

# INSPECTION REPORT

Sacred Heart RC Primary School  
Nottingham

LEA area : Nottinghamshire

Unique Reference Number : 122811

Acting Headteachers : Mr B. Mackinney  
Mrs P. Wakeling

Reporting inspector : Mr G. D. Timms  
21038

Dates of inspection : 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> February 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 703927

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school :	Primary
Type of control :	Aided
Age range of pupils :	5 to 11
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Southcliffe Road, Carlton, Nottingham NG4 1EQ
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Appropriate authority :	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors :	Mr R. Brooksbank
Date of previous inspection :	16th-19th January 1995

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Geof Timms, RgI	English Physical Education	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management Special Educational Needs
Sheila Gurney, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Equal Opportunities
George Simpson	Mathematics Geography History Art	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources The efficiency of the school
Brian Blundell	Science Design and Technology Information Technology Music	The curriculum and assessment Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- The school's ethos is very positive and there is a clear educational direction for the school.
- The children are very well behaved and very good relationships are created.
  - The school's strategy for the teaching of literacy is good and standards in English are high.
  - The quality of the teaching is good.
  - Children's spiritual, moral and social development is well promoted.
  - Parents are very involved with children's learning.
  - There is good financial control.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- Curriculum planning does not ensure that children develop their skills step by step.
- I. The work provided does not always provide enough challenge for all levels of ability.
  - II. Children do not have enough opportunities to develop independent learning skills.
  - III. Governors do not monitor the impact of their spending decisions closely enough.
  - IV. The information technology curriculum does not fully cover the programme of study.

The school's strengths clearly outweigh the weaknesses. When the recent history of uncertainty in the management of the school is taken into account it is of real credit to the governors, staff, children and the acting Headteachers that the school is as strong as it is and that the children's learning is so effective.

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

Following the last inspection a detailed action plan was produced which proved very ambitious and difficult to put into practice. Changes in the senior management at the school have slowed the progress which might have been expected. However, good improvements have been made in teaching, aspects of curriculum planning and the clarification of the roles of governors and staff. The school has a good capacity to improve further its provision and the standards achieved by pupils.

### Standards in subjects

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

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools
English	A	A
Mathematics	B	C
Science	D	E

<i>well above average</i>	A
<i>above</i>	B
<i>average</i>	C
<i>below</i>	D
<i>well below average</i>	E

From the evidence of the inspection attainment in English is above average, while in mathematics and science it is satisfactory. Attainment and progress in information technology is unsatisfactory. Satisfactory progress is made in art, geography, history, music and physical education. Progress in design and technology is unsatisfactory.

## Quality of teaching

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

The quality of teaching in 100% of the lessons observed was at least satisfactory. Almost 60% of the lessons were of good quality and over 20% were very good. This represents a significant improvement on the previous inspection where almost 20% of the teaching was unsatisfactory. Examples of very good teaching are found in most year groups.

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

## Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Children's behaviour is very good and very good relationships are created within the school.
Attendance	Rates of attendance are good but a high number of pupils arrive at school late and better procedures are needed for dealing with this.
Ethos*	The school's ethos for learning is very positive and encourages high attainment.
Leadership and management	Even with the recent uncertainty about the management of the school, the leadership provided by staff and the Governing Body is good. The acting Headteachers have introduced a variety of measures which have taken the school forward.
Curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced but not effectively planned to ensure pupils' skills are built on year after year.
Pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and the new co-ordinator has appropriate plans for the future. The teaching and non-teaching staff provide very good support for the children.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	The spiritual, moral and social development of pupils is good and their cultural development is satisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Provision is satisfactory.
Value for money	The school provides value for money.

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

## The parents' views of the school

<b>What most parents like about the school</b>	<b>What some parents are not happy about</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children enjoy going to school.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school has high standards of behaviour.</li></ul></li> <li>• They support the school's values and attitudes.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The pupils attain high standards in English.</li></ul></li> <li>• Parents are encouraged to play and active part in the life of the school.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The provision of homework is inconsistent and</li> <li>• Standards in mathematics are not high enough.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There has been a lack of continuity in the</li></ul></li></ul>

The findings of the inspection support the parents' views about the positive aspects of the school. The provision of homework is inconsistent and the school needs to devise and put into practice a policy to ensure that homework is of appropriate quality and quantity. The standards in mathematics are now improving. The interim management of the school has been carefully handled and the present acting Headteachers are having a positive effect on the development of the school.



## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

In order to improve standards further, the Governing Body, acting Headteachers and staff should:

V. improve the curriculum planning so that it

- provides a clear progression of skills in all subjects, but especially in information technology and design and technology;
- makes better use of the outcomes of assessment to help teachers plan for the next stage;
- ensures learning objectives are specific and achievable;
- ensures all pupils receive challenging work matched to their levels of attainment, especially the higher attainers.

VI. provide more opportunities for pupils to develop independent study skills by

- improving the use of the library by developing its management and organisation and by increasing the stock of non-fiction books;
- developing and putting into practice a homework policy;
- improving the planned provision for the using and applying attainment targets in mathematics and science.

VII. update and improve procedures for monitoring and promoting punctuality and child protection.

VIII. monitor spending decisions more carefully to check that they are improving the quality of learning.

In addition to the key issues above, the following weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

IX. The school does not provide a wide enough range of multicultural resources in art. (Paragraphs 31 and 83)

X. There is not enough monitoring of teaching to ensure the spread of existing good practice. (Paragraphs 61 and 70)

XI. There is no whole school policy for the marking of pupils' work and the practice is inconsistent. (Paragraph 21)

## **INTRODUCTION**

## **Characteristics of the school**

1. Sacred Heart RC Primary School is situated in the Carlton district of Nottingham. The pupils come from a variety of private and council accommodation. Most children have had some pre-school experience, mostly in play groups, and their overall attainment on entry to the school is slightly above that expected for children of their age. The school takes children from the age of five until they are eleven, when the majority transfer to the local Catholic secondary school. At the time of the inspection there were 201 pupils on roll, which is broadly average for primary schools nationally. A below average number of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Sixty-three pupils are recognised as having learning difficulties although none have statements of special educational need.
2. The school's published aims are to develop each child's potential academically, intellectually, physically, emotionally, spiritually and socially. They call for high expectations, varied and challenging learning experiences and equal opportunities. The aims are also based on a firm Catholic ethos and the wish to create a friendly welcoming environment.

## Key Indicators - Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1  
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	13	16	29

National Curriculum Test Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	10	11	11
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	25	26	26
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	86	90	90
	National	80	81	85

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	11	13	13
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	26	28	28
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	90	97	97
	National	81	85	86

## Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>2</sup>

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	15	15	30

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	11	9	9
	Girls	14	10	12
	Total	25	19	21
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	83	63	70
	National	65	58	69

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	9	8	6
	Girls	9	9	8
	Total	18	17	14
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	60	57	47
	National	n/a	n/a	n/a

<sup>1</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

<sup>2</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

## 2. Attendance

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	4.7
	National comparative data	5.6
Unauthorised Absence	School	0
	National comparative data	0.5

## Exclusions

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

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

## Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	23%
Satisfactory or better	100%
Less than satisfactory	0

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **Attainment and progress**

3. An analysis of the attainment of pupils' attainment on entry to the school shows that many pupils are achieving levels which are slightly above those found nationally, but taken overall their attainment is similar to that found in most schools. The evidence of national test results from the last three years shows that the attainment of pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 rose sharply in 1997 but dipped in 1998. This does not follow the national pattern of steady improvement. The trends over three years at the end of Key Stage 1 show improvements in 1998 in reading and writing but a dip in mathematics. The findings of the inspection are that the results each year reflect the differences in attainment of each cohort of pupils. The effect of the improved teaching and learning since the last inspection is not evident in these results due to the slow pace of change in the management of the curriculum as a result of the recent staff changes and uncertainties.
4. The attainment of pupils by the end of Key Stage 1 in the 1998 national tests show that attainment in reading and mathematics is close to the national average, while in writing it is above average. When compared to similar schools attainment in writing was still above average but in reading and mathematics it was below average. The pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 in the national tests in 1998 show that attainment in English was well above the national average while in mathematics it was above average and in science was below average. When compared to similar schools attainment was well above average in English. It was close to average in mathematics and well below average in science. In mathematics the number of pupils reaching the higher levels by the end of Key Stage 2 was above the national average.
5. Since the previous inspection, standards have improved in English and have remained sound in science and mathematics. Standards in information technology are less satisfactory as some aspects of the National Curriculum are not being covered. In most subjects improved resources and planning and guidelines provided for staff have ensured a better coverage of the curriculum. Standards of teaching have also risen and this has had a positive effect on the attainment and progress of all pupils.
6. The school's national test results in English give a consistent picture of more pupils than average attaining level 4, the level expected for pupils of this age, and an about average number attaining the higher level 5. Pupils' speaking and listening and reading skills are very well developed from year to year. The recently introduced literacy strategy is clearly helping raise attainment. Standards in writing are consistently good.
7. In mathematics standards throughout the school are satisfactory. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment in 1998 was above average. However, although the pupils do well in number, shape, space, measures and data handling their acquisition of the skills necessary to use and apply what they have learned are less well developed. Due to this shortcoming there are a number of pupils who are underachieving, particularly those who are potentially higher-attainers. The work provided for them does not enable them to fully make the progress of which they are capable.
8. Attainment in science in the 1998 end of Key Stage 2 national tests was close to the national average. However, the percentage reaching the higher levels was well below average. Inspection findings broadly reflect these results and show that, as with mathematics, the skills enabling pupils to use and apply their knowledge and understanding are underdeveloped.
9. Attainment in information technology at the end of both key stages is unsatisfactory. The school is not

meeting the National Curriculum requirements in controlling, monitoring and modelling activities. Pupils have developed satisfactory skills in word processing and data handling and by the end of Key Stage 2 are able to access databases to seek information. In the other subjects a typical level of attainment is reached in art, design and technology, and music. In geography, history and physical education many pupils reach good levels of skills.

10. Very good progress is made in English at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. In mathematics and science sound progress is made throughout the school. Progress is satisfactory in art, geography, history music and physical education but unsatisfactory in information technology and design and technology.
11. The school has worked hard on introducing the literacy strategy and has begun planning the introduction of the numeracy strategy for next year. The school management plan includes appropriate targets for English and mathematics. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is generally satisfactory, although where they receive individual help they make very good progress.

### **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

12. As they were found to be at the time of the last inspection, pupils' attitudes to learning are good and sometimes very good. These attitudes have a significant influence on the standards of attainment achieved. Children listen quietly and carefully to instructions. They work hard and co-operate and collaborate effectively. They concentrate well and become very absorbed in work which interests them.
13. Parents feel high standards of behaviour are achieved and they are pleased with the values and attitudes promoted. Pupils' very good behaviour is a strength of the school. It is very good in class, during assemblies, in the dining room and in the playground. Pupils show respect for their surroundings, appreciate the recent improvements made to the grounds and do not drop litter. No bullying was observed and neither parents nor pupils consider bullying or harassment to be an issue. There have been no exclusions. Almost all pupils abide by the simple school rules and a brief verbal reprimand is usually all that is required after any minor misdemeanours.
14. Relationships throughout are very good. Pupils work and play well together. They are polite and friendly towards adults and each other and they are welcoming to visitors. They show respect both for adults and for their peers. The school is a harmonious and orderly community.
15. Pupils respond well when given responsibility though they are not always given the opportunity to take initiative in their learning. However, older pupils begin to show a degree of maturity in the way they look after younger ones. For example they escort them back to their classrooms after playtime. They read to them and have made books for them. Pupils were involved in designing and creating the environmental garden and they run a weekly cake stall to support a charity of their choice, as well as taking part in other charity work when the opportunity arises.

### **Attendance**

16. At over 95% pupils' attendance is good and above the national average for primary schools. The rate of unauthorised absence is well below the national average. However, a significant number of pupils arrive up to ten minutes late for school and a small number are regularly and persistently late. Lessons start on time so they often miss out on important start to the day. The school has yet to devise effective procedures for dealing with this.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

17. The quality of teaching in 100% of the lessons observed was at least satisfactory. Almost 60% of the lessons were of good quality and over 20% were very good. This represents a significant improvement on the previous inspection where almost 20% of the teaching was unsatisfactory. Examples of very good teaching are found in most year groups. This picture of the quality of teaching is consistent with the standards attained and the progress made in most subjects.
18. The quality of teaching in English is good with 60% of lessons which are very good. This good teaching has clearly been helped by the introduction of the national literacy strategy and the extra structure and pace which this has given to lessons. In mathematics and science the teaching is also mostly good. One example of very good teaching was observed in information technology. The teaching in geography, history and physical education is good and in art, music, design and technology it is satisfactory.
19. At Key Stage 1 the strengths of the teaching are good class management and teachers having a sound knowledge and understanding of the subjects. This is especially evident in science and in English. The teachers use good questioning skills to both extend and assess their pupils' knowledge. The resources are appropriate and well prepared. However there are occasions when the tasks are not sufficiently well matched to pupils' levels of attainment and teachers' expectations of what children can achieve are uneven. For example in one lesson a number of pupils finished their tasks well within the allotted time and there were no extension activities available for them move on to.
20. At Key Stage 2 most teachers have good teaching skills and build mature relationships with their classes. There is a good use of the correct vocabulary and in the best lessons a sharing of the purposes of the lesson with the children. Lessons often have good pace with continuous reminders of the need to complete work within a certain time. Teachers subject knowledge is good. They provide good role models for pupils and often demonstrate clearly what is expected of them. Discipline is good in all classes throughout the school.
21. In both key stages there are times when the work provided for pupils during group or whole class activities is not well matched to all abilities. In some teachers' lesson plans there are too many learning objectives for the tasks to be accurately focused on the specifics of what the teacher wants the children to learn. The deployment of support staff is very good and they make a real difference to pupils' learning. The marking of pupils' work is very good at times, with some well considered comments to extend and challenge pupils' thinking. This practice is inconsistent due to the lack of a whole school policy and the good practice which exists needs to be built upon. The use of homework, as a significant number of parents felt, also suffers from the lack of a policy and practice varies between classes. It does not have a significantly positive effect on pupils' learning or provide them with enough opportunities for independent study. All teachers encourage good presentation of work and neat writing from their pupils.
22. The less able pupils receive good support, especially from support staff. This enables them to make satisfactory progress. Where they receive one-to-one teaching or work with support staff in small groups then very good progress is made. However, the higher attaining pupils are not always taught as effectively as they should be. Some thought has recently been given to the provision of work for them but this is still at an early stage and tends to be preparing more of the same, or the expectation that they will finish tasks more quickly than the others rather than more challenging work.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

23. Through both key stages the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which meets statutory requirements in all the subjects of the National Curriculum with the exception of information technology.

24. The planning of the curriculum is based on a two year rolling programme in Key Stage 1 and a four year programme in Key Stage 2. These programmes are not leading to the necessary continuity and progression in some curriculum areas, notably history, geography and science. There is also some lack of continuity and progression in music, art, physical education, design and technology and information technology. The school's timetable is in need of review, with some classes currently only experiencing four lessons in a day of too long a length. Insufficient time is currently allocated for the teaching of information technology.
25. The content of the curriculum is contributing satisfactorily to the educational standards achieved by all pupils irrespective of their age, gender, background or prior attainment except for the higher attainers where work does not always provide the necessary challenge. In mathematics and science there are limited opportunities for investigative work and independent learning. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their literacy or numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum. Those with special needs are satisfactorily catered for and their curriculum meets the requirements of all pupils on the school's Code of Practice. The curriculum is planned carefully to ensure that all pupils have the same opportunities. There is satisfactory provision for the teaching of personal and social education, health education and sex education. The pupils' education about the dangers of drug misuse is very good. Subject co-ordinators have been provided with some non-contact time to monitor their areas of the curriculum and this is an improvement since the last inspection.
26. The curriculum is enriched by the teaching of Italian to all year 1 pupils, Italian and German to year 6 pupils and by a range of extra-curricular activities. These include Irish dancing, further Italian lessons, karate, netball and both girls' and boys' football teams. The boys' five-a-side football team has recently represented Nottinghamshire in a national competition. A Mass is held in school at least once each half term and assemblies have benefited from the input of a visiting poet. Football teams are helped by the services of a coach from the local football team. Year 6 have a worthwhile residential visit each year to help with a wide variety of studies.
27. The assessment of pupils' work throughout the school is satisfactory and good in English. In the latter it is sometimes very good, particularly the assessment of pupils' involvement in group discussions. The statutory end of key stage tests are carried out as required. School assessments take place in the penultimate week of each term and include effective tests in spelling, comprehension and number. Assessment practices have improved since the last inspection but there is no whole-school marking policy. The school has pupil-selected records of achievement in the form of useful 'Treasure Boxes'. Whilst the school carries out baseline testing of its pupils soon after their entry to the school, little has yet been done to track the progress of these pupils although tracking sheets are now being introduced. However, too little use of made of assessment information to help teachers plan work which is suited to the differing needs of pupils.

### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

28. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The creation of the positive ethos within the school is one of its strengths and has a good effect on the learning of all pupils.
29. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. It is promoted in several subjects including science, art and music. Assemblies relate well to Christian values and opportunities for reflection and prayer are provided. They are sometimes led by the Parish Priest and this contributes to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils are given opportunities to listen to a range of music and to study paintings and are encouraged to express their reactions to these. There is a sense of wonder in some science lessons, such as those at Key Stage 1 where pupils marvelled at the growth of seeds into mature plants.



30. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school succeeds in achieving its aim 'to treat each other as we would wish to be treated ourselves'. The school has an underlying code of conduct, with the adults acting as good role models. Pupils are expected to have a good understanding of right and wrong and this is supported by an effective system of rewards. There are effective opportunities for the pupils to celebrate their achievements in assembly where certificates and stars are presented for good work or good effort.
31. The provision for pupils' social development is good. They are given opportunities to work co-operatively, particularly in science, information technology and music. After-school and other extra-curricular activities provide good opportunities for pupils to develop socially. Residential visits for Year six pupils contribute to their social development. Pupils are not given set responsibilities but have the chance to fulfil a variety of roles. Some of the pupils run a charity shop in school.
32. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The pupils visit a local art centre in Nottingham, experience the influence of a visiting musician each week and benefit from the Italian culture in the school. In English, they experience myths and fables and there is provision for environmental awareness in geography. The school's strong Christian ethos encourages some empathy and understanding about other cultures but there is insufficient emphasis in some subjects on promoting the multicultural aspects of modern living.

### **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

33. The school makes satisfactory provision for the support, guidance and welfare of its pupils. There is a good induction programme for children entering the reception class. In addition to meetings and visits, parents receive a very informative and useful booklet on how they can help their children to settle in happily and easily. Satisfactory procedures are in place for monitoring pupils' academic and personal progress. Pupils with special educational needs have appropriate individual education plans. The behaviour policy is very effective. Rules and expectations are well known to parents, staff and children. Pupils' very good behaviour is a strength of the school.
34. Despite pupils' good attendance, the maintenance of attendance records and the monitoring of punctuality is unsatisfactory. Though the school maintains there is no unauthorised absence, the reasons for absence are frequently omitted from the registers. Though a general plea to parents to get their children to school on time is issued through newsletters, parents whose children are persistently late are not individually targeted.
35. Non-teaching staff are not generally fully aware of the procedures for child protection, which are in need of clarification. Some information is given in the "guidelines for teachers" but this needs updating to accommodate changes in staff. A formal policy needs to be in place and staff training should be given.
36. Arrangements for pupils' health education are satisfactory and sex education is sensitively given to Year 6 pupils during their last term. Education about the dangers of drugs is very good. Year 6 pupils take part in an effective seventeen week programme run by the local police.
37. The health and safety policy is very comprehensive. The building is clean, bright and well maintained. No health or safety hazards were observed and regular risk assessments take place. The school provides a secure environment where children work and play happily and feel safe.

### **Partnership with parents and the community**

38. Parents are very supportive of the school and are pleased with the information it provides. Regular newsletters are detailed and interesting. Parents' consultation evenings are well attended and considered helpful. Pupils' annual reports are detailed, but they do not always include target setting.

Though helpful, neither the prospectus nor the governors' annual report to parents fully meet statutory requirements as pupils' test results are not compared with national statistics. Parents generally feel well informed about their children's work and progress. They particularly praised the information which the school provided prior to the start of the new literacy initiative. They all agreed that the school is welcoming and has an "open door" policy for parents. Teachers are readily accessible and keen to help.

39. Parents feel encouraged to become involved with the school and with their children's work. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are welcomed to a weekly session in the learning support room and encouraged to borrow learning games to enable them to give their children further help at home. Teachers strongly support parental involvement with homework although some parents felt there were inconsistencies regarding the use of homework diaries and home/school comments books. Parents and friends are regularly to be found helping in class and they are well deployed. Ten parents regularly give valuable help to some of the lower attaining pupils with the successful scheme teaching letters and sounds. They also accompany educational visits and swimming. One parent has coached football and seen the team achieve considerable success. An active Parents' and Friends' Association runs a variety of social and fund raising events. The main fund raising event is the annual summer fair and parental generosity raises considerable sums for the school.
40. The school is enriched by its strong links with the parish. The family of Catholic schools is a mutually supportive organisation and close liaison with the receiving secondary school helps to ensure pupils transfer happily and easily. Teachers have forged some interesting links with business and industry. For example a teacher went to a local cleansing department for a course on enhancing the environment. This led to involving pupils in the creation of a garden project and the development of the grounds with the help of volunteers from the British Conservation Volunteer Trust. Good use is made of the local environment. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 use the main street for a mapping project. Older pupils enjoy residential field study trips and make links further afield. Pupils show awareness and concern for the needs of others and each term they select a different charity to support. The many and varied community links which the school has forged make a considerable contribution to pupils' attainment and their personal development.

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Leadership and management**

41. The recent uncertainties over the management of the school, caused by the absence of the Headteacher and changes in other senior staff, have concerned parents and governors. The changes to the senior management have also delayed the practical effects of improvements made since the last inspection. However, the two acting Headteachers, in post on a job share basis for this academic year, demonstrate strong and effective leadership and have taken the school's development further than might have been expected. They form an effective partnership and, together with the strong staff team, have enabled the school to move forward and maintain or even improve pupils' standards of behaviour and attainment. The school's aims are largely met, although they are now out of date and in need of reviewing by governors and staff. However, there is a very positive ethos for learning in the school.
42. The Governing Body has worked in close partnership with the school to try and implement successfully the school management plan, its priorities and resourcing needs. This has been difficult due to the changes in management over the past twelve months. The plan is based on a five year cycle, with detailed planning for the current year, less detailed for the next two and finally a long term plan. This effective planning has enabled the school to deal successfully with the changes and with the introduction of the literacy strategy. The plan does not have very detailed action plans with clear success criteria which would enable the governors to monitor the success of their spending on developments.

43. The minutes of the Governing Body show that their business is properly conducted. There are three main committees which have clear terms of reference. They all keep minutes and report to the full body each term. This structure enables the work of the Governing Body to be more effectively carried out through sensible delegation of tasks and roles. The governors monitor the work of the school in a variety of ways. They plan now to be attached to a subject or other curriculum aspect so that individual governors get deeper knowledge of one particular aspect of the school. The Chair of governors and other governors visit the school on a regular basis although they do not normally have a clear focus for the visit on which they can then report in detail to the Governing Body.
44. The management and leadership of the curriculum has not improved as much as the school would have liked since the last inspection. The acting Headteachers and other teachers monitor the curriculum through teachers' planning and scrutiny of pupils' work. The monitoring of the teaching in the school is less well developed. The role of subject co-ordinators has been developed through in-service training work based on the experience of the acting Headteachers. In the previous term all co-ordinators had time to visit other classrooms and this has enabled them to gain a better overview of their subjects. Teachers willingly approach colleagues for support and guidance if they feel less secure in some aspect of a topic. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The newly appointed co-ordinator has clear ideas for the improvement of the organisation and production of individual education plans, although she will need sufficient time to carry this role out effectively. All significant statutory requirements are met, although there are omissions from the information provided for parents.

#### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

45. The teaching and non-teaching staff work hard and are concerned to ensure that their pupils do well while enjoying their time at school. Teachers collectively have sufficient expertise to teach successfully the subjects of the National Curriculum. Teamwork is strong. Where there are two teachers with similar aged classes they work and plan together, as do teachers working on the same subject matter. All teachers share expertise and experience and provide pupils with the same opportunities and learning experiences. The school employs an adequate number of non-teaching assistants to support those pupils who have special educational needs. Along with classroom assistants, they have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Administrative staff, the caretaker and his staff and the lunchtime staff all contribute to the positive ethos of the school by the way they care for pupils and welcome visitors.
46. Staff development has improved since the last report. It is linked to the school improvement plan. There has been training for subject co-ordinators, which has improved their effectiveness. Staff training has been provided for whole school initiatives, as well as for individuals. This has resulted in an improvement in the quality of teaching, which benefits the pupils. This can be seen in English, in the literacy hour, and in the increase in teachers' confidence with computer technology. Appraisal has been well organised and is considered to be of benefit by teachers. The school is ready for the next phase, when whole school goals, as well as personal ones, will be set. Whilst there is no formal procedure for inducting new staff, they are given good support to enable them quickly to become effective members of the team. The roles and responsibilities of staff and governors have been clarified, which is an improvement on the previous report.

47. The accommodation is good. It is spacious and well organised. Staff work hard to create an attractive, stimulating environment, by mounting interesting and interactive displays of work. They are supported by a caretaker who maintains a very clean school and carries out minor improvements. The governors are to be congratulated for maintaining the fabric of the building so well. The school grounds are attractive and well maintained, with a large hard playing area. The recently developed outdoor classroom and pond area are an asset to the school. The hall, although having a separate dining area, is cramped when used by older, larger classes for physical education.
48. The school library is in need of improvement, in both its organisation and stock. Children are rarely given the opportunity to use it for independent work and its organisation does not encourage such use. There are too few books, although current stock is of good quality. The school is actively planning to improve this but the current situation has an adverse effect on pupils' education.
49. Learning resources have improved since the previous report, in that they are now adequate in all subjects. There is a need for more printers in information technology, where some of the computers need to be updated. Programs are also needed for control, modelling and monitoring. Further provision of artefacts is needed in order to enhance the history curriculum. Resources for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory and are supplemented by staff made materials, which are used well. Resources are well organised and stored and those in the classrooms are readily accessible to pupils.

#### **The efficiency of the school**

50. The school has responded effectively to the issues raised in the previous report. The financial management of the school is satisfactory. The governors and staff plan the use of the budget carefully to ensure that it supports the educational aims of the school. This is shown by the priorities in the school improvement plan, including recent spending decisions to implement the national literacy strategy, and the expenditure on planned improvement in information technology. The finance committee monitors overall expenditure regularly. The governors have not yet established a procedure for measuring the effectiveness of their spending decisions by assessing the impact of those decisions on standards. Planned expenditure of reserve funds has been carefully thought through, but has been affected by costs accrued through staff absences.
51. Subject co-ordinators are allocated appropriate budgets which they use effectively to implement developments in their subjects. The money the school allocates to support pupils with special educational needs is properly spent on providing extra support and resources for these pupils.
52. The teaching and non-teaching staff are deployed effectively. The willingness of staff to work as a team has a positive impact on standards. This is evident in the increased confidence in computer use and also in the parity of opportunity offered across year groups and throughout the school. Good use is made of the accommodation. It is well organised and constantly developed. The alterations to teaching areas, for instance, the room for working with small groups, as well as the provision of an outside classroom, are evidence of this. Learning resources are satisfactorily used to support the curriculum. The use of resources in English is mostly good but the organisation and use of the school's non-fiction library is unsatisfactory.
53. Financial controls and internal administration in the school are efficient. The school has acted effectively to address the minor recommendations in the most recent audit undertaken by the local authority. Administrative staff provide good support and are instrumental in the smooth running of the school, leaving the way clear for teachers to focus on their work with pupils.
54. Given pupils' attainment on entry, the levels of expenditure per pupil and the quality of education provided, the school gives value for money.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

52. **English**

55. Attainment at the end of both key stages is above average. By the end of Key Stage 2 much of the attainment evident in lessons is well above average. The school's national test results over the past three years give a picture of attainment which is consistently above average by the end of Key Stage 2. The inspection findings confirm these results. The pupils are making very good progress at Key Stage 1 and at least good, and often very good, progress at Key Stage 2. The progress made in lessons following the national literacy strategy is also at least good and often very good at both key stages. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory in many classes and good where they receive targeted help from support staff. However, not enough is yet done to extend and challenge the higher attaining pupils. Comparison of the school's attainment with other similar schools shows that it is below average in reading but above average in writing. This matches the findings of the inspection which showed that although basic reading skills are being effectively taught these are not being developed through more challenging reading tasks and opportunities for independent research and learning.
56. An analysis of the trends in results shows that reading and writing scores at Key Stage 1 and English at Key Stage 2 are inconsistent and vary from year to year. This is also true of an analysis of the school's test results for each Key Stage 2 year group in 1998. The evidence points to the fact that results rely too heavily on the natural ability of a cohort of pupils rather than the value added by the school. The levels of attainment reached, and the present standards of literacy exhibited, demonstrate good improvement on those found during the previous inspection. The present inspection has identified the national literacy strategy as the major factor which contributes to the progress and improvements in English. This has been effectively put into place throughout the school and has provided more structured planning, clearer objectives and has improved the pace and challenge of lessons.
57. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are very well developed throughout the school although this is not always through planned opportunities. However, at Key Stage 1 pupils are given the chance to join in discussions during whole class and group sessions. In one lesson pupils discussed the growth visible in a variety of seeds and plants they had sown. This required them to speak clearly and to a larger audience which they did with confidence and enthusiasm. At Key Stage 2 teachers encourage discussions during lessons and collaborative work is planned which allow pupils to talk and work together. The pupils' ability to speak clearly and in well-formed sentences, and their willingness to listen and respond appropriately to others, is well developed in all classes. In assembly older pupils performed a 'rap' with clear diction and a good sense of rhythm.
58. The use of guided group reading within lessons, and the targeted use of a scheme for phonic awareness and learning is clearly having a positive impact on standards. However, reading development is not very well monitored or recorded at present and this is something of which the co-ordinator is aware. At Key Stage 1 most pupils can read quite fluently and they show a real enjoyment of books. They understand the differences between fiction and non-fiction. At Key Stage 2 most read accurately with expression. They are given opportunities to read a variety of texts including non-fiction, and to compare and contrast different texts which tell the same story. For example in history lessons older pupils drew out descriptions of Boudicca from two different sources. Most pupils have a good understanding of how books work, of contents and index and of terms such as author and illustrator. However, the library is very under-resourced and under-developed and this is having a negative impact on the higher attaining pupils' independent learning skills. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum.

59. The standards in pupils' writing are good, and examples of well produced and imaginative work exist. Most pupils develop a neat, fluent style and they demonstrate pride in their work. At Key Stage 1 pupils learn to write distinct speech using speech marks and 'bubbles'. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils spelling skills are well developed. At Key Stage 2 examples of creative writing show that many pupils use good vocabulary skills to give imaginative responses to a poem which used time as a metaphor for life.
60. The pupils have good attitudes towards English. In both key stages they are very keen and enthusiastic when taking part in the literacy lessons. They are well behaved in whole class sessions, and can discuss issues politely following the class rules. At Key Stage 1 pupils concentrate well on the tasks given and only get inattentive on the few occasions when the activities are not challenging enough or where the pace slows and they finish and need to find something else to do. At Key Stage 2 pupils remain keen to read out their work and share it with others. They listen to each other well and produce good work to a tight timescale.
61. The teaching of English at both key stages is good. In almost four out of ten lessons it is very good and a small amount is of the highest quality. All lessons seen during the inspection were at least satisfactory. The lessons based fully on the national literacy strategy were the most effective. In these lessons, teachers had a good understanding of what they were teaching, made clear links between reading, writing and spelling and maintained a good pace to the lesson. Very good use is made of a variety of texts and resources to promote learning. In the group sessions teachers use their time effectively to work with pupils but activities are not always sufficiently differentiated to challenge the higher attaining pupils or provide appropriate work for those experiencing difficulties. The use of support staff to keep a record of pupils' involvement in the whole class discussions provides teachers with a very useful assessment which enables them to ensure all pupils are fully involved over time. Although the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent there are examples of very effectively annotated work and comments which challenge pupils to take their learning further.

## **Mathematics**

62. At the end of Key Stage 2 the overall standards in mathematics in the 1998 National Curriculum tests are above average. Standards of attainment are average when compared to those attained by pupils in similar schools. The number of pupils reaching the expected levels for pupils aged eleven has been well above national averages since 1996, but has fluctuated. This is because of the differences in ability between year groups. The results of the 1998 National Curriculum tests for the end of Key Stage 1 are average when compared to schools nationally, but below average when compared to similar schools. The number of pupils gaining above national expectations has declined since 1996.
63. The inspection findings show that standards at the end of both key stages are average. This is because, although the pupils do well in number, shape, space, measures, and data handling, their acquisition of the skills necessary to use and apply mathematics are less well developed.
64. The majority of eleven year-olds are able to operate the four rules of number, including large numbers. They have satisfactory mental recall of multiplication tables and can solve simple problems mentally, but do not easily solve problems which require them to use more than one operation. They understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. They can describe accurately the properties of 2D shapes, but are less sure of 3D shapes. They also have a good working knowledge of angles and can name, identify and measure different types of angles. They are currently mastering the use of the protractor in constructing angles. Data handling is satisfactorily developed and pupils are able to present data in a number of ways, including computer graphics. Pupils being introduced to probability show an ability to understand the early processes.
65. Most Year 2 pupils are able to operate in the four rules of number to an average level. They show a

basic understanding of place value. They are also able to describe the properties of 2D and 3D shapes, including the square, rectangle, triangle, cube, cuboid and cylinder. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to use the terms 'regular' and 'irregular' when describing shapes. Pupils are able to present data using graphs.

66. Standards of numeracy are average. Numeracy is used across the curriculum in an incidental way, rather than as part of a planned programme. Examples occurred through the measurement of plant growth in science, the use of time lines in history and the measurement of nets for solid shapes in design and technology.
67. The progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory in lessons and over time. The sensitive use of a published scheme of work ensures this. Mental mathematics is taught at both key stages, but it lacks a co-ordinated overall plan and approach. Problem solving by conducting mathematical investigations is also under-developed. A coherent whole school approach to both these aspects is needed. This would challenge and extend all levels of attainment, including the higher attaining pupils and have a positive impact on progress, encouraging the development of independent learning, which is currently lacking.
68. Pupils enjoy mathematics. They take part in mental sessions with enthusiasm and like to answer questions. They listen very attentively to explanations and apply themselves diligently to set tasks. When further help is required, they are confident to ask for it. They are able to sustain concentration for extended periods of time. They work well individually and co-operate well in pairs. At all times, they present themselves as well behaved, polite and well mannered.
69. Teaching is at least satisfactory and is mostly good. The best teaching is very good. This is an improvement on the previous report and is because of the adoption of a common structure to lessons and the development of good questioning techniques. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. In the best lessons teachers plan carefully to provide activities which challenge all levels of attainment, including the higher attaining pupils. This does not always happen and sometimes the more able are not sufficiently challenged, which is also a factor affecting progress. All teachers ask challenging questions to extend thinking and encourage understanding. They assess progress well during lessons and provide further guidance when necessary. Teachers use their day-to-day assessments to adjust their planning for particular pupils. Lessons are well organised and resources are well prepared. Relationships are good and the management of pupils is effective.
70. The subject is led by a co-ordinator who is quite new to the role. Her role has been defined and she has a good understanding of the current position in the school. She has a clear vision of the future, which includes an intention to raise standards. She monitors the subject by looking at colleagues' plans and samples of pupils' work. She has not yet had the opportunity to observe classroom practice. This is planned as a future school development. Regular assessments are carried out and the results are collated to provide information on pupils' progress. This data is not yet analysed to identify trends, set future targets and inform planning. The co-ordinator is aware of the necessity to develop this practice.

## Science

1. On the basis of the 1998 national test results, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was close to the national average, although the percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels was well below the national average. In the 1998 teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment was above the national average, except for the percentage of high attainers which was below the national average. The performance of girls exceeded that of boys. Pupils' performance in the Key Stage 2 science tests was well below average in comparison with schools which have pupils from similar backgrounds. Taking the three years from 1996 to 1998 together, pupils' performance in the Key Stage 2 tests was above the national average.
2. Attainment in lessons observed during the inspection, together with a scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils, is in line with the national standards expected at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2. However, the attainment of those pupils who are capable of achieving higher standards is below that expected nationally. Inspection findings broadly reflect national test results although they do show an improvement in standards since 1998, due in part to the positive attitudes of the pupils and the standard of teaching now found in the school. Within the work seen during the inspection, many pupils demonstrate satisfactory attainment in relation to life processes, materials and their properties and physical processes. Attainment in investigative science is less satisfactory. Pupils in Key Stage 1 understand that plants need light for healthy growth and are even able to consider whether plants left on a window-sill at night with the curtains open might benefit from any moonlight. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 6 can construct series and parallel circuits and are able to provide some explanations of the advantages and disadvantages of each. In Year 5 they show appropriate understanding of wildlife in parks and ponds. Across the school, there are variations in the standards of presentation of scientific work, weaknesses in knowledge of scientific vocabulary and a lack of challenge for the higher attainers. There is evidence of some improvement since the last inspection, although work remains to be done on independent learning in scientific investigations.
1. Pupils' progress is satisfactory overall in both key stages. Planning for effective progress is hindered by the four year scheme of work in Key Stage 2 which does not address the learning and use of skills in enough detail, although the subject co-ordinator is already addressing this issue. Another factor which is hampering greater progress is that pupils' work is rarely marked or assessed, which means that the pupils cannot see how, or even if, they are progressing. There is currently no coherent strategy to nurture pupils' curiosity about science or to get them to take risks when making predictions and this is hindering pupils' progress in investigative work. Pupils with special educational needs generally make satisfactory progress in science but those pupils with high prior attainment are not making enough progress.
2. Pupils' response in science lessons is satisfactory in both key stages. They generally behave well and concentrate. Pupils' attitudes to science are generally positive and they show genuine enthusiasm. In a Year 1 lesson, their eyes sparkled with interest when thinking about what tiny seeds need to grow to maturity.
3. The overall quality of teaching is good. In twenty-eight percent of the lessons seen it was very good, in a further twenty-eight percent it was good and in forty-four percent it was satisfactory. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. In the best lessons, the teacher set a brisk pace, had high expectations of what all the pupils were capable of achieving and thoroughly assessed what the pupils knew, understood and could do. The pace of the lessons was good so that pupils stayed on task. In the lessons which were less successful there was insufficient challenge, particularly for the higher attainers. In all the lessons seen, teachers had at least satisfactory and more often good knowledge and understanding. Lesson plans were generally satisfactory although they were often not linked to National Curriculum levels. Marking of pupils' work was inconsistent as was the use of homework.



4. The long-term planning which has been in use for some time is unsatisfactory and does not promote continuity and progression. The science co-ordinator has been in post for one month and has already made inroads into writing a new and effective scheme of work. She is a hard working and enthusiastic leader for the subject who has started to monitor the work of the department although she has not yet had time to visit other teachers' lessons.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **Information technology**

5. Attainment at the end of both key stages is below that expected nationally. The school is not meeting the full statutory requirements for the teaching of information technology. Topics relating to controlling, monitoring and modelling in Key Stage 2 are not being taught at the present time. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have developed skills in the use of word processing, have effective keyboard and mouse skills and can generally print and save their work. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils can access databases to seek information for project work. Pupils use information technology mainly for word processing small documents such as recipes, short stories and poems and for carrying out research into topics such as that on the Romans.
6. The progress of pupils in both key stages is unsatisfactory and is limited by the lack of opportunity to learn about information technology regularly. The pupils have positive attitudes to the use of information technology. They work confidently and behaviour is good.
7. Information technology is not generally taught as a separate subject but through the different subject areas of the curriculum. Tasks are often introduced to the whole class and in the one lesson observed during the inspection, this happened in a very effective way. This lesson was very good and taught the Key Stage 2 pupils about font and print styles.
8. A newly appointed co-ordinator is appropriately responsible for the subject. She is enthusiastic, has undertaken relevant training and supports her colleagues. A common pattern for the assessment of pupils' attainment across the key stages is not yet in place. The school has a limited range of resources to deliver the information technology curriculum. Each teaching area has computer facilities but provision is inconsistent. Although provision has improved from the time of the previous inspection, additional equipment and software is required to enable the school to extend the use of information technology and to fully meet the demands of the curriculum.

### **Art**

9. By the time they are eleven, pupils are able to work in a variety of media, including pencil, watercolour and pastels. They mix colours effectively and draw accurately. This is evident, for instance, in their paintings using a limited palette and their still life drawings. A strength in pupils' attainment is their knowledge of the work of artists. All age groups have produced work in the style of Monet and Van Gogh, experimenting with a range of media, including paper and fabric collage. This whole school approach has resulted in some very good work by Year 6 pupils during a visit to local art centre, where they produced very good water colours based on works by Monet. This indicates good progress in painting, but this conclusion is misleading as other work on view in the school shows that such standards are inconsistently achieved. Similarly, progress in some printing techniques is satisfactory, but is unsatisfactory in others, for example string printing. The leaf printing in Year 2 and the reproduction of William Morris designs by older pupils are particularly successful. Progress overall is satisfactory, but inconsistent because of the absence of planning which identifies progression of skills and really builds on what has gone before.

10. In the lessons seen, teaching was never less than satisfactory and on occasion is good. In the best lessons, skills are taught in a methodical, systematic way which allows pupils to make careful progress, such as, for example, in printing techniques in Year 2 and still life painting in Year 6. All teachers prepare materials and organise their activities carefully. Planning of lessons is thorough, but the planning for the consistent development of skills is adversely affected by the lack of a clear long term scheme.
11. Pupils enjoy their art lessons and are keen to do well. They take pride in their work and in that of others. Their completed work is valued and is carefully displayed in classrooms and in public areas around the school. Art is used successfully as a means of communication in a number of subjects of the curriculum, such as history and geography. There is a lack of emphasis on multi-cultural art. The work of an artist in residence, which has resulted in the painted sliding doors in the hall and the paving stones in the playground, has a positive effect on the school environment and raises pupils' awareness of the value of art in the world around them.
12. Art has not been a priority for development since the last inspection, so standards are much the same. The co-ordinator has been recently appointed to the role and is very keen to provide a scheme of work and to improve standards. She has begun sensibly by carrying out a survey of drawing. This has provided encouraging results and indicates that standards can improve.

### **Design and technology**

13. Following on from the interim requirements for the primary curriculum from September 1998, the school has given a lower priority to design and technology than previously. This was borne out in the inspection, where only one design and technology lesson was observed in each key stage. Pupils' skills in both key stages are unsatisfactory. This judgement is based on a scrutiny of the small amount of pupils' work available throughout the school, together with discussions with pupils.
14. Progress is unsatisfactory in both key stages. Pupils make insufficient gains in their knowledge and understanding of design and technology. Their response to the subject is satisfactory. In the lessons observed, they worked consistently at their tasks. In the two lessons seen, the standard of teaching was satisfactory. Examples were seen of worthwhile questioning to develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding.
15. The long-term planning is not sufficiently detailed to enable teachers to devise lessons which will sufficiently develop pupils' skills. The co-ordinator for this subject is newly appointed and is keen and enthusiastic. She recognises that at the moment the school is giving greater priority to numeracy and literacy but that there is a need to develop design and technology in the future.

### **Geography**

16. A strength of geography is the systematic teaching of mapping skills at Key Stage 1. Pupils are introduced to an imaginative course of lessons, from which they learn and recognise features of their locality. Year 2 pupils are able to create plans using 'birds' eye views'. They also produce imaginative maps of the route taken on her walk by 'Rosie the hen', from a children's story, and are able to use correct terminology when describing the route, e.g., in front of, behind, round, past. In discussion with Year 6 pupils, it is clear that their understanding of mapping skills is sound. They are able to use maps and atlases with the aid of co-ordinates, but their understanding of map references is underdeveloped. They do not understand 'latitude' and 'longitude'. Work at Key Stage 2 on environmental change is imaginatively developed and pupils engage in a stimulating course of lessons. During a study on the proposed development of meadowland, pupils gain a real insight into the issues involved as they write letters of protest and weigh up all aspects of the situation.

17. Progress is inconsistent, but is satisfactory overall. The standards achieved, for instance, in mapwork at Key Stage 1 are not sufficiently built upon at Key Stage 2, even though the orienteering exercise enhances this aspect of the curriculum. However, progress in the understanding of environmental issues is good. Older pupils recall their river study and demonstrate a sound understanding in their use of appropriate terminology, such as source, meander and estuary. The development of a scheme is underway which is intended to make pupils' progress more consistent and to enable teachers to plan a curriculum which consistently builds upon what has gone before.
18. In the lessons observed, which were only at Key Stage 1, pupils show an enthusiasm for the subject and a willingness to learn. They demonstrate a curiosity about the world around them and talk confidently when describing their work. Hence, the youngest pupils are able to use their map to guide a visitor to the local supermarket.
19. The teaching observed was good. Pupils are involved in worthwhile and meaningful tasks related to their immediate environment, which motivates learning. Activities are well resourced and teachers prepare materials thoughtfully and imaginatively. Classrooms are well organised and appropriate methods are employed. The planning of lessons is thorough, but long term planning, which will identify how skills will be developed in the subject, is lacking. Hence, there is no mechanism by which assessment data may be collated and used. Teachers use display techniques well to reinforce learning. This is exemplified by the imaginative use of house advertisements to make graphs in order to present data.
20. The subject is led by a co-ordinator who is keen to improve standards. She monitors the subject by examining teachers' plans and looking at pupils' work. She has yet to have the opportunity to assess classroom practice. Good use is made of the local environment and locations further afield.

## **History**

21. Because of the way the curriculum is organised, it was only possible to see history being taught in Key Stage 2. A strength of the subject is the development of pupils' enquiry skills. Most pupils in Years 5 and 6 are able to identify and use primary and secondary sources of evidence. This is evident in their study of the Romans, where pupils are examining evidence, making sensible deductions and drawing reasonable conclusions. Some very good work in Year 4 encourages pupils to look at events from different points of view and empathise with the participants. The use of music to evoke the emotional state of the Vikings and the monks of Lindisfarne during the invasion, is particularly effective and motivated the pupils to become absorbed in the written task. From this work they learn that all recorded historical information is not necessarily strictly true, but can suffer from a bias in the reporting. This is also evident in the earlier study of Guy Fawkes in Year 2. Pupils have a well developed sense of chronology and are able to place in the correct order the periods of history they have studied. They are able to describe some of the characteristic features of periods studied, e.g., events from World War 2 and from the Victorians, but their depth of knowledge and understanding is limited.
22. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Progress in the understanding of chronology is supported by the use of 'time lines', both in history and literature. Progress in general is affected by the lack of a clearly defined progression of skills through the topics studied. Hence, although each topic is planned and studied carefully, there is no recorded information to enable teachers to build accurately on what has gone before. Pupils use their literacy skills satisfactorily to read texts and to write accounts of what they have learned.
23. Pupils enjoy history. They listen very attentively to explanations and work hard at the tasks given to them. They co-operate well with one another when working together. They talk expressively about

their findings and take a pride in the knowledge they gain and in the work they produce. They especially enjoy tasks which challenge them to think, such as in the examination of evidence. They also become engrossed in their work when it captures their imagination, for example, when they are asked to put themselves in the places of the Viking invaders or the monks of Lindisfarne. In response to careful questioning by the teachers they are gaining in confidence when discussing their own opinions.

24. Although only three lessons were seen, it is clear that the standard of teaching has improved since the previous report. Teachers plan carefully and prepare activities which capture the imagination. Their use of questions to encourage pupils to think and draw their own conclusions is commendable. They have a good understanding of the periods they teach. The most successful teaching injects real enthusiasm into the proceedings. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and behave well. Their relationships are good, as is their classroom management. Teachers show appreciation of pupils' achievements by mounting careful and imaginative displays, such as the 'Viking Chronicle', which celebrate and reinforce learning.
25. The subject is led by a co-ordinator who has real enthusiasm for the subject. She manages the budget well and has purchased an adequate range of resources. The school does lack its own collection of artefacts, which would be useful, not only in history, but in other subjects too.

## **Music**

26. Pupils' skills are similar to those found in most schools. Their skills in appraising and in composing are better than that in performing. In Key Stage 1 pupils can follow and echo a tune when singing, for example, "Tiny little seed". They can use dynamics in, for example, "We will build a big strong house" and are aware of tempo. Pupils are able to sing songs from memory and in unison. In Key Stage 2 pupils can clap in rhythm using, for example, a crotchet beat. Pupils can sing a variety of songs and play accompaniments with some confidence and awareness of pulse. They know the symbols for some of the musical notes and experience the music of other cultures such as the djembe drum from Gambia, tablars and Chinese cymbals.
27. Progress is satisfactory in both key stages. Pupils' progress is enhanced by the visiting specialist teacher and through the high expectations of the subject co-ordinator. The progress of those pupils who have special educational needs is satisfactory.
28. Pupils' attitudes to music are satisfactory, both in lessons and when singing in assemblies. They behave well, show enthusiasm for new tasks but, on occasion, do not always fully participate in singing.
29. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory in both key stages and in one of the five lessons observed it was very good. Teachers are well supported by a visiting music specialist. All pupils benefit from this input, as do the teachers, who then go on to develop the work in those lessons where they do not have the assistance of the specialist. The knowledge and understanding of the teachers are satisfactory overall and they have good class management. Pace and expectations are generally satisfactory. Teachers are supported by a commercial scheme of work, particularly in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2.
30. There are effective opportunities for the further development of music. For example, there is a school choir drawn principally from years 5 and 6 which sings in the local parish church and takes part in Masses. A local folk club in the parish has many of the school's older pupils as members and, in

alternate years, the school has a full production at Christmas. The newly appointed co-ordinator is keen and enthusiastic. She has started to monitor the work in music.

### **Physical education**

31. Although very few lessons were observed during the inspection the limited evidence shows that the majority of pupils reach at least a satisfactory and, in two out of three lessons, a good level of skill in gymnastics. The previous inspection found that there was underachievement at Key Stage 2. It is evident now that most pupils make good progress during the lessons and that such underachievement is much less evident.
32. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are able to build a sequence of four movements and appreciate the importance of a good finish. They can get out and put away the apparatus safely and sensibly. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils can control their movements well, even in a small hall. They can use the apparatus imaginatively. Standards in games skills reach high levels as shown by the recent results of the school teams in football and netball.
33. The pupils' attitudes to learning are at least good and, in one in three lessons, very good. They are well behaved and approach their tasks with confidence. This has a positive effect on their learning. The pupils clearly enjoy physical education and they are keen to learn new skills and improve the ones they have. They are encouraged to watch each other but few opportunities are created for them to evaluate each other's work. The teachers' use of warm up and cool down activities, and the discussion of the effects of exercise on the body, is inconsistent, although a good example of this occurred in Year 2. A good emphasis is placed on safety matters in all lessons.
34. Work has begun on a scheme of work and long term plan, but staff changes have meant that developments in physical education have been sidelined. Teachers would benefit from a more up-to-date and more detailed programme of study with guidelines about effective activities and teaching methods. At present one of the acting Headteachers is acting as co-ordinator but, although he has good personal expertise, his time for the role is limited.
35. The accommodation is satisfactory although the school suffers from a hall which is fairly small, especially for activities involving the older pupils. There is a large field and a good hard play surface. Pupils have the opportunity to experience swimming at a local pool. There is an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities and a good number of pupils take part. The residential visits organised give the pupils opportunities to experience some outdoor and adventurous activities.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

36. The team consisted of 4 inspectors, including a lay inspector, who spent a total of 14 inspector days in school. The inspection team:

- .spent 40 hours observing lessons and reviewing children's work
- .attended a sample of registration sessions
- .attended assemblies and a range of extra-curricular activities
- .had lunch with the pupils on several days
- .observed pupils' arrival at and departure from school
- .observed all teachers at least once and most several times
- . had discussions with the acting Headteachers, teaching and non-teaching staff, the Chairman of Governors and other governors
- . reviewed all the available written work of a representative sample of three pupils from each year group and heard these and other pupils reading
- . held informal discussions with many pupils
- . analysed a large amount of documentation provided by the school both before and during the inspection, including:
  - the school prospectus;
  - school policies
  - the Governors' Annual Report to Parents;
  - minutes of governors' meetings;
  - financial statements;
  - the School Development Plan;
  - subject policies and planning;
  - pupils' reports and records, including special educational needs records
- . held a meeting attended by 23 parents and considered 47 responses from parents to a questionnaire asking about their views of the school.

## DATA AND INDICATORS

### Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	201	0	63	12

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers (Y3 – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25:1

#### Education support staff (Y3 – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week	47.5

Average class size:	28.7
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### Financial data

Financial year:	1997/98
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	£
Total Income	292 685
Total Expenditure	302 783
Expenditure per pupil	1 499
Balance brought forward from previous year	39 250
Balance carried forward to next year	29 151



## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

157

Number of questionnaires returned:

47

### Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	48.9	46.8	4.3	-	-
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	44.7	53.2	-	2.1	-
The school handles complaints from parents well	21.7	56.5	17.4	2.2	2.2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	12.8	76.6	6.4	4.3	-
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	25.5	57.4	14.9	2.1	-
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	34.0	59.6	6.4	-	-
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	44.7	42.6	12.8	-	-
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	23.4	59.6	2.1	14.9	-
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	53.2	42.6	4.3	-	-
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	57.4	36.2	6.4	-	-
My child(ren) like(s) school	59.6	38.3	2.1	-	-

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents were concerned about the recent uncertainty over the management of the school, due to the extended absence of the Headteacher. They also felt that standards in mathematics were not high enough.