

INSPECTION REPORT

ST GEORGE'S C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Semington

Trowbridge

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126353

Headteacher: Mrs Suzanne Gilbert

Reporting inspector: Mr Keith Edwards
21190

Dates of inspection: 26-28 March 2001

Inspection number: 183439

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Pound Lane Semington Trowbridge Wiltshire
Postcode:	BA14 6LP
Telephone number:	01380 870243
Fax number:	01380 870243
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs B Woodward
Date of previous inspection:	22-4-1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Keith Edwards, Registered Inspector (Ofsted No 21190)	English	What sort of school is it?
	Art and design	The school's results and pupils' achievements
	Information and communication technology	How well are pupils taught?
	Music	How well is the school led and managed?
	Physical education	
	Special educational needs	
Helen Griffiths, Lay Inspector (Ofsted No 9446)		How well does the school care for its pupils?
		How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Bamber Loizou, Team Inspector (Ofsted No 18645)	Foundation Stage	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
	Science	
	Religious education	
	Design and technology	
	Geography	
	History	
	Equal opportunities	

The inspection contractor was:

Sandfield Educational Consultants
16 Wychwood Drive
Trowell Park
Nottingham
NG9 3RB

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is set in the village of Semington. It is proud of its status as a Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) school and maintains good links with the diocese. The school has a strong local profile and is regarded by the population as a focal point in the community. Families generally have employment and live predominantly in owner-occupied property. Most pupils live in the village although an increasing number attend the school from the surrounding communities. The character of the area is changing and this has resulted in a high incidence of pupil mobility. Almost a third of the pupils left or started school at a time other than the usual during the last year.

The children are admitted into the Reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. The school is much smaller than average. There are 54 pupils on roll, organised into mixed age classes. It is an all white school population and all of the pupils have English as their first language. Numbers are insufficient to support a village playgroup, but most Reception children have had some time at local nurseries. Six per cent of pupils, which is well below the national average, are eligible for free meals. The school has identified 15 per cent of its pupils as having special educational needs. This is below the national average. None of these pupils has a statement of educational need. There are two full-time and two part-time teachers employed in the school. The headteacher has a significant teaching commitment in Key Stage 2.

The inspection of this school included a detailed inspection of its provision for pupils with special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that provides satisfactory value for money. St George's has secured its position at the heart of the village and its ethos strongly reflects its church connections. The quality of management is good and the teaching is satisfactory. Standards are in line with national expectations in almost all subjects and the pupils make sound progress overall.

What the school does well

- The work of the school reflects its church connections and the pupils achieve well in religious education.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and has secured the place of the school in the heart of the village community.
- The teachers make good use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.
- The school provides well for the spiritual, moral social and cultural development of the pupils and their personal development is a strength.
- The quality of relationships is very good and this supports the pupils' learning.
- The school organises the curriculum well to provide for the different age groups.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology could be higher.
- The accommodation is inadequate for aspects of the physical development of the pupils.
- The quality of teaching and learning could be improved by introducing greater challenge. The school should make better use of its assessment information, its marking and record keeping procedures to provide appropriate challenge for all of its pupils, particularly the higher attainers.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in April 1996. Since then it has made satisfactory progress. Although standards have improved, the rate of improvement has not kept pace with the national trend. Issues from the last inspection regarding the management of the curriculum have been satisfactorily addressed. The school now groups pupils by ability for literacy and numeracy but the teachers' planning does not always meet their needs. The work set does not consistently provide appropriate challenge for the different ability groups. The headteacher has monitored these arrangements and has ensured that time is used effectively. The pupils have a clear understanding of which group they should be working with at any given point in the day. Furthermore, the school has introduced long term planning that details what is to be taught throughout the year. The short term planning has greater focus although it still tends towards outlining what the pupils will do rather than what the pupils will learn. The provision in the Foundation Stage now ensures that the pupils are involved in an appropriate range of practical activities and the pupils make good progress in their personal and social development. The school has been successful in maintaining the good standards of discipline and the level of care for the pupils which remain strengths of the school.

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
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	B	B	D
Mathematics	B	B	C	E
Science	B	B	C	E

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

* The "similar" in the table above refers to the percentage of free school meals and not the size of school.

Cohort sizes are very small. The school has a high pupil mobility rate and this adversely affects attainment. Of the twelve pupils who took the tests in 2000, one third did not start their education in the Reception class. The children start school with a wide range of ability but overall standards of attainment are average. The children make sound progress in the Foundation Stage and by the end of their Reception year most are likely reach the early learning goals for this age group in each area of learning. They make good progress in their personal and social development. Standards in the work seen in the core subjects are average at the end of Key Stage 1. By the time the pupils reach the age of eleven, standards in the core subjects still match the national average. The school usually achieves its targets in national tests although some of the individual targets for pupils are not challenging enough. Standards could be higher in the core subjects. Although the pupils' attainment was above average in English in 2000 at the age of eleven, their achievement was not as good as those pupils in similar schools. Standards were well below in mathematics and science in comparison with similar schools. The rate of improvement in standards has not kept pace with the national trend, Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and they make sound progress in literacy and numeracy. Although standards in information technology are below average, they are improving as the pupils make good use of the new computers installed in the classrooms. The pupils achieve well in religious education and standards are above average. Standards in art, geography, history and design and technology are satisfactory. Standards in music meet expectations and the quality of performance is good. The pupils reach satisfactory standards in physical education and achieve well in swimming and

sports' skills. However, because of the limited facilities, the pupils do not achieve well in gymnastics and dance.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils' attitudes to school are good. They enjoy school and co-operate well with teachers. They show good levels of interest in their work and apply themselves well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Standards of behaviour are good. This makes a considerable contribution to the pupils' learning and progress. The school is a friendly, happy and orderly community. However, two pupils with behavioural difficulties have been excluded in the last three years.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils' personal development is very good. They are becoming mature and self-sufficient. The pupils make good independent use of reference books in literacy lessons. The quality of relationships is very good.
Attendance	Attendance levels are above average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. Punctuality is good. Pupils are eager to come to school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. It enables the pupils to make satisfactory progress throughout the school. In 94 per cent of lessons, the teaching was satisfactory or better. In 41 per cent of lessons, the teaching was good. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory and that was found in a physical education lesson for the older pupils. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. The overall quality of teaching in English and mathematics lessons is satisfactory and enables the pupils to develop a secure foundation in the skills of literacy and numeracy. However, a few lessons lack the rigour to ensure that the pupils remain on task in group work. The school is effective in meeting the needs of most pupils in most subjects. Throughout the school, the teachers make good use of adult support in lessons. However, marking and record keeping lack consistency. More could be done to help the pupils to improve their work. Furthermore, the school does not make full use of its knowledge of the pupils to provide greater challenge for the higher attaining pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities offered by the school are satisfactory and the curriculum meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the recommended early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage. The curriculum does not consistently meet the needs of the higher attaining pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for those pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Children with learning difficulties are identified and supported from an early age. However, tasks set for these pupils do not always support their learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Standards in the provision have been maintained since the previous inspection. The provision for the pupils' moral and social development is very good. The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is good and well supported through acts of collective worship. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a good level of care for all of its pupils. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are very good. The school does not make full use of assessment information to challenge all of its pupils. This limits the progress of the higher attaining pupils.

The school works well with the parents and this has a positive impact on their children's learning. The parents hold the school in high esteem.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership provided by the headteacher is good. Her personal contribution to the school's standing in the community is good. She successfully combines her roles of manager and class teacher. There is a strong sense of teamwork between the teaching and non-teaching staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body complies with almost all statutory requirements including collective worship, sex education, and the provision for those pupils with special educational needs. However, the school has yet to agree formally its policy on raising drugs awareness.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has established clear priorities for development that meet the needs of the school. It is taking effective action to meet its targets.
The strategic use of resources	The school is successful in managing its finances. Spending decisions are linked to priorities in the development plan and the school is seeking out best value for money in its spending decisions. St George's provides satisfactory value for money.

The school is resourced satisfactorily and there are enough teachers for the number of pupils on roll. Resources for information and communication technology have recently been improved. However, the accommodation has shortcomings. The hall is unsuitable for dance and gymnastics lessons for the juniors and there is no discrete outdoor area for the physical development for those children under five years of age.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem• The school expects their children to work hard and do their best• The school is well led and managed• Their children like school• The teaching is good• The school works closely with parents• Behaviour in the school is good	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of activities outside lessons

Parents express strong support for the school. They are very pleased with the school and all that it does for their children. Parents feel strongly that their children are making good progress and that the school is well led and managed. Their children enjoy coming to St George's and the parents find the school to be approachable if matters need to be discussed. Parents feel that their children respond well to the school's expectations of hard work and are becoming mature and responsible. Inspectors support their positive views and judge that the quality and range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and that the curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The children's attainment covers a wide range on entry to the school but it is average overall. The children respond well to the teaching in the Reception class and make sound progress. They make good progress in their personal and social development. The children rapidly settle into work routines in pairs and groups, share resources and quickly establish good relationships with their friends and the adults who work with them. By the end of the Reception year, the children are beginning to read, turning the pages of books correctly and recognising words. Many children write their name and are forming letters well. They are beginning to understand number and use mathematical language such as "more than" and "less than". They make satisfactory progress in their creative development and become accustomed to working with a range of media. The pupils make satisfactory progress in their physical development but are hampered by the lack of appropriate facilities. By the end of the Reception year, most pupils are likely to attain the early learning goals in all the areas of learning and a few will exceed these.

2. Too few pupils were involved in the National Curriculum Key Stage 1 assessments for 2000 to draw any meaningful comparisons with results in other schools. However, an analysis of the pupils' work across the curriculum indicates that standards are in line with the national average in mathematics and English. Pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage and sensitively supported. This enables them to make satisfactory progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Overall, the pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior levels of attainment and achieve standards which are in line with the national average in all subjects except information technology at the end of Key Stage 1.

3. In a small school the performance of one or two pupils can have a significant impact on comparative data. The National Curriculum assessments for eleven-year-olds in 2000 show that standards were above average in English and close to average in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence finds that standards in English, mathematics and science are average. An analysis of the school's 2000 performance data indicates that the pupils' achievements were below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science when compared with similar schools. This is not a true reflection of the work of the school. There is a high level of pupil mobility at St George's and two thirds of the pupils who left the school at the age of eleven at the end of the last academic year started in the Reception class.

4. Although test results have fluctuated over the last four years, in both key stages, standards have not improved in the core subjects in line with the national rate. The school is using the structures provided by the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to good effect to raise standards and consistently meets the targets set for its eleven-year-old pupils. However, some of the teaching lacks challenge for the higher attaining pupils and a few are not achieving the levels of which they are capable. The school is carefully monitoring the teaching in the daily literacy and numeracy lessons to evaluate their effect and is using booster classes to raise attainment. This demonstrates that the school is developing the strategies to improve.

5. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make sound progress. These pupils are well supported in literacy and numeracy lessons but the tasks set for them do not always match the targets on their individual education plans. Furthermore, the targets set for the other ability groups, particularly the higher attaining pupils, are not as challenging as they might be and this slows

their progress. The attainment of boys and girls is broadly similar in the core subjects and the quality of learning for all pupils is satisfactory.

6. Pupils make good progress in listening and satisfactory progress in speaking. They have a secure command of language appropriate for their age and by the time they leave school, most express themselves confidently. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in this element of English. Teachers modify their questions to take account of their abilities. The pupils are encouraged to listen carefully and they confidently participate in discussions.

7. The pupils make satisfactory progress in reading. Almost all of the pupils enjoy reading and older pupils cope with a wide variety of texts such as prose, poetry and play scripts and demonstrate a sound range of skills. By the age of eleven, the higher attaining pupils read a range of classic novels such as "The Railway Children" with pleasure and understanding. Their skills include skimming text to gain an overall impression and scanning to locate information. Their reference skills enable them to research information and they use these reading skills independently.

8. The pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their reading and in writing through appropriately focused strategies to meet their specific needs. An additional factor to this progress is the effective support they receive from classroom assistants and from the well-briefed voluntary helpers. These pupils benefit from detailed individual programmes to improve their reading skills. The good quality of the relationships between the teachers and their pupils contributes significantly to their rate of learning.

9. Writing standards are broadly average by the end of Key Stage 1. There are some examples where the pupils are using their newly learned skills to extend their writing in other subjects. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' attainment in writing is close to the national average. Pupils use their skills in literacy to good effect in other subjects such as science and design and technology with a good understanding of grammar. Most pupils have succeeded in developing a well formed handwriting style and spell accurately.

10. By the time the pupils leave school standards in mathematics are average. The school has successfully introduced the Numeracy Strategy and is now well placed to continue to improve. The pupils are responding well to their numeracy lessons and the emphasis on mental mathematics. They are making sound progress in calculations involving tables and measurement. The pupils make good progress in acquiring and using an appropriate mathematical vocabulary. They collect data and know how to present information in different graphs. Their understanding of mathematics benefits from opportunities to apply their skills in other subjects. However, not all of the teaching challenges the higher attaining pupils.

11. The pupils make satisfactory progress in science in both key stages and by the age of eleven standards are close to the national average. The younger pupils engage in practical investigations and can classify materials according to their properties. They respond well to the teaching in Key Stage 2 and make satisfactory progress. By the age of eleven, the pupils engage in investigations and apply sound scientific methods to reach their conclusions. They have a secure understanding of basic concepts and use their knowledge to make valid predictions in their experiments.

12. By the time most pupils leave the school, their understanding of information technology is below expectations. Although the teachers plan sufficient opportunities to use computers to support learning, it is within a limited range of skills such as word processing and using graphics programs. The pupils do not have the opportunity to develop the full range of skills for their age group. However, the school has recently invested substantially in new equipment which provides access the Internet and greater opportunities for the use of computers for research and modelling.

13. The pupils' attainment in religious education is above average at the end of both key stages. By studying a carefully chosen series of themes the pupils learn about Christianity and acquire a knowledge and understanding of its origin, the Bible and its content. They also learn about the other principal faiths of the world and can draw comparisons with Christianity.

14. The pupils' achievement in history and geography is satisfactory in both key stages. These subjects are supported by schemes of work and field visits that stimulate the pupils' interest. Standards in art and design and technology are supported by clear schemes of work and standards are close to average. Pupils achieve well in aspects of physical education such as swimming and games skills. However, because of limited facilities the pupils do not achieve well in gymnastics and dance. Their achievements in music are satisfactory and are well supported by opportunities to perform for a variety of audiences. The pupils sing with confidence and clarity and this makes a strong contribution to their sense of belonging to their school community.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Since its last inspection in 1996, the school has improved the attitudes, values and personal development of the pupils. The pupils are trustworthy and care for each other. They respect their own property and that of others. Older pupils take responsibility for moving tables and chairs before assemblies and, due to the limited space, the pupils show initiative every day when they are expected to organise their resources and move into different working groups. The children in the Foundation Stage are developing positive attitudes in their learning. They are well behaved and attentive. For example, Reception children persevere with tasks, showing that they co-operate with others when in the role-play area or when working on reading and writing activities with the learning assistant during guided reading in literacy lessons.

16. The pupils' attitudes to school are good. They enjoy school and this is reflected in their behaviour and levels of attendance. They co-operate well with teachers and apply themselves well to tasks. They show good levels of interest in their work. For example, in the infant class, the pupils enjoy reading together in a group during a literacy lesson, there are good levels of interest as the pupils talk about "The very hungry caterpillar". Pupils are very keen to answer questions during class discussions. For instance in a Year 5 and 6 geography lesson, they were eager to offer a great variety of spontaneous answers to questions about different mountain regions around the world. The pupils participate well in lessons, showing good levels of concentration. The pupils show enthusiasm during special visits, for example, during the inspection, older pupils participated in a country dancing day and were very keen to share their experiences when returning to school.

17. Standards of behaviour are good. This makes a considerable contribution to the pupils' learning and progress. The school is a friendly, happy and orderly community. Pupils behave sensibly in classrooms, and in and around the school. Behaviour in class assemblies and at playtimes is good. Lunchtime is a very pleasant social occasion where pupils mix very well together and enjoy each other's company. All pupils are courteous and show respect for staff and visiting adults. They are very well mannered towards visitors and enjoy being asked about their school. Behaviour management by staff is good with a consistent whole school approach. The pupils have a good and clear understanding of the impact of their actions on others. One pupil was excluded in the last academic year.

18. Relationships are very good. The pupils value each other's contributions and achievements in lessons. A good example of this was seen during an assembly when some older pupils played musical instruments. The pupils also listened, and showed their appreciation, when a child sang the verse of a

hymn on her own and the whole school joined in the chorus. Younger children in the infant and Year 3 class work well together, supporting and co-operating in their groups. The older pupils in the class support and work with younger pupils and children under five, often helping, sharing resources and co-operating well. The pupils show very good levels of respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others.

19. Personal development is very good. The pupils are progressively becoming more mature and self-sufficient. They make good use of reference books in literacy lessons showing independence and perseverance. In Years 4, 5 and 6 many pupils use text books to find information to support their answers to questions on how different characters respond in a complex poem by Lord Tennyson. Many pupils select their own learning resources independently in many lessons. The pupils show a very good level of initiative in their learning. A good example of this was seen in the junior class during a religious education lesson when the pupils were discussing the symbolic significance of 'bread and wine' in Christianity. This evoked a mature and sensible discussion with pupils sharing ideas in groups with each one taking responsibility for writing notes or organising the discussion. Pupils of all ages accept responsibilities very well. Monitors perform their tasks in a helpful and effective fashion, for example, when preparing musical instruments for assemblies.

20. The pupils' enthusiasm for school is good and this is reflected in the good levels of attendance that is above average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. Punctuality is good. Pupils are eager to come to school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

21. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. It enables the pupils to make satisfactory progress throughout the school. In 94 per cent of lessons, the teaching was satisfactory or better. In 41 per cent of lessons, the teaching was good. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory and that was found in a physical education lesson for the older pupils. The overall quality of teaching in English and mathematics lessons is satisfactory and enables the pupils to develop a secure foundation in the skills of literacy and numeracy. The school is effective in meeting the needs of most pupils in most subjects. Throughout the school, the teachers make good use of adult support in lessons.

22. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory with some good features. This ensures that the children achieve well in their personal and social development and in the acquisition of language. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. The teacher and classroom assistant work very well as a team and they have a good understanding of how young children learn. They choose activities well to help the pupils to learn. Work is planned to provide challenge for all of the children. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are soundly taught and this is giving children a firm grounding. The adults informally assess the children's progress and this is used to plan the next steps in their learning. These assessments are recorded so that the children are monitored regularly. The children with special educational needs are identified early and are given good support.

23. The emphasis that all teachers give to the pupils' personal and social development is a strength; it raises the pupils' confidence and self-esteem and nurtures a very positive attitude towards learning. The teachers provide good role models for the pupils and have established strong relationships with them. This enables the teachers to manage sensitive issues as in a religious education lesson when the teacher skilfully helped the pupils to consider the death of a loved one and the memories they left behind. The pupils were at ease when volunteering comments such as "My gran was always good at baking cakes" or "My nana used to feed me with strawberries". This lesson then successfully linked the pupils' sense of loss with the feelings of the disciples when Jesus was crucified.

24. The teachers consistently maintain good standards of discipline. This enables the pupils to settle quickly to group work especially in literacy and numeracy sessions. Furthermore, the teachers are skilled in their use of questions. For example, in the lower juniors the teacher enabled the pupils to identify the special features of a fable such as the use of animals, the moral content and the brevity of the story, through the use of well-focused questions. In most classes the plenary session is used well to establish what has been learned. The quality of the display of the pupils' work reflects the value that is given to it.

25. The pupils in Key Stage 1 are taught together with the children in the Foundation Stage for most subjects and the substantial majority of Year 2 pupils work with the pupils in lower Key Stage 2 for their literacy and numeracy lessons. This arrangement works well as the pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment. However, assessment information is not used as effectively to challenge the higher attaining pupils. The teaching in the Literacy Hour tends to be more effective than the teaching in the Numeracy Hour. In particular, the teachers are successful in teaching the skills of reading and in encouraging the pupils to value books. In numeracy lessons, there is insufficient rigour to ensure that the higher attaining pupils are achieving their best in group work. The school is developing target setting for groups of pupils but the targets tend to be imprecise in the short term planning and the pupils progress towards targets are not reviewed regularly enough to make them effective. The teachers' marking is inconsistent and is a weakness in the teaching. Where it is effective it shows pupils how they can improve their work. Where it is merely a list of ticks or crosses or bland comments, it does not help the pupils to improve. Furthermore, the school lacks consistency in its record keeping. Too little information is recorded in a systematic way about the pupils' progress.

26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has many good features. The class teachers carry out the planning for the individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs, together with the special educational needs co-ordinator. The learning support assistants make valuable contributions to the individual education plans. The work is carefully matched to pupils' needs but does not always identify the small steps needed for them to progress. As a consequence, there are a few occasions when the pupils with special educational needs do not progress as well as they might. The good relationships established with the pupils with special educational needs has a significant impact on their learning and enables them to make sound progress in achieving the goals set in the individual education plans. The provision is particularly successful in enabling these pupils to make significant advances in the development of their skills of literacy.

27. The school has just purchased a stock of up-to-date computers which have been located in the classrooms to enable the pupils to make use of them in a whole range of subjects. The pupils are already producing good work for example, in science and history lessons. Homework has a positive effect on the pupils' learning. The teachers strive to maintain a close working relationship with the parents and set a variety of interesting tasks for the pupils to complete at home. This approach is appreciated by the parents.

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

28. The quality and range of learning opportunities offered by the school are satisfactory and the curriculum meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the recommended early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage. At the time of the previous inspection several weaknesses were identified related to the curriculum and particularly that for infant pupils. Since then the school has improved planning so that younger pupils are provided with more practical activities. Learning objectives are usually shared with the pupils at the start of each lessons, although these are not always challenging enough for higher attaining pupils. The headteacher, monitors teachers

planning more closely and, together with a broader curriculum and schemes of work, the school provides more practical and relevant activities in all the subjects of the National Curriculum and the new locally agreed syllabus for religious education.

29. There are more opportunities provided for practical investigation in science and mathematics. Planning for continuity between the infant and junior age groups is well planned.

30. There is equality of access for all of the pupils, although the higher attaining pupils do not do so well, particularly in upper Key Stage 2. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in the level of specialist support, monitoring by the co-ordinator and effective links with outside agencies and parents. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and classroom assistants and the curriculum is soundly matched to their needs. The requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are met satisfactorily.

31. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented in the school and these are helping to raise standards. The planning and provision for literacy and numeracy are good. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and teachers' planning have been adapted so that activities are appropriate for mixed aged classes. The planning in both subjects identifies the activities for pupils of different capabilities to help them to learn. However, a few lessons lack challenge for the higher attaining pupils. Regular assessments are undertaken during each term. The school mainly uses the nationally recommended schemes of work for all subjects. Cross-curricular links are identified between subjects and good use is made of the local environment to support geography and history. The school has limited space for acts of collective worship and indoor physical education. Consequently, the school's accommodation is unsuitable for dance and gymnastics and this affects the pupils' progress in these aspects of the physical education curriculum. Children under five in the Foundation Stage do not have enough space or regular access to outdoor play using climbing apparatus and wheeled toys.

32. There is sound provision for personal, health and social education. A draft policy and scheme of work have been written but are not yet in place. Health education, including sex education, is taught appropriately in science. The school has not yet formally adopted a drugs awareness policy. Relationships are explored in acts of collective worship and religious education and other aspects are taught as they arise in class discussion.

33. Homework is provided and this is satisfactory overall. Younger pupils take home reading books and spellings. Pupils in the junior years are provided with a range of weekly tasks in addition to reading, spellings and tables. On occasions they are provided with stimulating tasks to support their work in science and technology such as designing and making musical instruments.

34. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is similar to that found in the last inspection and is good.

35. The provision for spiritual development is good. When pupils come into acts of collective worship, they do so in a quiet and reverent manner. They know that this is a special time. The lighting of the candle is "for when we talk to God". There is a very supportive and positive atmosphere in assemblies. All pupils and teachers join in the singing and prayers. There is time for reflection, about sharing, helping and kindness to others. Music is well used to enhance the mood and atmosphere. The headteacher and staff share responsibility for leading acts of collective worship, reinforcing the very good relationships and community spirit of the school.

36. The provision for moral development is very good. All adults involved in the school set a fine example in their relationship with each other and with the pupils. The pupils know clearly what is right and wrong. This is reinforced in acts of collective worship. Morals are drawn from Bible stories, general fiction and from myths and legends.

37. The provision for social development is very good. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their social skills in school. In lessons they share in their learning by working in pairs or groups. In science lessons for example, the way that pupils are grouped enables higher-attaining pupils to share with and help those who are less secure in the subject. At the end of lessons, when pupils are given opportunities to tell the class what they have achieved, others respect this and listen attentively. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities and are given opportunities to boost their self-esteem. The mixed age classes enable the pupils to work with younger or older pupils and this is carefully planned so that in some lessons younger pupils benefit from shared activities.

38. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. This is similar to the findings in the previous inspection. Pupils learn about their own culture through history, geography and local studies of the village. Pupils benefited from their recent history topic where they experienced a whole day 'living the lives' of Victorian school children. Other cultures are studied through ancient societies such as the Ancient Greeks, Romans and Egyptians and comparisons are made between the pupils' own village and a village in Gambia on the African continent. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their literacy skills through studying stories from a variety of African countries. Studies are made of different faiths and pupils hear stories of Mohammed as well as Jesus.

39. Extra-curricular provision is good and makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning. There is a range of clubs that are all well subscribed. At present these include music activities, a pottery club and seasonal games and sports. The curriculum is enriched effectively by the use of resources outside the school. During the past two years there have been residential visits for older pupils to Cornwall for fieldwork in geography and outdoor adventurous activities.

40. Links with the community are good. The school is embedded in the heart of the village. There are very good links with the local church, where the pupils hold special services three or four times each year. The school supports the Trowbridge churches' soup run in the winter and distributes harvest gifts to the elderly. All pupils display work at the village fete and show. Pupils are encouraged to think of others less fortunate than themselves and support fundraising days.

41. Links with partner institutions are satisfactory. There is no nursery school or playgroup in the village. The headteacher meets regularly with staff from other small schools to share good practice. Links with the local secondary school are satisfactory: some bridging projects have taken place in English and Year 6 pupils visit the school. Teachers from each school exchange pastoral and academic information on pupils. However, curricular links are in the early stages of development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. As at the time of the last inspection, the school is a caring community which has established good procedures to ensure the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. Local authority guidelines in child protection have been adopted and all staff are trained each year. There are good links with outside agencies. Health and safety practices are good. Arrangements for dealing with pupils' medical conditions are good and there is a good number of staff with first aid qualifications.

43. The level of supervision at lunchtime is good. The playground is bleak and there is little for the pupils to do. There are no quiet or shaded areas and no separate area for under fives. The governors

and “Friends” joint working group have recognised this as a priority area of need and have detailed plans for improvements.

44. The positive behaviour policy introduced over the last two years has proved very successful. “Golden rules”, certificates for good behaviour and the house points system make very positive contributions to the good behaviour of pupils. Pupils are very clear about how they should behave. Bullying is rare and pupils and parents are confident that it is dealt with quickly and effectively.

45. Procedures for monitoring pupils’ personal development are good, through teachers’ personal knowledge and through reports. Teachers know their pupils very well and are concerned for their welfare. Parents are very pleased with the pastoral care of their children.

46. Procedures to promote good attendance and monitor patterns of lateness or absence are thorough. Registration takes place promptly and ensures a calm and orderly start to sessions. There are good relationships with the Educational Welfare Officer and other agencies.

47. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils’ academic progress are unsatisfactory because assessments of how well the pupils are doing are not being carried out regularly enough. This makes it difficult for the headteacher and staff when setting learning and attainment targets because any lapses in pupils’ progress are not being picked up soon enough to remedy or improve pupils’ learning.

48. In the Foundation Stage, the pupils are assessed on entry to the school and there are continuous assessments made throughout the year. In the rest of the school there are procedures in place to assess and test pupils, for example, reading tests are undertaken twice a year. Spelling and mathematics tests are regularly undertaken and the results of these are used to set targets and inform the staff which pupils are likely to achieve the expected levels in the end-of-key-stage National Curriculum tests at age 7 and 11. In this way the school groups the pupils by ability. But evidence from the lessons observed show that the pupils who have the potential to achieve high levels in the tests are not being monitored closely or rigorously enough to ensure that they fulfil their potential and realise the predictions set in their learning targets. The targets are used to track how well the pupils are doing but it is not clear whether the pupils understand them or how often their progress is checked.

49. The headteacher analyses test results and this is used to identify strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of English, mathematics and science. Teachers keep records of what pupils can do and in which areas they need help but the marking of work varies in quality across the school. Information from tests and teachers’ marking is sometimes used to adapt and inform their planning. Records of achievement are kept by collecting samples of the pupils’ best work across a range of subjects. The staff assess the work and provide National Curriculum levels to each piece of work but there is no consistent policy that ensures regular checks on the pupils’ attainment, the results of which can be used to inform teachers about the progress, or lack of it, that each pupils is making.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. Parents at the meeting and in a high response to the questionnaire were very supportive. They are very pleased with the school and all that it does for their children. Parents feel strongly that their children are making good progress and that they are well informed about progress. Teachers are thought to be accessible. Parents are strongly supportive of the way the school is led. They feel that behaviour in the school is good and that their children are encouraged to be mature and responsible. The findings of the inspection support these positive views. The only area of dissatisfaction was that of extra-curricular activities. The provision of extra-curricular activities is judged to be satisfactory.

Seasonal sports, choir or music club and pottery club are offered, but the range of activities is restricted by facilities available.

51. The school has effective links with parents. The information provided for them is satisfactory. The prospectus and annual governors' report to parents are attractively presented and easy to use. Good information is provided each term on the curriculum to allow parents to help their children with their learning. There is some information on special educational needs for new parents, though as yet no advisory booklets on, for example, starting school or helping children with reading. Nearly all parents have signed the home/school agreements. Reports are felt to be helpful and include information on personal development and opportunities for self-assessment. However, they do not report separately on each aspect of technology. There is a good range of curriculum and consultation meetings. Parents feel free to consult informally with teachers about their children.

52. A satisfactory number of parents help on a regular basis in the school and others help with trips and visits. They feel that they are welcome in the school and that their efforts are appreciated. This has a positive effect on the pupils' learning.

53. The Friends' Association organises a good range of social and fund-raising activities. Very good sums are raised each year and funds are to be put to good use in developing the grounds in collaboration with the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The leadership provided by the headteacher is good. She knows the school, the pupils and their parents well and gives good support to the staff. The headteacher's personal contribution to the school's standing in the community is good. The headteacher carefully monitors the work of the school and has established clear and appropriate priorities for improvement. She successfully combines her role as headteacher with a substantial teaching commitment. There is a strong sense of teamwork between the teaching and non-teaching staff and this promotes learning.

55. Issues from the last inspection regarding the management of the curriculum have been satisfactorily addressed and the school has made satisfactory progress since then. The school has successfully introduced a complex planning arrangement to ensure that all of the pupils have the opportunity to work in appropriate ability groups for their literacy and numeracy sessions. The headteacher has monitored these arrangements and has ensured that time is used effectively. The pupils have a clear understanding of which group they should be working with at any given point in the day. Furthermore, the school has introduced successfully long term planning that sets out clearly what is to be taught in different subjects throughout the year. The short term planning has greater focus although it still tends towards outlining what the pupils will do rather than what the pupils will learn. Lesson objectives still lack precision. Through the headteacher's careful monitoring of teaching, improvements have been made for the youngest children. The provision in the Foundation Stage now ensures that the pupils are involved in an appropriate range of practical activities and the pupils make good progress in their personal and social development. The school has been successful in maintaining the good standards of discipline and its level of care for its pupils which remain strengths of the school.

56. The last inspection reported that, "Throughout the school attainment is in line with what is expected nationally" and this remains the case today. Although standards have not risen in line with the national trend, the management of the school has coped well with the high pupil mobility and this is a success for the school.

57. The school is successful in meeting its aims that focus on the personal development of each child. The ethos of the school, which is strong on ensuring the pupils' welfare, is good. The school takes pride in its links with the church and the headteacher uses assemblies well to promote the personal development of the pupils. Subject co-ordinators have a sound knowledge of their areas of responsibility and are committed to raising standards. For example, the information technology co-ordinator has helped to raise the expertise of her colleagues and the English co-ordinator has successfully monitored the introduction of the Literacy Strategy. All staff participate in training and are keen to improve their skills. The school is developing performance management strategies appropriately.

58. The leadership and management of special educational needs provision are at least satisfactory and some aspects of it are good. The headteacher acts as co-ordinator. She makes a significant contribution to the quality of provision in the exercise of both roles. As headteacher, she has increased the number of hours worked by learning support assistants and makes sure that the available funds are spent appropriately in support of the school's special educational needs provision. As co-ordinator, she works closely with her colleagues in drawing up individual education plans. She monitors teachers' planning and classroom practice and contributes to the teaching.

59. The governing body complies with most statutory requirements including collective worship, sex education, and the provision for those pupils with special educational needs. However, the school has yet to formally agree its policy on raising drugs awareness. The governors have an effective committee structure and have established procedures to monitor the curriculum. The governors have nominated a member of their board to oversee the provision for pupils who are on the register for special educational needs. They are supported in a way that ensures their needs are identified at an early stage and appropriate strategies are adopted. Equally, governors have been involved in the implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and inspection evidence indicates that the arrangements are working satisfactorily. The governors have been closely involved with the discipline and health and safety policies. However, the governing body has difficulty in recruiting new members and three vacancies remain unfilled.

60. The school is successful in managing its finances. Administrative procedures are tight and efficient. Issues arising from the last auditors' report have been satisfactorily addressed. Spending decisions are linked to priorities in the development plan and the school is seeking out best value for money in its spending decisions. Specific grants are used well. For example, the school has recently invested in information technology and funding to support pupils with special educational needs is used well appropriately. The school deploys the adults who work in the school well to support learning. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

61. The school's staffing levels, accommodation and resources are mostly satisfactory and make a positive contribution to learning. The Reception classroom provides a stimulating environment for the youngest children. However, the children do not have access to a discrete outside play area. Furthermore, the hall is inadequate for the demands of the physical education curriculum and all of the pupils have limited access to the appropriate facilities if the weather is bad. There is scope for making better use of the space in the central open area although the school is hampered by a lack of storage facilities.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. The headteacher, staff and governors should now:

- improve standards in information technology by ensuring that the full programme of work is covered (paragraphs 115, 116)
- improve the progress made by the higher attaining pupils by developing the use of assessment information to set targets for groups of pupils and to provide greater challenge for pupils of differing abilities across the curriculum. This process should include greater consistency in marking the pupils' work and in the school's record keeping procedures (paragraphs 4, 25, 47, 48, 49)
- continue to strive for improvements in the school's accommodation to extend the facilities for the pupils' physical development (paragraphs 31,61, 71, 127).

Minor issues

63. The school should also seek to ensure compliance with national guidelines with regard to annual reports to parents on their children's progress and with regard to the formal introduction of a drugs awareness programme (paragraphs 32, 51, 59).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

17

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

20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	41	53	6	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

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	54
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	8

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
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Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

As fewer than ten pupils took the national tests for seven-year-old pupils in 2000, no data is represented.

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	2000	7	5	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	10	10	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (86)	83 (86)	92 (71)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	11	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (86)	92 (86)	92 (86)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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	54
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	6	1
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	24

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	54
Number of questionnaires returned	40

Percentage of responses in each category

My child likes school.

My child is making good progress in school.

Behaviour in the school is good.

My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.

The teaching is good.

I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.

I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.

The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.

The school works closely with parents.

The school is well led and managed.

The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	38	2		
My child is making good progress in school.	40	55	5		
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	48			8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	46	5		3
The teaching is good.	52	48			
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	48	10		
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	25			
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	38			
The school works closely with parents.	52	48			
The school is well led and managed.	62	38			
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	55			

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	151460
Total expenditure	140200
Expenditure per pupil	2125
Balance brought forward from previous year	5566
Balance carried forward to next year	16826

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

26	29	32		13
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PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

64. When the children are first assessed on entry to the Reception class, they have a wide range of attainment in their language skills, in mathematics and in their physical, personal and social development. The children's attainment is broadly in line with the standards expected for their age when they first start school. There are eleven children in the Reception class, five of them began school in September full-time because they will be five years of age before the end of March. The rest joined part-time and became full-time in January. The Reception children are taught alongside Year 1, 2 and 3 pupils in a classroom which has appropriate facilities and designated areas for children in the Foundation Stage as well as facilities for the other pupils who are taught the early stages of the National Curriculum. Relationships with parents are very good and this helps the children to settle quickly and begin learning.

65. The provision is satisfactory, except in physical development because the school does not have a designated space for outdoor play. Detailed planning ensures that the curriculum is based on the six areas of learning appropriate for Reception children. It includes specific learning objectives for all of the activities but the lack of a play area restricts the children's physical development. There is an appropriate balance between teacher directed learning and self-chosen or 'free choice' activities which are structured to allow pupils to develop their creative and imaginative skills.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. The provision for personal, social and emotional development is given a high priority by the staff and they soon get to know the children well. The quality of teaching is good. Most of the children show a good degree of independence and confidence for their age. They concentrate for appropriate periods in group or class sessions and are enthusiastic about their learning, wanting to share their ideas and experiences. For example in the sand area, two children were happily playing together and sharing spades and tools when making a "Play-people party". The children are learning to share and take turns and to say 'please' and 'thank you.' Routines are well established and the children know what is expected of them. Their behaviour is good. They are beginning to take responsibility for themselves and others by helping to tidy up and clear away. When the children are involved in directed and self-chosen activities, especially during role-play in the mock "camp-site", the children are thoroughly absorbed in their roles, talking, listening and responding, co-operating and sharing. The children stay in role and sustain an activity when choosing from those provided by the staff. The quality of learning is good and all of the children are in line to achieve the early learning goals in this area. Most have already done so. Through the balanced programme of play and instruction, the children are growing in confidence, self-esteem and independence in a secure learning environment.

Communication, language and literacy

67. The children are given many opportunities to speak and to listen, including times such as "story-time" in focused literacy lessons. The teaching is good in this area of learning. The children learn their letter sounds and distinguish print from illustration in books during good shared reading sessions. All of the children are able to express themselves and some are able to match rhyming words. The children enjoy listening to stories and join in the reading of the 'big' book together, and some are beginning to recognise words and phrases. The classroom assistant supported a group of children as they focused on a "The very hungry caterpillar" book as part of the guided reading during literacy. The children read together in a group, looking at words and pictures and responding well to

questions such as “Can you remember what happened next?” They discussed the story and predicted what might happen. Older children worked with the teacher, who used effective teaching techniques when asking the children to recognise words as she held some up on flash cards. The children responded by recognising the first letter or word shape, gesturing with their hands as they did so, then sounding out the letter sounds in the word. They are beginning to learn the names and sounds of letters and how to write them. They write their own names and are forming their letters accurately. Higher attaining children read simple books by themselves and are starting to tackle new words using their knowledge of letter sounds but are less confident when identifying letter sounds at the end of words. Other children know some key words and ‘read’ stories by using the pictures as clues.

68. During role-play in the fictitious “Isle of Struay Camp site”, good spoken language was used and the children responded well because resources were available for them to talk, listen and respond. For example, after listening to the “hungry caterpillar” story, a group of children sorted out toy fruits and vegetables, matching the real ones the teacher brought in a shopping bag, and began to act out the story. The teacher and classroom assistant are successful in evoking language and link this well to other areas of learning. For example, they asked the children, “Who can remember what came last in the story?” The children responded thoughtfully, recalling different parts of the story. The teaching is good and as a result, by the time they enter Year 1, almost all the children will have achieved the early learning goals, with some exceeding them.

Mathematical development

69. The children make satisfactory progress in their mathematical development and the teaching is satisfactory. By the end of the reception year most children will have reached the early learning goals. The attainment of the children is variable but work is well matched to individual needs and assessments are carried out regularly to ensure this. The classroom assistant and teacher share the teaching well so that children can work in small groups with an adult. All the children confidently count sets of objects, usually up to ten, and they understand the meaning of ‘one or two more or less.’ They recognise numerals up to ten and can write all of them. The younger children are beginning to count accurately with support. Higher attaining children are able to carry out and record simple addition and subtraction sums, using the appropriate vocabulary. Sound teaching techniques are used to reinforce their learning, for example, the children’s workbooks show good development from tracing the shape of a number in September to the most recent work where the children write numbers independently, recognising their order and matching them to groups of objects in a set. As a result, the children are developing an understanding of number, shape and pattern. Counting songs and rhymes are used to reinforce important stages in the counting sequence. Consequently, higher attaining children recognise that five and ten are important stages so they learn the importance of the value of numbers as well as their position on a number line and are beginning to count in groups of five and ten. All of the children know the names of simple two-dimensional shapes and can recognise them quickly. Very good use is made of practical resources and counting apparatus, for example, younger children are making satisfactory progress learning to recognise numbers and matching these by connecting construction bricks. Real life experiences are also used well to reinforce practical and real life situations. The teacher showed the children items of fruit and vegetables bought from a shop. They count the items together and place them in order. The teaching by both adults makes a significant contribution to children’s learning in this area of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

70. The teaching is satisfactory because opportunities are provided to discuss the wider world. As a result, the provision for the development of the children’s knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory and ensures that the children relate their own experiences to stories, pictures and songs.

The children were observed discussing “Special occasions” and the teacher read a story about a girl’s special party. Good links were made with a New Testament story and this helped the children to relate their own experiences of parties and celebrations to the difficult concept of the “Last Supper” in the Easter story. The classroom assistant helped a group of children to make bread, as this was used as an important part of the story. However, the symbolism of “bread” and “wine” was more relevant to the older pupils in the class in Years 2 and 3. The Reception children enjoyed talking about different types of bread. The children sometimes use the computer, and show good control and understanding, but this is not always a feature of the lessons and could be used more regularly. They build and construct using a range of construction kits. They enjoy listening to stories but little use is made of tape recorders and new technology to support their learning. The teaching links a specific topic or theme to language and literacy and this is successful in drawing from the children’s experiences, for example, when looking at the different types of bread, the children could re-call their own experiences of eating ‘pitta’ or ‘naan’ breads.

Physical development

71. The lack of facilities caused by the limited space in the school affects the physical development of pupils. They do not have regular access to a designated and secure play area to use climbing apparatus or wheeled toys. The children have planned sessions of physical education every week in the main building, and this enables them to make satisfactory progress but activities are very limited because of the lack of space. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. There is a good emphasis placed on the safety of the pupils. The adults supervise very closely to ensure that the children do not run into each other or stretch too far and collide with others. The children demonstrate good control and skill when using scissors and pencils. A range of tools has been used to create models and collages. Children spread glue very carefully when making their own collage. Most are able to use the computer mouse confidently and skilfully.

Creative development

72. The provision for the children’s creative development is satisfactory. The children respond to the satisfactory teaching and are making sound progress. The teachers provide the children with a wide range of activities which allow them to use malleable materials to sculpt and mould. The children use chalk, crayon and paints to produce pictures such as still life pictures of flowers; they use other artefacts, materials and construction blocks when sculpting, to produce a good display entitled, “We have been looking at Sculpture”. The teachers make good use of story books such as “Elmer plays hide and seek” to encourage creativity. The children decorate templates of elephants and use imaginative patterns and combinations of colours. Other materials, including textiles are provided to allow them to make collages. The children enjoy choosing their own materials by texture or colour and use them creatively to make pictures and collages. They enjoy imaginative painting and experimenting with ready-mixed paints. The children sing nursery rhymes and songs from memory along with the other pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3. They listen to recorded music in assemblies and sing confidently, along with older pupils, and know most of the words and actions to songs. The children are in line to achieve the early learning goals.

ENGLISH

73. Only a small number of pupils took the 2000 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds and so no comparisons can be drawn with either the national picture or with the performance of pupils in similar schools. At the age of eleven, almost all of the pupils attained the expected level and a significant minority attained the higher level (Level 5). Standards in the National Curriculum tests at

the age of eleven have been consistently above the national average. This represents a significant success for the school particularly in the light of such high pupil mobility. However, inspection evidence shows that standards are average at the end of both key stages and are similar to the standards found in the last inspection. This reflects the capability of the current group of Year 6 pupils.

74. The pupils begin full time education with average attainment in speaking and listening, reading and writing. They make good progress in learning to listen to their teachers and to each other and satisfactory progress in all other areas. By the time they are seven, most pupils listen carefully to stories and instructions from their teachers. In group activities, they listen to one another and respond appropriately to what is being said. Most of the pupils talk with an appropriate degree of confidence. They are beginning to show awareness of the needs of their listeners. For example, they include relevant detail when they are explaining their ideas. Most pupils speak clearly and have a sufficiently large vocabulary to ensure that they are successful in making themselves understood. By the time the pupils are eleven their attainment in speaking and listening matches the expected standards for their age. They listen carefully to their teachers and to each other in a wide range of activities. For example, in an assembly to celebrate the achievement of the pupils, a pupil in Year 2 gave a good account of his work on light and shadow and the rest of the school listened attentively. In class, when they discuss what they are learning, they listen to others in the class and make sensible contributions by asking questions that are relevant.

75. By the age of seven, standards in reading are satisfactory. Most of the pupils read simple books with an appropriate degree of confidence, and many clearly enjoy reading. Most recognise familiar words in what they read and use their knowledge of letters and their sounds to help them build up unfamiliar words. Most of the pupils willingly talk about the stories they read. A few clearly express their opinions about the characters and events in their books. In the literacy lessons, nearly all of the pupils enjoy the reading activities that are guided by the teacher. By the age of eleven, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in reading is close to the national average. They read a good range of texts, including novels, non-fiction books and poems. They have developed a range of strategies for understanding texts and are able to evaluate the content. For example, one Year 6 pupil identifies “Burnt the fire of thine eyes” as her favourite line from William Blake’s “The Tyger” and explains why. A small number of the pupils attain above average standards. They read a very wide range of challenging books, borrow regularly from the library and download and read material obtained from web pages on the Internet. This was evident in their participation in the recent national garden bird survey.

76. The standard of the pupils’ writing at the end of Key Stage 1 matches that expected of seven-year-olds. Most of the pupils have an appropriate vocabulary and write stories. They write in simple sentences and use capital letters and full stops consistently in their work. The pupils spell many simple or common words accurately. The teachers ensure that the pupils regularly have handwriting practice and this has enabled them to develop a neat handwriting style. The pupils are learning to sequence events in their writing and achieve success in describing how to tidy their classroom. The pupils enjoy retelling favourite stories such as “The Hungry Caterpillar” or writing their own myths and legends.

77. By the age of eleven, most of the pupils organise the content of their writing well in order to express their ideas. They recast the poems they read into descriptive or narrative prose. This writing is beginning to show the pupils’ growing confidence and skill in developing character and atmosphere. The pupils are beginning to write in a wider range of forms such as diaries, play scripts, news articles and poems. For example, they write persuasive letters to encourage the “Three Billy Goats Gruff” to cross the bridge to feed on new pastures. In some recent work, they have begun to explore how writing can be used to persuade readers to a particular point of view and add text to graphics to support an environmental campaign. Much of the writing shows good use of the more complex

sentence forms and a consistent use of paragraphs. The pupils' spelling is average. The pupils' handwriting is satisfactory but the pupils do not always present their work using their best script.

78. Some of the poetry written by the middle ability pupils shows a secure understanding of how to construct a sense of place and atmosphere. For example, their cinquains about a day at the seaside are particularly successful. One pupil wrote:

“The waves
Crashing on rocks
Seagulls shout in the air
The ships go swiftly through the waves
The sea.”

79. The quality of the teaching is never less than satisfactory and it enables the pupils to make steady progress throughout the school. The main strengths of the teaching include the high quality of the relationships that the teachers have established with their pupils and the way that they successfully manage their behaviour. Furthermore, the co-ordinator has successfully organised the teaching groups to make the most of the staffing and accommodation and to narrow the age range within the teaching groups. The teachers have successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and make good use of it to present the pupils with a systematic approach to developing language skills that builds upon what the pupils already know. They make effective use of learning support staff to provide good levels of help to the lower attaining pupils, including those who have special educational needs. The teachers use their questioning skills to good effect, particularly when they are helping the pupils to understand reading material. For example, in lower Key Stage 2 the teacher successfully helps her group to identify adjectives and in the upper juniors, the teacher enables her pupils to identify the qualities of classic literature and is successful in enabling the pupils to assimilate new vocabulary such as “disdaining”.

80. The teachers plan their lessons well to make sure that the work interests the pupils. The planning successfully identifies what activities the pupils will be engaged in and what the pupils should learn. The planning enables the pupils to develop their literacy skills across the curriculum. For example, a Year 5 pupil describes, with accurate use of grammar, the perfect village hall. This supports a project in design and technology where the design brief requires a diagram with an analysis of the essential components. However, although the teachers' planning successfully accommodates the broad age groups it is less successful in preparing work that challenges the higher and lower attaining pupils. The teaching does not consistently convey what it is that the pupils need to do to acquire the skills and understanding they need if they are to make better progress. This limits the progress of the higher and lower attaining pupils, particularly in their writing. Another weakness in the teaching is the inconsistent approach to marking. Some marking is helpful to the pupils because it identifies what is wrong with their work and explains how it could be improved. However, this practice is not consistent. Although the teachers mark the pupils' work regularly and include encouraging comments, they do not pay sufficient attention to identifying what it is that the pupils do not know or cannot do. This inhibits the progress the pupils make in acquiring an appropriate range of skills, knowledge and understanding.

81. The co-ordinator is involved in a local scheme to raise standards in literacy and has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the provision and standards at St George's. The subject is well managed. For example, the school has made good use of the available literacy training opportunities for teachers. One outcome of this is that most of the teachers are confident about teaching the Literacy Hour and are well organised. Booster lessons are well used by the teachers to build on the work begun by the pupils in their literacy lessons. They provide good opportunities for the

pupils to broaden their vocabulary and to understand different texts. These measures are beginning to bear fruit.

MATHEMATICS

82. Standards in mathematics are similar to those reported in the last inspection. Results for 11 year olds were in line with the national average, but compared with similar schools, standards were well below average in terms of the percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels. In the 2000 tests, the 11 year olds achieved similar results compared with four years ago. At the end of the infants and juniors, test results are now about the same as those found nationally but below those of pupils in similar schools. The school has achieved its targets for the number of pupils reaching the expected level in Year 6. However, there is insufficient rigour in the planning to enable the higher attaining pupils to achieve the higher levels.

83. Attainment by the age of 7 is average. Almost all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving appropriately. Infant pupils are confident in number work where they can identify sequences and patterns, for example counting and exchanging coins for equivalent values. They understand addition and subtraction well, using secure mental recall and practical equipment such as coins and number lines. Brighter pupils are beginning to use their understanding of tens and units to develop their own calculation methods for bigger numbers. Some could achieve more in using their good estimation and number skills to investigate and solve problems.

84. By the age of 7, the pupils can recognise and name the common two and three-dimensional shapes. They can tell the time and make money calculations, although there are some gaps in their understanding of equivalent values as some pupils are confused when they try to sort coins into equal values, sometimes forgetting that there is no “3 pence” coin. This is not always pointed out and as a result, the pupils lose their way before realising the error. More capable pupils are not always stretched, for example, the worksheet provided for them during the money topic, was too easy for some of them.

85. By the age of 11, the pupils have made satisfactory progress in all areas of mathematics. Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils were observed using the four number operations to convert amounts of money into other currencies. Good mental recall skills were used but more capable pupils were not always challenged, especially when working independently. The teacher’s enthusiasm, promoting confidence that wrong answers are entirely acceptable as part of learning through trial and error, is helping most pupils to self-correct and re-visit problems. The pupils develop a sound knowledge of decimals and fractions, for example recognising that “0.1” is the same as a tenth, with higher attaining pupils having a good understanding of the underlying mathematics when working with fractions and decimals.

86. Throughout the school pupils sustain positive attitudes to the subject. Boys and girls are equally enthusiastic and involved in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are sometimes supported by a classroom assistant and this enables them to make satisfactory progress.

87. Pupils learn to use numeracy skills well in other subjects. For example, in science, infant pupils understand how graphs can be used to represent measurements of parts of the body. In all classes, work is presented well, so that the pupils learn to be careful and logical in their calculations. The computer is sometimes used to support mathematical learning, for example in Year 2, 3 and 4 pupils made satisfactory progress familiarising themselves with a new computer program about money

calculations. Information and communication technology is underused to support learning in mathematics lessons.

88. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in both key stages. The school makes good use of the National Numeracy Strategy to structure mathematics lessons in three linked parts. Mental mathematics sessions are used so that pupils learn to think quickly. A notable teaching strength in a Year 5 and 6 lesson was the way that teacher involved the pupils as they came out to the chalk board to demonstrate how they calculated 321×36 . As all the teaching is in mixed age classes, care is taken to identify what is to be covered by each year group and in all classes, groups are set up according to their attainment levels and appropriate work provided. However, during independent work in the main part of the lessons, higher attaining pupils sometimes drift off task and have to be reminded or supervised to produce the work of which they are capable. Teachers' questions are pitched at different pupils in the class so that everyone is kept on their toes but this rigour is less evident when the pupils work in groups or independently and some of the work lacks challenge.

89. A weakness in the teaching for the infants and younger juniors is that open-ended work is too often set only as an extension activity for pupils who have finished the main task. This reduces the opportunities for problem solving, for example with pupils who work more slowly and with higher attaining pupils who do not always need to spend so much time on relatively easy sums. Consequently, too few opportunities are provided for pupils to extend their thinking further.

90. Teachers have taken full advantage of the training associated with the National Numeracy Strategy and consequently have good subject knowledge as well as a range of effective class management strategies. Whilst good oral feedback is usually given to pupils, the marking of their work is less detailed and does not always give clear information about what the pupil is doing well and what needs improving. In a Year 5 and 6 class, where the marking is significantly more analytical, pupils' work shows some good progress and development because of the better guidance provided by the teacher.

91. Resources are chosen and used well, resulting in good support for learning. For example, pupils use good quality money resources when sorting and counting coins and notes. A good range of tests are used to assess what pupils have learned each term but the learning targets are set for the end of each key stage. The pupils' progress towards set targets is not monitored sufficiently in the interim to ensure that the more able pupils achieve higher levels in the national tests.

92. The subject benefits from good leadership. The school as a whole shares a commitment to improving standards in mathematics and the coordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Good records are kept as well as an assessment folder, although teachers' marking is not consistent with some evidence of pupils' work showing lapses in their learning. The coordinator looks at planning and pupils' books and this helps to identify strengths and weaknesses. The curriculum is well structured to ensure progression for pupils of different ages and abilities but more capable pupils could be challenged more in lessons and do better.

SCIENCE

93. Overall, the attainment of eleven-year-old pupils in last year's National Curriculum tests was in line with the national average, but well below that achieved by pupils in similar schools. Only a very small number of pupils were assessed at the age of seven and so no significant comparisons can be made between the relative standards between the two key stages. Inspection findings confirm that standards in science are in line with those expected at the age of 7 and 11. There has been

satisfactory improvement in all aspects of the subject since the inspection in 1996 and the school has put in place better planning systems, especially in the infant years. The school is using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority science scheme of work and other commercial schemes and resources. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and most pupils are achieving the levels expected for their age but at age 11, too few are exceeding this level. Although improvements have been made so that there is consistency in the planning of work during the last few years, the school has focused on improving literacy and numeracy planning so that science has not received the same focus.

94. Only one science lesson was seen during the inspection and evidence of standards are also drawn from an analysis of pupils' recorded work and discussions with staff and pupils. Science lessons are well planned so that they build on previous work and this helps to provide secure foundations in the pupils' understanding of how to organise a fair test and investigate the properties of materials. In the lesson observed junior pupils enjoyed investigating the habitats of "mini-beasts" and were motivated and interested in the work set. The pupils are able to work co-operatively during investigative work and record their observations clearly.

95. By the age of seven, infant pupils develop their skills in carrying out investigations. They are able to identify what is likely to happen, based on their increasing knowledge, and can carry out simple tests with support from the teachers. From the analysis of the science books, infant pupils investigated the way that objects can be classified into 'man-made' and 'natural' materials. The pupils have made reasonable predictions about "Things that use electricity". Their written work shows understanding in carrying out simple investigations and the pupils are able to record their results using graphs, charts and simple matrices. For example, Year 2 pupils are able to use a "Venn Diagram" to classify and sort materials into "shiny" and "not shiny". Computers have been well used by infant pupils to produce block graphs using a simple data handling program. The pupils investigated their "Favourite foods", producing clear graphs which they use to distinguish between the most and least popular food choices amongst their classmates.

96. Junior pupils are introduced to an appropriate range of experimental work, enabling them to plan and carry out fair tests. The teacher was observed helping the pupils to choose the most appropriate resources, for example, boxes, soil, food that mini-beasts may prefer and so on. A good feature of this lesson was the way that pupils worked in groups and formulated questions. They were aware that their test had to be fair and one group of boys had to choose the most appropriate size of box to see if they could see what ants preferred to eat and which habitat they would choose. Good use was made of the class computer to help the pupils search for characteristics of animals and their preferred habitats using an electronic encyclopaedia. Although the pupils learned how to prepare a test which would help them to determine which habitats the animals would choose, they were less secure in choosing which resources to use and how to plan their experiment.

97. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The teachers plan lessons carefully with an appropriate balance of practical activities, discussion and recording of the work. There is good interaction between the teacher and pupils, but the pupils rely too heavily on teachers' guidance and are less confident when trying to think for themselves. This limits the pupils' progress, particularly that of the higher attaining pupils. The pupils' science books show that in the most lessons, they use scientific terms correctly and ensure that these are reflected in their written explanations of what they see and deduce. Teachers do not always test what the pupils know every term so that assessments of pupils' progress are not as rigorous as they are for literacy and numeracy.

98. The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory support for teachers. There is a clear view of what needs to be done to maintain standards, and the school has identified ways in which this can be

carried out by extending the monitoring of pupils' recorded work. However, more capable pupils are not being monitored closely enough and this partly explains why too few are scoring higher levels in the national Curriculum tests. Overall, the resources for science are sufficient to allow the teachers to develop the planned work and they are well organised and stored.

ART AND DESIGN

99. No art and design lessons were observed during the inspection. Evidence is drawn from the scrutiny of the pupils' previous work, some of which is displayed around the school or recorded in books or folders, and from discussions with staff and pupils.

100. By the end of both key stages, the work that the pupils produce is of the standard expected for their age. The pupils with special educational needs and the higher-attaining pupils make satisfactory progress. This is evident in the work that the pupils produce in lessons and in displays around the classrooms. Standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection. The pupils build up their knowledge and understanding of a range of techniques. They mix paint, learn to control their brush strokes and show an understanding of colour. The pupils have the experience of working with a range of materials in two- and three-dimensional forms. For example, the older pupils demonstrate their skills of observational drawing when drawing different containers. They learn to draw what they see and to control their pencils. Most of these pupils successfully represent the reflections and proportions of glass water jugs. Other pupils learn the basic techniques of modelling when using clay to create vases.

101. The younger pupils respond well to the work of famous artists. The teacher skilfully introduces the pupils to a range of art through displays of the work of artists such as Monet. In a brief session, while the pupils are waiting for their lunch, she asks the pupils to describe the scenes on postcard reproductions of famous paintings. Her questioning enables the pupils to consider very carefully the detail of each print. The pupils explore colour through working in the style of Giulianaa Lazerini and they explore different techniques of using pencils for shading in the style of William Hogarth. The teacher shows that she values their work through the quality of the display. For example, the pupils' experimentation with batik to depict simple flowers is shown to great effect.

102. A strong feature of the pupils' artwork is the way in which it is used to support their understanding of other subjects. By the age of eleven, they make detailed studies of British birds in work that is linked to a project in science. They use pencils, crayons, pastels and paint in these observational studies and take great care to achieve the right texture. They produce delicate studies of flowers with a painstaking eye for detail. Equal care is taken in the pupils' studies of creatures of the rain forest. Younger pupils study Spike Milligan's "Land of the Bumblebee" in the Literacy Hour and illustrate their own fantasy writing with imaginary creatures.

103. A common feature of the artwork in the school is the value that is placed on the pupils' work. The pupils are encouraged to show their work in assemblies and their achievement is celebrated. Each pupil has an art book that contains examples of sketches, drafts and experimentation with new techniques. There is a shared commitment to succeed and to ensure a good progression of skills and a broad range of experience for the pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

104. No design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection. Evidence is drawn from the scrutiny of the pupils' previous work, some of which is displayed around the school or recorded in books or folders, and from discussions with staff and pupils. Standards are in line with

those expected by age 7 and 11. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Planning has improved slightly so that teachers prepare more practical lessons that enable the pupils to evaluate simple designs, exploring ideas and improving the finished products. Design and technology is linked to other subjects or topics well.

105. Infant pupils make satisfactory progress designing a box for their Easter eggs. This is linked well to the current topic so that younger pupils can relate this to their religious education work. In the juniors, the pupils make satisfactory progress because the work is planned so that topics and skills are linked with science work. For example, the older pupils were observed describing how they planned and made “Electric alarms”. This had been achieved over a series of lessons, including their science work on electric circuits, and the pupils’ work shows sound development and progress. The purpose of their design was clearly understood because the pupils could describe real life situations in which the ‘alarms’ could be used, for example, the pupils’ ideas included “bedroom alarms”, “biscuit tin” alarms and other imaginative and in some cases humorous ideas. The teaching enable the pupils to follow through a series of ideas, sketches and investigation. The pupils plan the sequence of actions and the possible materials to be used. Previous work in the juniors includes the design and modelling of musical instruments, again well linked to their music lessons when they studied “music making”.

106. No direct judgements about the teaching can be made, but evidence from the pupils’ work displayed around the school or kept as photographs shows that it is satisfactory with good links made with other subjects and topics. The subject is soundly managed and the co-ordinator has ensured that a scheme of work is used to help teachers plan their lessons.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

107. Standards in history and geography are in line with those in other schools and pupils achieve appropriately, particularly in acquiring knowledge about different time periods and places. Current standards are similar to those found in the last inspection and the school has maintained its satisfactory provision for both geography and history. Each subject is taught in blocks of time and during the inspection, only geography was being taught. Judgements about both subjects are drawn from the two geography lessons observed and evidence from pupils’ geography and history books.

108. By the age of 7 most pupils have a secure knowledge of past events such as the Fire of London in 1666. Younger pupils have investigated toys, objects and artefacts that are new and old, recognising the differences and characteristics that help to distinguish between modern and the past.

109. In geography, infant pupils make satisfactory progress in writing about different places in the world. Good use is made of the imaginary island of “Struay” to help the pupils identify contrasting features and physical characteristics of landscapes. By Year 2 for example, more capable pupils can write a comprehensive list of physical and climatic features, whilst others can distinguish the most important such as temperature. They can understand simple maps and interpret some symbols. Year 1 and 2 pupils show a sound knowledge of the globe, and are able to recall that the north and south poles are the coldest parts of the world. The pupils have also studied the characteristics of birds of prey in their topic entitled “Fly by Night”. Good use was made of resources borrowed from the local authority’s loan service. A stuffed barn owl sits proudly in the classroom surrounded by the pupils’ written work and pictures. Good links with literacy lessons were made as the pupils read the story of “Blink who flew by night”. In a satisfactory infant lesson, the pupils were observed studying the jobs that different people do after reading “Katie Morag delivers the mail”. The pupils could identify that a family tree is like a map and that in some jobs, like farming, there is more than one type of job involved, for example, growing crops and caring for animals.

110. In the juniors, pupils study time periods such as “Ancient Greeks”, “The Tudors”, and “Victorians” and completing a substantial amount of written work during the term. Good opportunities are provided for the pupils to perform in role, such as during a visit to Sevington School, where the staff and pupils dressed up as Victorians for the day. This is successful because it enriches the pupils’ learning with first hand experience, and improves their understanding and appreciation of the difficulties that children in that time encountered.

111. In geography, the majority of pupils gain a satisfactory knowledge of the countries and continents of the world. Junior pupils were observed researching the characteristics of mountainous regions around the world. Most develop an adequate understanding of the environment, for example identifying features that are similar or different but the pupils are not always clear about the reasons for these differences.

112. In both subjects, there is sufficient emphasis on pupils posing questions in order to research aspects for themselves. A promising start has been made in using the Internet and computers to research information.

113. The teaching and learning of geography are satisfactory in the infant and junior classes. In geography lessons, teachers match the work to the needs of different age groups and abilities and this is sometimes challenging for all pupils. For instance in a good geography lesson, Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils worked together, searching for clues in books and on the computer which would help them define the mountain regions of the world and their characteristics. The work was challenging for all age groups, especially when the teacher questioned and probed further, but on occasion, some pupils find it difficult to stay on task when not being directly supervised and they settle into working at a comfortable level rather than dealing with more challenging problems.

104. The subjects have not been a focus for recent development but there have been improvements to the planning since the last inspection, especially in the infant class. The co-ordinators manage resources well and use the services of the local authority to provide a good range of artefacts and source materials for both history and geography. Their influence is currently informal and time has not been allocated to enable the monitoring and staff development necessary if standards are to be raised further. Resources are good, as at the time of the previous inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

115. Standards are below average at the end of both key stages. This represents a deterioration since the last inspection. However, much of the school equipment was limited in its scope and could not meet the widening curriculum. Resources have recently been upgraded significantly.

116. The school has made a considerable investment in developing the pupils’ skills in information and communication technology (ICT) by installing new computers. Standards in the subject are now improving, as indicated by the enhanced opportunities for the pupils and by the commitment of the staff to use the new technology to support other subjects. However, the pupils have not yet had sufficient time to benefit from this provision and, overall, standards are below average. The pupils’ attainment in word processing is in line with what is expected at the end of each key stage and the pupils are making satisfactory progress. There is a suitable range of pupils’ word processing around the school and their skills in this aspect are broadly average. There are very few examples of the pupils’ work in other strands of the subject such as modelling and data handling.

117. The pupils are beginning to use the new equipment with increasing confidence. When they are using the desktop publishing facilities, they are helped by a buddy support system by which a more

experienced pupil works with a less proficient pupil to help raise the level of expertise. The pupils' enthusiasm and ability to work together in small groups supports the quality of learning. The infant pupils have a sound knowledge of the main keys and are able to use the mouse to move the cursor. They use click and drag techniques to make up specific amounts of money with the minimum number of coins. Older pupils research information about the Victorians using a CD-ROM and use text and graphics to display their work. The oldest pupils are developing the skills of 'logging on and off' and, with support, can access a web site to contribute to a survey on garden birds. They can follow instructions to display data in graph form to support their work in science.

118. There is evidence of the pupils using computers in other subjects, particularly in English and science. The staff are awaiting training to enhance their confidence and expertise with the new equipment to enable them to integrate information technology to a greater extent into the curriculum. Very little direct teaching of information technology was observed during the inspection. However, where the teaching was focused on a small group of pupils who then practised the skills, it was effective. This was evident in a lesson for the upper juniors who were developing their word-processing skills in a literacy lesson. However, in lower Key Stage 2, the pupils were developing the skills necessary to modify text by altering the font size and colour. These skills were taught as a whole class and many pupils did not benefit from the immediate hands-on opportunity to practise the skills they had learned. They had to wait for a subsequent lesson for their turn and therefore much of the impact of the teaching was lost. Furthermore, there is a mismatch between the size of the pupils' chairs and the height of the monitors and this inhibits the pupils' progress.

119. There has been insufficient time for the pupils to cover the full range of the work required since the installation of the new computers. For example, there have been too few opportunities for them to enter and store information in a prepared database and their skills of presenting information in a variety of ways are at an early stage. The pupils have had little opportunity to use a programmable floor robot. The co-ordinator recognises these shortcomings and has a planned programme to improve the range of experiences for the pupils.

MUSIC

120. Standards in music are in line with national expectations at the end of each key stage. The pupils are provided with a range of well-planned experiences that enable them to make satisfactory progress. The pupils enjoy music and singing and these make a strong contribution to the ethos of the school. However, standards are not as good as those reported in the last inspection.

121. In Key Stage 1, the pupils listen carefully and explore sounds using simple body percussion, clapping and tapping. They use different percussion instruments and their voices. They learn to identify and understand how sounds can have high and low pitch and be of different length.

122. The pupils throughout the school sing a range of songs to support daily acts of collective worship. The pupils in Year 3 are learning to play the recorder and perform simple melodies to piano accompaniment. In this performance, they are guided well by a more experienced Year 6 pupil and it provides a good example of the co-operation between the older and younger pupils. The pupils are enthusiastic, particularly when playing instruments and when working together to compose pieces of music. They listen well when other pupils are playing instruments and respond thoughtfully when given the opportunity to evaluate performances. For example, a group of older juniors skilfully performed their own composition using the pentatonic scale and this was well received in a school assembly. Another child sang a solo part in assembly, secure in the knowledge that her efforts would be valued. The pupils listen to a range of music from different cultures and musical traditions and this is helping to

develop their listening and appraising skills. However, the pupils are not always reminded about the music's composer or country of origin and this detracts from learning.

123. Too little teaching was observed to make a judgement. The planning for lessons gives the pupils appropriate opportunities for performing and composing. Music is well linked to subjects such as design and technology. For example, as a homework task the pupils are required to respond to a display of interesting musical instruments by preparing a design brief for their own unusual instrument. However, the school recognises that the potential of information technology to support learning is not realised. The peripatetic teacher provides regular support for a small group of pupils who are learning to play the violin. These pupils demonstrate their developing skill by performing short pieces such as "Shady Grove".

124. The co-ordinator is supportive of her colleagues. There is a good range and number of percussion and keyboard instruments that are well organised and readily available for use. The work done in music makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal development, particularly their spiritual, social and cultural development. For example, the pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to perform for different audiences within school and the village.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. Standards have been sustained since the last inspection and remain in line with those expected from pupils aged seven and eleven, with good standards in swimming and sport by the time the pupils leave the school. The pupils' progress in swimming is well supported by the regular swimming programme that is provided for all the pupils in Key Stage 2. By the time that they leave school almost all of the pupils can swim at least 25 metres. They are well supported in country dancing. The pupils in Key Stage 2 take part in an annual festival and are well prepared for the event. However, overall standards in dance and gymnastics are below average because the lack of indoor facilities limits the pupils' progress.

126. The teachers' planning, based on the national guidelines, shows that an appropriate range of activities is planned during the year. However, during the inspection it was only possible to observe one lesson. This is because the weather prevented the use of the outdoor facilities and all of the juniors were involved in the country dancing festival on one afternoon.

127. The Key Stage 2 gymnastics lesson that was observed revealed how inadequate the school's indoor facilities are for the development of the pupils' skills. Standards in gymnastics are below average. The hall is too small in terms of height and floor space for pupils in the junior age group. The teacher successfully warmed the pupils up with a vigorous aerobics routine, but the subsequent floor exercises did not challenge the pupils or support their learning. The movement of the pupils lacked precision and their sequences lacked sophistication. However, throughout the session the teacher was very mindful of health and safety considerations. Furthermore, the pupils worked well together and their use of the apparatus showed imagination.

128. The pupils develop a good range of sports skills through their involvement in the school's "Games Club" and through sporting ties with local schools. In the summer term, the pupils engage in a programme of athletics instead of swimming. Furthermore there is an opportunity for the older pupils to participate in a biennial residential visit when they have the opportunity to develop a range of outdoor skills such as archery and orienteering.

129. The external accommodation is good with a well-drained field that is suitable for both athletics and a variety of sports. The school has a good range of games equipment that is well maintained and stored.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

130. It was only possible to observe one lesson being taught in Years 4,5 and 6. Evidence from this lesson, the pupils' responses in assemblies, the teachers' planning and the pupils' work in books or on display indicates that by the end of both key stages, attainment is better than the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and the pupils make good progress.

131. Infant pupils learn about the major festivals in the Christian calendar such as harvest, Christmas and Easter. There are good links and comparisons made with other world religions and belief systems. In Year 2, the pupils discuss the symbolism of 'light' and 'dark' when discussing the significance of these in the Islamic religion. There are comparisons with welcoming the light, which are also prevalent in most religions, including the coming of Christ. The teaching is good because it enables the pupils to work on topics that start from themselves, for example the topic "Myself", and the work extends outwards so that Bible stories, religious festivals and symbols are used to illustrate the significance of religion in the family and society in general.

132. Junior pupils continue to increase and deepen their knowledge and understanding of the significance of religion and how this affects society. In the good lesson seen, the pupils were beginning to understand the importance Christianity in society and that symbolism is used in Bible stories to convey particular meanings. Thoughtful work has been done on the symbolism of religious stories and sayings from the New Testament which are directly related to the way that Jesus expected his followers to lead by His example. The teacher skilfully led the pupils through the text of a book called "Badger's Parting Gift", linking this to the story of Christ and the "Last Supper". Using the story the pupils gained an insight to the significance of "bread" and "wine" and how Easter time is a very important point in the Christian calendar.

133. The teaching is well planned and lessons build on the work done previously. The locally agreed syllabus provides a good framework which supports the school's scheme of work and long term planning. This ensures that the pupils receive a balanced programme of studies which are relevant to their age and which are interesting, evoking good quality discussion and recorded work. Good links are made with the work that pupils do in other subjects, for example, English, history, art and geography. Resources are good and well managed. There is a good range of reference books, posters, illustrations and basic artefacts to support the pupils' understanding, ensuring they make good progress in religious education.