of seven pupils, containing three girls, their performance is better than that of the four boys. This reflects pupils' prior attainment and the considerable movement of pupils from other schools to this school. For instance, only one boy has been with the school since the beginning of Key Stage 2. Overall at the end of Key Stage 2, standards are satisfactory and in line with the national average.

73. At Key Stage 1, evidence from the inspection shows that pupils' attainment in reading and writing is satisfactory and in line with the national average. In 1999, six pupils out of 16 who undertook National Curriculum assessments were on the school's special educational needs register. Most of these pupils were boys. In the current Year 2, where there are fewer pupils with special educational needs, most pupils have achieved satisfactory standards in national tests. Both the nature of the cohort and the improved progress in Key Stage 1 reflect improved standards.

74. Pupils' performance in comparisons with similar schools is not fully valid. Although an average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals, this is achieved through many parents having employment related to rural and tourist industries. The school's own analysis of the socio-economic circumstances of its catchment area shows that these are below average. Attainment on entry to the school is below average overall. Many of the youngest children have below average speaking and listening skills and have yet to learn how to recognise print or to write their names. The school also admits a number of pupils who have not thrived in other schools. A significant number of pupils have specific learning difficulties.

75. At Key Stage 1, younger pupils develop increasing confidence in speaking and listening and are often well supported by classroom assistants who encourage pupils to participate. A few lack confidence in talking to large groups. They enjoy listening to stories and poems, such as when they listened to the poem, "Cat". Pupils recalled some of the

verse and talked about rhyming words before devising their own collaborative poem. By the end of the key stage, pupils listen attentively, answer questions and make suggestions, such as when discussing the book, “How to choose a Pet”. They talk about books using appropriate vocabulary, such as “author, illustrator and publisher”.

76. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop sound speaking and listening skills. They contribute their ideas to discussions and, in one drama lesson observed, Year 3 pupils devised imaginative group plays about a haunted house. They developed expressive dialogues and showed increasing confidence in performing for others. Older pupils use increasingly more complex vocabulary in their discussions, such as when talking about persuasion methods used by advertisers to promote their products. Pupils recalled slogans and discussed the features of different types of texts well.

77. In reading, pupils at Key Stage 1 develop sound strategies for recognising and understanding words. They read aloud from their reading books accurately and with increasing expression. A few pupils have yet to become secure in their use of illustrations and the surrounding sentences to try to deduce unfamiliar words. By the end of the key stage, most pupils have sound reading skills. Most read accurately and with suitable fluency and expression. A few are hesitant readers and lack secure understanding of ways in which to predict unfamiliar words. All pupils show interest in books, though their knowledge of different authors is limited. By the end of the key stage, most understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction, though they are unsure about library arrangements for these different types of books. For example, none know that fiction is arranged in order of authors' surnames in a library.

78. At Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils show increasing understanding of different types of books and learn about a variety of formats. For example, those with higher prior attainment refine information that they have produced in the form of a diagram to ensure the reader gains sufficient information. Most Year 3 pupils read to find answers to questions and have sound understanding of the main ideas in a story. The high number of pupils with special educational needs in this class make good progress in their comprehension skills, with additional support. By the end of the key stage, pupils read a variety of work. They use books effectively and efficiently to locate information. They enjoy books by a variety of authors and often show good understanding of implicit meanings in fiction. Most have satisfactory reading skills by the end of Year 6 whilst a few have good reading skills.

79. In writing, younger pupils make good progress in developing a fluent handwriting style, with most Year 1 pupils joining letters by the end of the academic year. They develop satisfactory spelling skills and show awareness of simple punctuation in sentences. By the end of Year 2, pupils write several sentences, sequence events to tell a story and most use punctuation accurately. Those with higher prior attainment begin to include dialogue to interest the reader in the story.

80. At Key Stage 2, pupils' writing develops in fluency and presentation. Most pupils write increasingly more complex sentences, using a widening range of methods to connect these. They recognise and write letter patterns, such as those in words that contain “ough”. By the end of the key stage, pupils use a range of writing formats for a variety of purposes. For example, their reading journals include summaries, exercises involving the use of a telephone directory and the Dewey arrangement for the classification of library books. Pupils' project books contain descriptions and accounts, such as those about the “Rockaday Hotel” and the artist William Morris. Pupils write letters, showing good understanding of the use of formal and informal language, such as when writing arguments against a proposed

bypass development. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils writing is satisfactory and in line with the national average.

81. Overall, pupils make good progress in English throughout the school. Those with special educational needs also make good progress, supported by good quality education plans and teaching assistants.

82. Most pupils enjoy English. They listen attentively to stories, instructions and explanations. Those who have difficulty in sustaining concentration as a result of their special educational needs are supported well and encouraged to take a full part in lessons. Pupils behave well and generally co-operate when undertaking shared tasks.

83. The quality of teaching is good. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and plan work carefully to meet the needs of all pupils. In a very few instances, some work was insufficiently well matched to pupils' prior attainment. These involved pupils reading from material that was too difficult for them in relation to their prior attainment in reading. These instances were rare and exemplified the considerable work that teachers have to undertake to meet the many varying needs of their pupils, in particular those with special educational needs. Expectations are high and lessons are often skilfully developed. For example, when introducing the book, "How to choose a Pet", the teacher drew on pupils' own experiences, asking them to devise questions that they would like answered. This produced humorous examples that helped to maintain pupils' interest and motivation. In the combined Year 4, 5 and 6 class, the teacher's effective use of language ensured pupils answered questions about persuasive texts in a mature way. The younger pupils in the class were helped to understand meanings, such as the meaning of "politician".

84. Teachers monitor their pupils' progress very carefully and use this information to plan future work. Targets are set for further improvement and are closely monitored. Regular assessments are made of the progress of pupils with special educational needs, in relation to their individual education plans. Work is carefully adapted to meet their needs. Support staff, including volunteers, are effectively deployed to work with individuals and small groups. Sometimes, the needs of pupils with special educational needs are not fully met due to the lack of sufficient visiting specialist support staff for the numbers of pupils in the school. Time, resources and the accommodation are generally used well, with a few exceptions.

85. Resources are adequate, though there is an insufficient variety of books in the reception class and in the Year 2 and 3 class libraries. Several books are in need of repair or replacement. The school library is used to select reference and fiction but is insufficiently used as a resource for developing pupils' understanding of the classification system for both fiction and non-fiction. In some classes, book corners are insufficiently attractive or well organised to promote reading for pleasure.

MATHEMATICS

86. The standards achieved in the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 were below those of other schools and very low in comparison with similar schools. The school has presented convincing evidence to show that the basis of comparison for the last figure is inaccurate. The current standards of attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 are satisfactory and show a marked improvement similar to that in 1997.

87. Standards in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 were unsatisfactory and

below the national average. Standards currently achieved by the pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are satisfactory and in line with the national average. In 1999, absence also affected the school's results. Pupils have made good progress.

88. At the end of both key stages, the proportion of pupils attaining levels higher than that expected of pupils aged 7 or 11 is lower than expected nationally. The school makes regular and detailed assessments of the progress of individual pupils as a basis for an efficient programme for setting targets. This indicates that good progress is made throughout both key stages. This also highlights the effects of the much higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs on the school's overall performance.

89. At the time of the last inspection standards in mathematics were identified as being low in relation to those expected nationally throughout the school. Pupils' learning skills were inadequate and using and applying mathematics was only superficially taught. The quality of teaching and learning was generally unsatisfactory throughout the school. Standards had improved by the 1997 re-inspection. Since then, the school has very successfully addressed each of the issues raised and there have been considerable improvements in mathematics, particularly with respect to the use and application of mathematics. The initial improvement preceded the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, the adoption of which has enhanced it.

90. At Key Stage 1, younger pupils confidently count in tens up to and back from 100. They create repeated patterns of shapes and colours. The older pupils with higher prior attainment make repeat patterns with regular variations of shape and size and colour. They calculate quickly and accurately using known number bonds up to 10. They successfully arrange lists of one and two digit numbers in ascending and descending order. Pupils also answer and devise their own 'number stories' and use the same techniques to apply mathematics to other subjects, such as design and technology. They learn and use correct mathematical terms with increasing confidence. Progress at Key Stage 1 is good overall.

91. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress. They handle increasingly more complex calculations with confidence. They try different ways of solving problems and explain why they have chosen a particular method. Pupils readily use these skills in other subjects, such as science and design and technology. They become confident in using fractions and simple percentages. By the end of the key stage, those with higher prior attainment readily convert these into decimal fractions, including eighths. The pupils make good use of earlier studies to further develop their knowledge and understanding of mathematics. For example, they discovered how to use previously learned skills of mentally doubling and halving numbers to convert fractions and decimals. The encouragement in the use of previous knowledge to discover new facts or skills is a strong feature of the teaching. It develops a sound self-reliance among the pupils and supports their skills, knowledge and understanding. In handling data, good links are established between the work in mathematics and that in information technology. The pupils discuss the merits of different types of graphs for different sorts of information and can produce them by hand or on a computer.

92. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They are successfully integrated and their individual education plans are used effectively to plan appropriate work. Teaching assistants provide sensitive additional support for small groups and individual pupils.

93. Pupils respond well. Their behaviour is good and they have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils and teachers have good relationships. Pupils respond well to the clear

introductions to lessons and are confident in answering and asking questions.

94. Most teaching in mathematics is good. Teachers confidently use the National Numeracy Strategy. They have good understanding and manage the pupils very well. They have a clear expectation of what their pupils can do and encourage them to achieve the best standards that they can. Very good use is made of the generous supply of support staff, which is a significant factor in the improvement in standards. The style of teaching employed in mathematics, which encourages the pupils to think for themselves, is designed also to raise their self-esteem. It gives them confidence to tackle new work and maintains their interest in the subject, which most enjoy. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the good support they are given through the well devised and well managed individual education plans. Teaching assistants who provide the support are well informed and know when to provide direct help and when to encourage pupils to make the discovery for themselves.

95. Although there are marked differences in standards in mathematics from year to year, there is an underlying improvement over time. This is the result of careful planning and skilful teaching applied consistently throughout the school. The successful co-ordination of the subject has had to take account of the considerable movement of pupils in and out of the school and of the changes in numbers and distribution of year groups between classes. Resources and the accommodation are good for mathematics.

SCIENCE

96. Pupils' attainment in science throughout the school has improved markedly since the last inspection. The 1999 teacher assessments in science indicated that the performance of pupils in Key Stage 1 was well below average. In the same year, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attained good and above average standards in relation to the national average and in comparison with similar schools. The overall trend over the last four years indicates that pupils make slow progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. Evidence from the current inspection shows that standards are good and above those expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 1. The current level of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly in line with that expected of pupils aged 11. This reflects pupils' prior attainment and does not indicate slower progress than in Key Stage 1. Standards in other year groups throughout the key stage are higher than those expected, so that overall standards are good.

97. The variations found in national assessment results are due to the higher than average proportion of pupils with identified special educational needs, coupled with the small numbers in each age group. This leads to much larger than usual percentage differences in scores from year to year.

98. Pupils' attainment in experimental and investigative science is satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 and good at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils think scientifically, pose their own questions about their work, such as in the study of sound, and devise experimental methods to test out their ideas. They know how to devise fair tests and record the results in ways which make their findings clear. This approach is a particularly strong feature of this subject throughout the school and the pupils are successfully encouraged to think independently and broadly, using ideas and skills derived from other subjects. In the same way, teachers make good use of work in literacy, numeracy and information technology to improve the effectiveness of the recording of results in science.

99. Younger pupils at Key Stage 1 find out about themselves, about how their bodies work, needing exercise and a balanced diet. They begin to understand the different qualities

of different materials such as wood, metal and plastics and whether they will float or sink. They discover how things melt or dissolve. These discoveries are deepened and extended by tasks such as devising tests to see which model cars will travel furthest. Pupils learn by experience how to make the tests fair, even when the evidence overturned their predictions. They find different ways of making boats that float, such as by using malleable materials or aluminium foil. Year 2 pupils start a study of 'Earth and Beyond' by identifying some of what they already know and then listing the things they would like to find out. They used previous knowledge and experience to devise a good range of questions to be investigated. Pupils make good progress in investigating and experimenting and in their deepening knowledge of science.

100. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress in scientific thinking. They develop their knowledge and understanding of scientific methods of classifying materials or creatures, such as those discovered in ponds. They discover the ways in which electrical circuits work and then make use of that knowledge to devise fair tests for other studies. This was seen, for example, where they made a buzzer as part of an experiment on the effects of different materials on the transmission of sound. Pupils develop a good knowledge of how their bodies work, demonstrating their understanding of the function of the heart and circulatory system by drawing clear explanatory diagrams. They use knowledge and understanding from science in other subjects such as design and technology. For example, the older pupils with higher prior attainment discussed the towers they were making, using ideas about forces derived from work in science.

101. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress in science. Teaching assistants collaborate well with teachers to provide good quality support. Teachers also challenge those with higher prior attainment to extend their efforts and to attempt more difficult tasks.

102. Most teaching in science is very good. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is good overall. Lessons are well planned and the tasks provided for the pupils to do are well matched to their prior attainment. Teachers make good use of assessment in science to plan the curriculum and to make day-to-day adjustments to their teaching. For example, they start a new topic with a well designed test to find out what the pupils know already and where to pitch the new teaching. This is especially important because of the large turnover of pupils in the school. Teachers make good use of a range of methods to gain and hold the interest of the pupils. They manage pupils well. The lessons proceed at a good pace so that at the end of the lesson the pupils have made good progress. The system for undertaking and recording assessments is very thorough and is used to propose targets for individuals to achieve. Good use is made of teaching assistants in all classes and particularly with the youngest pupils. Here, the degree of effective co-operation between all the adults in the room is impressive.

103. The resources available for the teaching of science are good and the teachers make good use of them to improve the standards in thinking and learning about science. The subject is well co-ordinated and the headteacher monitors the quality of its teaching. Work in science is well supported by parent and governor helpers. This makes the work with small groups more effective, by releasing the teacher to concentrate on one group at a time.

104. The subject is regularly featured in the curriculum development planning for the school to ensure that the teaching and learning keeps up with the latest national or local recommendations. The style of teaching and the enjoyment provided by the subject contribute considerably to the good quality of pupils' personal, moral and social development. The excitement of discovery contributes to pupils' spiritual development.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

105. In the 1995 inspection report, standards of attainment in information technology were unsatisfactory and well below those expected nationally. The need for improvement in the teaching of the subject was identified as a key issue in the report.

106. The improvement in the standards and teaching of information technology over the past four years has been very good. Standards are now higher than those expected of pupils aged 7 and 11 across a wide range of aspects of information technology. It is a strong feature in the developing curriculum of the school.

107. At Key Stage 1, the youngest pupils build on their early experiences with the computer. They use computer programs for learning number work, spellings and picture making, as well as using listening centres for listening to stories and following them in books. They make good progress. They are well supported by the teaching assistants and other adult helpers who ensure that the time available to the pupils on the machines is used efficiently. Word processing skills are used to record ideas and to write short accounts of pupils' experiences. Pupils in Year 2 correct text accurately, create lists for use in data processing, change the size of fonts and the colour of parts of their text confidently. The short, well-planned and taught lessons introduce them step by step to new techniques and features of the programs. These are followed up by periods of practice with clear and simple instructions to remind them of the lesson. The pupils also send and receive e-mail messages. They understand about CD-ROMs and can use them to gain information. They also identify the range of uses to which information technology can be put. By the time they are 7 pupils attain levels of competence which are in advance of what is expected of pupils of that age.

108. The pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to make good progress in their computer skills, their understanding of the machines and of the programs available to them. As well as using word processing as an accepted tool for communicating their ideas, they develop their understanding and use of databases, such as in conducting a survey of housing, which can be used for a number of different searches. By the end of the key stage, those with higher prior attainment learn more complex methods of interrogating the database, using several criteria. Imaginative use is made of information technology to support learning in other subjects. For example, pupils in the oldest class have learned how to work creatively with computers, such as to enhance and change scenes of the school and its surrounds. They have also learned how to use a digital camera to photograph their favourite places in the school grounds.

109. The pupils have very positive attitudes to information technology and enjoy the work. They co-operate well with one another. Their competence in the subject is regularly assessed and they are kept aware of what they need to do to make progress. This information is used in setting targets for groups and individuals.

110. A good feature of the teaching and of the pupils' learning, is the emphasis placed on the pupils knowing and understanding what they are doing. The tasks given to them are designed not only to show them how to do something, but to indicate also the principles behind the task. This increases pupils' competence in finding more efficient ways of undertaking activities with the programs they use.

111. Good use is made of information technology in other subjects, in recording pupils' activities through words and photographic images and in creating pictures. Skills and ideas from other subjects are used in information technology. The order for interrogating a database was intelligently linked to the use of brackets in mathematics. The creation of graphs is used not only to support work in other subjects but also to illustrate the targets for learning of groups and individual pupils.

112. All the teaching of information technology was good and some was very good. It was marked by a familiarity with computing skills and the programs used in the school. Good use is made of teaching assistants and parents to enable the pupils to make good progress. The helpers are well informed and balance support with encouragement of the pupils to find out for themselves. This effectively promotes understanding of the processes involved.

113. The teachers have high but realistic expectations of the pupils. They encourage those pupils who have a secure understanding to support others. This is a good example of the high quality of relationships between pupils and with the staff which is a strength of the school. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with good quality support that ensures that they make good progress.

114. The resources for information technology are sufficient for the needs of the curriculum and are regularly updated. Personal computers and portable computers are available and are used effectively across the curriculum. A significant feature of this subject is the technical and other support that is offered by the local secondary school. This is also an area of the school's work that has attracted practical support from parents and the local community. The accommodation is satisfactory, though the organisation of computer furniture in some classes is restricted by the limited power points.

115. The teaching style in the subject promotes pupils' independence and self-reliance. It is a potent factor in the development of their sense of self-worth, which is an important aim of the school. Similarly, it is an important contributor to the very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

116. The quality of religious education provided by the school has improved markedly since the 1995 inspection. The work is planned carefully to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus of religious education. The standards achieved at the end of both key stages are in line with those for pupils aged 7 and 11 in national guidelines. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress across the school.

117. At Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christian and Jewish stories from scripture as well as some drawn from the Hindu tradition. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils retell the stories and recognise that there are ways in which people from different traditions learn about their religion. The school pays particular attention to the personal development of the pupils. It has a programme designed to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This also covers aspects of religious education, especially that related to "learning from religion". The teachers successfully use circle time techniques to encourage the pupils to respond with sensitivity to the experiences and feelings of the other people in the class and school. Pupils learn about the rules found in religions and relate them to everyday living. They learn about particular elements from the Christian code of conduct,

such as “love your neighbour” and discuss their purpose. Observations such as “If we didn’t have rules everything would collapse” from a boy in class 1 is typical of the standard of investigation and discussion of important ideas. Pupils look carefully at specific religious practices such as the use of a Mezuzah in the Jewish home. The pupils were encouraged to decide what they would like to be reminded of every day and they made an interesting display of their suggestions.

118. The older pupils in Key Stage 2 develop a deeper understanding of religious and moral matters. They discuss the formation of a school council in circle time. This involved considerable and effective thought about what such a body could do and how it could set about its business. This adds to their understanding of what it means to belong to a religion or how to practice a faith consistently. They understand how religious leaders are important, and how Jesus is particularly important for Christians. They recognise that all the religions they study have some features in common such as collections of scriptures, special people associated with the teaching of the faith and specific forms of worship. The work the school does towards establishing school and classroom rules is also related to work done in religious education.

119. The school, in common with many rural schools, faces problems in providing the pupils with first hand experience of faiths other than Christianity. The school uses artefacts used in worship and in the everyday religious lives of believers in Judaism and Hinduism, the two faiths other than Christianity studied in the school, as part of the pupils’ religious education experience. This goes some way to overcoming the difficulty. The school continues to seek ways in which a more direct experience, even second-hand, through the use of suitable videos, could be provided.

120. The teaching of religious education is good. It is marked by enthusiasm for the subject and a sensitivity to the beliefs and feelings of the pupils and their families. As a result of a good use of in-service training opportunities, the knowledge and understanding of the subject is good. Pupils are encouraged successfully to find the subject fascinating and enjoyable. Though much of the work provided at Key Stage 1 is oral, a good deal of knowledge is retained and the pupils at Key Stage 2 demonstrate a sound understanding of the work they have done. The lower amount of recorded work, than for example in the core subjects, renders the assessment of the subject less effective, but it is satisfactory overall. The sensitive methods of teaching are effective in promoting empathy in understanding how important values and beliefs are to people. This contributes well to achieving the school’s aims. Very good use is made of support staff in teaching this subject. Visits to the local places of worship and the visits of local ministers to help with collective worship adds depth to the pupils’ understanding of the place of religion in some people’s lives. The resources available for religious education are good in quality and sufficient in quantity to meet the current needs of the subject. They are used well. The co-ordination of the subject is well managed and the staff are effectively supported.

121. Religious education plays a major role in the very good provision for supporting the pupils’ spiritual, moral social and cultural development and it is a significant factor in maintaining the distinctive, supportive ethos of the school.

ART

122. Very few art lessons were seen during the week of the inspection. From work seen, including displays and pupils’ sketchbooks, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in art throughout the school. This shows a significant

improvement since the inspection in 1995, when standards in art were poor and well below those expected nationally. At that time, pupils were underachieving in relation to their prior attainment. The interim report in 1997 indicated that there was a considerable improvement in pupils' progress in all subjects, which reflects the current inspection judgements.

123. At Key Stage 1, the youngest pupils design patterns and paint papier mâché hot air balloons. They use paintbrushes with suitable control. They learn to make patterns that can be transferred from their original sketches. From their study of the local area, pupils have produced work in a variety of ways, including collages, such as those of homes, minibeasts and flowers. They have learned how to make rubbings of interesting features, such as the gravestones in the local churchyard. Pupils have learned to appreciate the work of famous artists, such as "Starry Night", by Vincent van Gogh. By the end of the key stage, pupils have learned a range of art techniques and used a variety of materials.

124. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their knowledge of pattern, tone and shape through studies related to their topics. Three-dimensional work is also included, such as where pupils have made model Tudor galleons. Topics such as the Tudors, Victorians and Ancient Greece have been used successfully to learn about pattern, shape and form. For example, pupils have learned about architecture in Ancient Greece, considered landscapes by famous artists and pattern by William Morris. In the Year 4, 5 and 6 class, pupils have developed art projects that include sketches of the local castle and church. They have used information technology effectively to enhance their work, supported by a visiting specialist who demonstrated ways of working creatively with computers. Picasso has been a focus for appreciation, with pupils working collaboratively to recreate sections of paintings. Here, pupils had to agree colours and ensure that the sections joined together appropriately. Some very good quality still life work is displayed in this class, showing good observational skills and good understanding of techniques used to highlight and shade subjects, such as fruit.

125. In the very few lessons seen, pupils responded well. They used tools and materials appropriately and shared resources. Pupils show appreciation of others' work. They show pride in their sketchbooks and in their progress over time. A few older pupils lacked concentration when working outside the classroom. Their observations of features around the school were sketched without due regard to shape or form.

126. Planning is generally good, with care taken to incorporate art into topic work. Cross curricular links are identified in teachers' medium term planning. A suitable balance is provided, ensuring pupils learn a range of art techniques, using a variety of materials. There is some overlap of activities on occasion, though the school is to refine its scheme to take account of the new curriculum guidance for September. Pupils' work is informally monitored. The use of sketchbooks provides a clear indication of pupils' progress. Leadership of the subject is good. The work of the school is carefully monitored and all staff share responsibility for the development of skills and concepts within the subject. Resources and the accommodation for art are satisfactory overall.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

127. In the 1995 inspection report, pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages was well below national expectations. Pupils were given little opportunity to design and plan the models they made and were not achieving the standards that they should. A key issue from the report was for the teaching of design and technology to meet statutory requirements. The improvement in the standards and teaching of the subject over the past four years has been

very good. Standards are now satisfactory and in line with what is expected of pupils aged 7 and 11. The development of designing and planning skills in the subject is a good feature of the work undertaken throughout the school.

128. At Key Stage 1, pupils design and make a range of objects related to the topics around which the curriculum is built. These are made from a variety of different materials. Pupils talk about their designs with increasing clarity. They make drawings of them and discuss why they have chosen this or that material, or used one means of fastening rather than another. They make up the designs and then discuss how they could have been improved. A good feature of the work in design and technology is the emphasis that is placed on thinking about the designs and in planning. Pupils select the appropriate materials, tools and methods of construction. The standards of both designing and making are broadly in line with what is expected of pupils by the end of the key stage.

129. At Key Stage 2, pupils increasingly gather information about materials and methods they might use in their constructions before making decisions. They consider alternatives and use knowledge derived from other subjects in their planning, such as considering forces, studied in science, when constructing towers out of rolled newspaper. They make labelled drawings that indicate both materials and, where appropriate, methods to be used. Those with higher prior attainment test joining techniques, for example, before deciding which to use. They also evaluate what they are doing while making their constructions and check progress against their plans. Pupils evaluate designs and make suggestions about how they could be improved. Pupils with lower prior attainment in designing skills pay less attention to the designing process in favour of “making it and seeing if it works”, with a consequent loss of quality. The standards in both designing and making by the end of the key stage are satisfactory for their age.

130. Progress in the school is good overall. Pupils with special educational needs in both key stages are provided with good support so that they make good progress in the subject. The provision of tasks that require co-operation enable pupils to discover together and learn from one another. This not only improves the range of work that can be done, but markedly improves the quality of relationships within the school and supports pupils’ social development. Pupils use the correct technical terms in their planning and discussion and their accuracy in measuring is enhanced by the work undertaken in numeracy.

131. All the teaching observed in design and technology was good. The teachers have a good working knowledge of the subject and of how pupils can be encouraged to approach it successfully. The work is well planned so that there is progression in the development of skills in designing and making. Teachers expect pupils to work hard at the tasks planned for them and enable them to enjoy the work. The resources available for the subject meet the needs of the curriculum and are used well. The planning is currently based on national recommendations, though the school is aware that it will need to match this to the new National Curriculum regulations. Design and technology is a developing part of the school’s curriculum and adds breadth to the pupils’ experience.

GEOGRAPHY

132. No lessons were seen in geography during the week of the inspection due to the organisation of the timetable. Evidence from pupils’ work, displays, teachers’ plans and discussions with pupils shows that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school. This reflects the judgements of the interim inspection in 1997 and shows a marked improvement since the school’s inspection in 1995.

133. The younger pupils in Key Stage 1 recognise the features of their own locality. They recognise differences and similarities between their homes and, from their work in history, understand that homes have changed over the years. Older pupils compare places further afield, consider human effects on the environment and understand the influence of weather.

134. At Key Stage 2, where pupils study the wider world, they show good understanding of maps. For example, pupils locate and name major places in Greece, reinforcing their historical knowledge and understanding of Ancient Greece. Pupils know the major cities in the world and use a legend effectively. Literacy is developed well through geography, such as in pupils' persuasive writing in a letter to a planning department. Here, they argue against proposals for a bypass, showing good understanding of the effects of major developments, economics and environmental issues.

135. The work seen in geography is often of a high quality. Pupils present their work well and use a good range of sources, including books, articles and computer programs. The subject supports pupils' developing research skills, which are also enhanced by the provision of research tasks for homework. Planning is good, showing a range of suitable objectives and using a variety of resources. At present, planning is based over two years. There is a satisfactory policy and scheme. Leadership of the subject is good. With the additional class and reorganisation of year groups in the next academic year, the present planning is unlikely to ensure continuity and progression. The school's assessment procedures are very good. Opportunities for assessment are included in teachers' plans and the information is used to inform future teaching.

136. Resources for geography are satisfactory. The school's rural position is used well as a resource for fieldwork. Opportunities are also provided for pupils to visit nearby towns, such as Carlisle, to look at similarities and differences between localities. The school is in a somewhat isolated position, but makes best use of its surroundings as a resource. The accommodation is satisfactory for teaching geography.

HISTORY

137. Few lessons were seen in history during the inspection. Evidence from those lessons observed, the scrutiny of pupils' work, plans and discussions shows that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress across the school. In 1995, standards in history were unsatisfactory overall, though there was a significant improvement by 1997. History is taught within topic work at Key Stage 1 and as a discrete subject at Key Stage 2.

138. At Key Stage 1, pupils have looked at homes and families. They understand that things change over time and know about some major events, such as inventions. They know about some famous people, including Isaac Newton and have a sound understanding of different sources of information. Year 2 pupils have learned about life in Tudor times, where they study costume, homes and lives of famous people. They understand the effects of change, such as during the different years of Tudor monarchs.

139. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to compare and contrast periods in history, including the influence of the Ancient Greeks. Here, pupils learn about architecture, myths and legends, enhancing their knowledge in art and supporting their literacy development. The older pupils in the key stage have good understanding of the main events of World War II and are aware of the variations in sources of evidence. For example, pupils know from their

recent work in the literacy hour that there are many types of writing and that some can be factual and some may be less factual than it first appears. This shows a good awareness of the need to select from a range of sources.

140. Pupils enjoy history. They listen attentively and behave well. In a Year 4, 5 and 6 lesson, pupils collaborated effectively, selecting their particular focus for research into Ancient Greece. They worked closely to devise plans and showed a mature approach to taking responsibility.

141. In the few lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good. Lessons were planned well and proceeded at a good pace. Teachers explained work carefully and encouraged pupils to participate in discussions. In history, teachers reinforced pupils' basic skills by encouraging good handwriting, spelling, sentences and punctuation. Pupils' speaking skills also benefit from the good opportunities provided for pupils to discuss, question and make suggestions. Teachers assess pupils' progress and maintain good records of progress. Assessment is undertaken and used to inform future teaching. From the scrutiny of work, in a few instances, there is an over-reliance on the use of worksheets to practise skills. The subject is carefully led and managed. Resources for history are good overall, though there are few artefacts available in school. The accommodation is satisfactory.

MUSIC

142. The interim report in 1997 indicated that the quality of music had improved since the inspection of the school in 1995 when standards were low. This improvement has been maintained.

143. At Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in singing and making music. They use simple rhythms and sequences of sounds, both by following tunes already known or learnt and by making up their own simple sequences using a range of tuned and untuned instruments. They sing together enthusiastically and competently, with some holding the musical line well. They recognise music that they have heard before and become aware that music varies from other times and different places.

144. At Key Stage 2, pupils' musical skills are developed further and they make good progress. They sing in parts holding their own line well, while at the same time being aware of what the other pupils are doing. They have a wide repertoire of songs that they perform with enthusiasm and evident enjoyment. They explore the texture of music, its rhythms and mood, in painting and writing as well as musically.

145. Pupils with special educational needs in both key stages profit from the good level of adult support from teaching assistants and other adult helpers and make good progress. The well supported co-operative nature of music in the school plays a significant role in the good progress made by those pupils whose difficulties are emotional and behavioural rather than academic.

146. Pupils enjoy music. They behave well, working co-operatively and taking turns generously. They try hard and the standards of performance are satisfactory as a result of their interest and concentration. They sing for groups of people within the community and take part in concerts. The pupils take a pride in this and their audiences are appreciative. All children in Key Stage 2 are offered the opportunity to play any woodwind or brass instrument. Recently, the school has offered pupils the opportunity to take violin lessons, free of charge.

147. The teaching of music is good, much of it being undertaken by a member of staff with special interest and skills in the subject. A significant amount of musical education is associated with collective worship. There is a well managed singing practice for assemblies each week, when the whole school meets to practice singing together and to learn new songs and hymns. Music is well planned and skills are taught progressively. The management of pupils' time and resources is very good so that no time is wasted or resources underused. Good use is made of visitors who bring different sorts of live music into the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

148. Only one lesson was seen in physical education during the week of the inspection. Evidence from the lesson seen in the oldest Key Stage 2 class, planning and discussions with teachers and pupils shows that pupils make satisfactory progress. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of games' skills. At the time of the previous inspection in 1995, there were many shortcomings in the subject, though the quality of learning in athletics and games was broadly satisfactory.

149. In the lesson seen, pupils showed suitable understanding of the need for warming up activities, recognising the effect of exercise on their bodies. They could strike a ball with reasonable accuracy, using a bat. They learned how to bowl and strike a ball when working

with partners. Whilst many responded well, some pupils had difficulty in working well with a partner. This still reflects a part of the judgement in the 1995 inspection, where the level of collaboration was minimal. However, a high number of pupils have joined this class in recent years and have yet to establish effective relationships with one another. A few pupils lacked self-confidence and some lacked stamina.

150. The quality of teaching in this lesson was good. The teacher ensured that tasks were developed progressively, providing increasing challenge for pupils. She made good use of demonstration and questioning to encourage pupils to refine their work. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, were fully included in the lesson. Pupils were managed well. The teacher interacted closely with all pupils to ensure they fully understood the aims and objectives of the lesson.

151. The policy and scheme for physical education clearly outlines the curriculum and organisation to ensure there is full coverage of the programmes of study. Although the school lacks a hall for physical education, good use is made of the playing field in good weather for games. Visits are made to a local sports centre to ensure pupils experience the use of large apparatus for gymnastics, whilst all pupils, including the younger pupils, receive swimming lessons. Co-ordination of the subject is good. There are regular evaluations of the school's policy, along with evaluations of organisation and teaching.

152. Resources are satisfactory. Equipment is stored safely. The school recognises that the lack of a hall sometimes restricts pupils' development in some aspects, such as using large apparatus for gymnastics. There is no large, outdoor play equipment for children under five. The isolated site means that additional time and money has to be allocated to travelling, such as to the sports centre, to enable pupils to receive their entitlement. Best use is made of available resources though the headteacher fully recognises the effect of the limitations of the accommodation towards developing more effective provision in this subject.