

## INSPECTION REPORT

**BRANCASTER CHURCH OF ENGLAND VA  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

BRANCASTER, KING'S LYNN

LEA area: NORFOLK

Unique reference number: 121131

Headteacher: Mrs Janet Nuttall

Reporting inspector: Mrs Christine Leeson  
021310

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> March 2000 - 30<sup>th</sup> March 2000

Inspection number: 185459

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 Aided                                     |
| Age range of pupils:         | 4 - 11  |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed   |
| School address:              | Market Lane<br>Brancaster<br>King's Lynn<br>Norfolk |
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| Appropriate authority:       | The Governing Body                                  |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Mrs C Highmoor                                      |
| Date of previous inspection: | 21 <sup>st</sup> October 1997                       |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members     |                      | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities  |
|------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Christine Leeson | Registered inspector | Mathematics              | What sort of school is it ?  |
|                  |                      | Information Technology   | The school's results and pupils' achievements.                         |
|                  |                      | Geography                | How well is the school led and managed ?                               |
|                  |                      | History                  |  |
|                  |                      | Music                    |  |
|                  |                      | Under Fives              |  |
| Edmund Worby     | Lay inspector        | No subjects              | Pupils' Attitudes, Values & Personal Development.                      |
|                  |                      |                          | How well does the school care for its pupils ?                         |
|                  |                      |                          | How well does the school work in partnership with parents ?            |
| Godfrey Bancroft | Support Inspector    | English                  | How well are pupils taught ?   |
|                  |                      | Science                  | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
|                  |                      | Art                      |  |
|                  |                      | Design and Technology    |  |
|                  |                      | Physical Education       |  |
|                  |                      | Equal Opportunities      |  |
|                  |                      | Special Educational      |  |

The inspection contractor was:

Norfolk County Council

Norfolk Education Advisory Service  
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The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Brancaster Church of England Voluntary Aided School is situated in a village on the North West Coast of Norfolk. It is much smaller than most primary schools with only 28 pupils on roll compared with the national average of 226. Pupils attend the school from Brancaster and neighbouring villages. All the pupils are white; there are no children from ethnic minorities. There are 19 per cent of pupils with special educational needs, which is around the national average. The number of pupils in receipt of free school meals is 25 per cent, which is around the national average. Pupils start school at the beginning of the year in which they are five. The low numbers of pupils starting school each year lead to significant fluctuations in attainment on entry, but attainment over the past few years is average. The school has close links with the Church and the local community.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Brancaster is a caring school, which continues to make steady progress and provides a sound quality of education for all its pupils. Pupils achieve standards that are close to the national average. The headteacher, appointed since the last inspection, has provided a clear direction for the work of the school, and works well with staff, governors and parents to achieve the school aims. Teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory overall at Key Stage 2 and for children under five. Pupils' behaviour is very good and their attitudes to school and their work are very positive. Links with the community are well established. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Teaching at Key Stage 1 is good, as is the teaching of science and physical education at Key Stage 2, and results in effective learning.
- The headteacher and staff work well together and are committed to raising standards.
- The provision of individual targets for pupils' learning in mathematics and English is effective in ensuring progress in learning.
- The ethos of the school is caring and supportive.
- Staff set high expectations for standards of behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- Governors are very supportive of the school.
- There is a very effective partnership with parents.
- A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided.
- The school makes effective use of the local community.

#### **What could be improved**

- Elements of the information technology curriculum, such as control technology, are not taught at Key Stage 2, and the teaching of information technology skills in both key stages lacks systematic progression.
- Monitoring the curriculum and the quality of teaching is being undertaken, but the impact of these upon pupils' learning is insufficiently considered.
- Governors' strategic management in relation to the monitoring of the curriculum and financial control is developing, but is insufficiently rigorous.
- Appraisal of staff is not being undertaken, and professional development is not planned with sufficient clarity to ensure that staff needs are met and impact on pupils' attainment maximised.
- There are no procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development.

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

## **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Since the last inspection in June 1995, the school has made significant improvements in the education it provides for its pupils. This level of improvement has been maintained since the HMI Inspection in October 1997, with further improvement evident in spoken and written English. The provision of resources for information technology has increased. The confidence of pupils and staff in using information technology has been raised and information technology is being used more widely to support pupils' learning. While there is some very good work being undertaken in information technology, the curriculum at present does not fully cover National Curriculum requirements and pupils' information technology skills are not developed systematically. Improvements in attainment and teaching in other areas of the curriculum, which were identified in the previous report as unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2, for example, science, design and technology, history, geography and art, have been sustained. Science teaching is now good. Attainment in history, geography, design and technology and art are satisfactory.

A school management plan is in place, which provides a clear structure for further development. A teaching and learning policy indicates what the aims of teaching are, but does not clarify what makes for effective teaching. Staff have begun to monitor the quality of teaching and learning, and they are working with a local education authority adviser to review and improve their assessment of learning. Coverage of the curriculum and continuity between Key Stages 1 and 2 has improved as a result of the implementation of a rolling programme of planning for subjects. Planning and provision for children under five is not always appropriate.

## **STANDARDS**

The standards achieved by the three eleven year-olds in the 1999 National Curriculum tests are not published in this report.<sup>1</sup>

Comparisons of trends in national assessment tests are also unreliable where year groups of pupils are so small. Inspection evidence indicates an improvement in standards since the previous inspection, in that most pupils now achieve appropriate standards in relation to their prior attainment.

By the age of five, children reach the expected outcomes for all areas of learning. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards are average overall in English, although good progress is made in reading. Pupils read fluently with enthusiasm, using skills such as use of context well to help them read unfamiliar words. Standards are good in mathematics, science and information technology. In mathematics, pupils' mental agility is strong, for example, when adding or subtracting to 20 or in tens. The extent of pupils' knowledge in environmental science is particularly good. In information technology, pupils at Key Stage 1 are able to access with ease a variety of programs and use the computer competently. Standards by the time pupils leave school at the age of eleven are average in English, mathematics, art and design and technology. They are good in science and physical education. In their science work, pupils have a good understanding of fair testing. In information technology, standards of work undertaken are satisfactory, but overall attainment is below that expected nationally, as pupils do not undertake the whole range of work expected.

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<sup>1</sup> Where there are less than ten pupils taking Standard Assessment Tests, the Department for Education and Employment recognises that the confidentiality of individual pupils' attainment may be breached by publication of results.



The school is setting realistic targets for improvement in standards in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2, and is making satisfactory progress towards them. The use of individual targets for pupils in English and mathematics makes a significant contribution to pupil progress.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment  |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school                | Pupils have very positive attitudes to school.   |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good.   |
| Personal development and relationships | Relationships in the school are very good. Staff are very caring about their pupils and know their pupils well. Pupils' personal development, however, is not specifically planned to ensure appropriate individual development. |
| Attendance                             | Attendance is very good.   |

Parents report that their children look forward to coming to school. Pupils are courteous and show respect for one another and the adults in school. There have been no pupil exclusions. Relationships between pupils benefit from what parents describe as a 'family atmosphere', and are not restricted by age or gender. Parents of new children are impressed by the care shown by the older pupils. The personal development of pupils is good, but there are too few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and show initiative. Pupils willingly take responsibility when it is given, and demonstrate that they can organise their own work, as when deciding who should record findings to present back to the class in a group science experiment. Attendance is very good, which supports parents' views that their children are eager to go 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       | Good           | 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 overall quality of teaching is good. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 91 per cent of lessons, of which 52 per cent were good and 4 per cent very good. There were just two unsatisfactory lessons (9 per cent).

The quality of teaching in English is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. The National Literacy Strategy has helped to develop pupils' understanding of texts and contributes to their enthusiasm for reading, which is a particular strength. The quality and range of writing has improved since the last inspection. Writing is imaginative and presented well. In mathematics, the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is good, particularly when teachers use the end of sessions well to consider what pupils have learned. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. The effective implementation of the

National Numeracy Strategy has brought about some improvement in pupils' facility with number and their speed of mental recall of number facts. The quality of teaching in science is good at both key stages. The teachers' good subject knowledge helps pupils to make significant progress during lessons and over time.

A particular strength of the teaching at both key stages is pupil involvement in setting targets in literacy and numeracy and assessing their progress with the teacher.

A weakness of the teaching is that teachers fail to provide strategies for pupils' independent working. This is particularly evident when pupils complete a set task and then wait for the teacher or classroom assistant to tell them what to do next.

### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

| <b>Aspect</b>   | <b>Comment</b>   |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum   | The school provides a suitably broad and balanced curriculum. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and to the wide range of additional activities provided by the school.                              |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs   | There is satisfactory provision for these pupils. Support is allocated appropriately and learning targets set to ensure progress. As a result, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Overall provision for personal development is good as staff know pupils well. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good and spiritual development satisfactory.                                     |
| How well the school cares for its pupils  | The school is a caring community where pupils are well supported and cared for.  |

The partnership established with parents is very good, which represents great progress since the last inspection. Parents' skills are utilised well to widen the range of activities on offer to pupils after school. Some aspects of the information technology curriculum are not fully in place. Good arrangements are in place to ensure pupils throughout the school have access to the teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher provides a clear educational direction for the work of the school. Subject leader roles are more clearly established than at the time of the last inspection. Initiatives in place to help staff get an overview of pupil progress in subjects across the school are effective.   |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | Governors fulfil their statutory duties and are supportive. They have begun to undertake some monitoring of the curriculum and teaching, and are well informed about the work of the school. The governing body manages the use of resources satisfactorily, but procedures for forward planning and evaluating the impact on pupil attainment of the school's expenditure, are not yet secure. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | The school has established an overview of pupils' progress in its endeavours to raise attainment. Through its development plan, it identifies appropriate areas for improvement, but does not sufficiently evaluate the impact of those developments on pupil attainment.   |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Resources are generally used well. Financial management is satisfactory, but recent problems involving changes in administrative procedures have led to some weaknesses in the monitoring of expenditure. The school offers satisfactory value for money.   |

The school has appropriately qualified and experienced teachers and good level of support staff. The overall level of accommodation is satisfactory, although there is no hall, which restricts physical education, and there is a shortage of storage space, which the school is attempting to overcome. There are adequate resources for the teaching of the curriculum except in information technology and for the physical development of children under five.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most   | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school expects children to achieve their best.</li> <li>• The teaching is good and the school is well managed.</li> <li>• Staff are approachable and keep parents well informed.</li> <li>• Children make good progress and receive the right amount of homework.</li> <li>• The school promotes good behaviour</li> </ul> |   |

The inspection findings support the positive views of the parents.

## **PART B:COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. The standards achieved by the three eleven year-olds in the 1999 National Curriculum tests are not published in this report.<sup>2</sup> Comparisons of trends in national assessment tests are also unreliable where year groups of pupils are so small.
2. The under-fives make satisfactory progress and are on target to reach or exceed the expected outcomes for all areas of learning within the Desirable Outcomes.
3. By the end of both key stages, most pupils are achieving standards that match national averages in English. In all year groups, there are pupils who attain above the average or expected levels in reading, while attainment in writing is close to the expected levels. There has been an improvement in speaking and listening skills since the last inspection. Good progress has been made in this area. Pupils express themselves well in discussions, for example, when a pupil at Key Stage 1 gave a clear explanation of why a whale could not be contained at the local Sea Life Centre because of its size and feeding requirements. Pupils at Key Stage 2 adapt their writing for different audiences or purposes, writing narrative reports, for example, when recording their experiences on a school trip or recording topic information in a book on the Greeks. Some aspects of writing at this key stage are less secure. For example, speech is not always punctuated correctly and some pupils do not use paragraphs to separate their ideas effectively. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning.
4. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in mathematics are above the national average. Pupils count on and backwards accurately in tens and hundreds, starting from any two-digit number. Higher-attaining pupils order numbers to 1000 and assign them a correct position on a number line. Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, attainment is in line with the national average. Through the teacher's implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, pupils' numeracy skills in both mental and written calculations are developing, but there are still aspects of the mathematics curriculum where pupils' number skills are weak. For example, the older pupils found difficulty in identifying missing numbers in a sequence when more than one operation was involved, such as by adding one and then multiplying the next number by two. Some have difficulty adding or subtracting two-digit numbers mentally. Higher-attaining pupils, however, can add and subtract accurately three-digit numbers mentally.
5. Attainment in science has improved since the last inspection. Attainment at both key stages is good and pupils apply their knowledge and skills well in different contexts. For example, by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils apply their knowledge of

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<sup>2</sup> Where there are less than ten pupils taking Standard Assessment Tests, the Department for Education and Employment recognises that the confidentiality of individual pupils' attainment may be breached by publication of results.

circuits to power models made in design and technology. The oldest pupils identify well the variable factors present in an experiment, which might affect their results, in order to carry out a fair test.

6. Standards in information technology are above national expectations at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, pupils do not experience the full statutory curriculum, as there are insufficient opportunities given for pupils to be involved in control technology, monitoring or sound work, which lowers standards. Attainment in aspects covered appropriately. For example, data handling and communicating information are about average. Progress in developing information technology across the school since the last inspection has been good. Pupils at Key Stage 1 can open a program from the desktop and use it independently. They word-process well using full stops and capitals appropriately. Higher-attaining pupils alter the colour and type of font used and import pictures from a clip art program. At Key Stage 2, pupils can word-process independently, with good knowledge of available facilities to enhance their work, for example, when wrapping text around an imported picture. They can hold a compact disc correctly and insert and load it for use. Pupils are able to use spreadsheets and databases effectively to present findings in subjects such as science.
7. At both key stages, standards in geography, history, art, music and design and technology are average. At Key Stage 1, physical education is satisfactory and at Key Stage 2 it is good.
8. Throughout the school, literacy and numeracy skills are applied and developed satisfactorily. Literacy skills in subjects such as geography, and numeracy skills in subjects such as science, are of the expected standard. There is little evidence, however, of reading skills being utilised independently to research information in subjects, for example, in history.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

9. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and they are very well behaved. Parents appreciate the positive attitudes and good behaviour demonstrated by pupils in the school. All the pupils respond very well in lessons. They show keen interest in their activities and most concentrate for appropriate periods.
10. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to the school and respond with interest to their teachers. They are generally sensitive to each other's feelings and they take turns and share resources well. The tolerance that pupils show for one another is a positive aspect of this school. Pupils are introduced to the values and beliefs of other cultures through literacy, music, art and religious education, and show respect for other's beliefs. Pupils make valued contributions to the life of the community, for example, helping with Church festivals and events.
11. Relationships in the school, both between pupils and between staff and pupils, are very good. Pupils are considerate, listen to others and collaborate on tasks productively, when required. They are courteous and show respect for learning resources and property.
12. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities given, for example, putting away equipment

or carrying out classroom duties. Older pupils support younger ones within the classroom, during lunchtimes and in the play area. These responsibilities contribute positively to their personal development, which is further enhanced by a varied and significant range of after-school activities, for example, thread craft, model-making and drama. Strategies to develop independence in pupils' learning are not well developed.

13. Bullying is rare, and parents commented that the isolated incidents that have occurred are dealt with quickly and sensitively.
14. The school is one in which pupils feel very secure and where caring relationships based on mutual respect are a strength. The school achieves good rates of attendance and the rates of authorised and unauthorised absence continue to be low, as was the case at the time of the last inspection. Procedures for cross-checking a pupil's reason for absence, however, when no explanation is received, are not clear.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

15. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is good and at Key Stage 2 satisfactory. Basic skills of literacy are taught effectively throughout the school and good use is made of opportunities to enhance these skills in all subjects. The national strategy for this aspect of learning has been introduced successfully and is having a positive impact on standards. Phonics and basic numeracy skills are taught systematically and rigorously at Key Stage 1. This provides pupils with a sound foundation on which they base their future learning. At Key Stage 2, the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has brought about some improvement in pupils' facility with number. Teachers have good knowledge in several subjects and their planning is detailed and thorough. The teaching of science at both key stages is a particular strength, as teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to explore their environment and investigate scientific problems. Teachers' subject knowledge here, particularly in environmental science work, enthuses pupils, with the result that standards in this subject are high.
16. Teachers make good use of the available resources and classroom support assistants are usually deployed effectively, for example, when supporting learning in numeracy at Key Stage 2. They are not, however, always used efficiently when working with the youngest pupils. For example, in a numeracy lesson, the pupils quickly completed what the teacher had set them to do. The assistant was clearly unsure what to do next and so just kept repeating the activity with bigger numbers. Eventually the pupils were working in hundreds, although one of the under-fives had only recently grasped number to five. Teachers generally manage their classrooms well despite the complexities of teaching a wide age range. The exception to this is when time is not used effectively. Sometimes pupils finish work and no extension activities have been provided. When this is the case, pupils mark time or move on to an activity unrelated to the work being undertaken. Relationships between teachers and their pupils are well established and make a very positive contribution to the quality of education. As a result, pupils behave well. Their good behaviour and responses are reinforced by frequent praise.
17. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are well developed. The use of individual learning targets for each pupil in literacy is effective as clear steps for moving learning forward are provided. These targets are suitably

challenging and are reviewed regularly in meetings between pupils and their teachers. This enables pupils to evaluate their success in achieving their target. The targets are referred to in lessons, which helps pupils to focus on what they should be learning. Often the targets are shared with parents. This provides them with a useful insight into what their children are being taught.

18. At Key Stage 1, pupils' work is marked thoroughly, often with an evaluative comment and some helpful advice for improvement. Marking at Key Stage 2 is a weakness in some subjects. In some books, significant amounts of pupils' work are left unmarked for long periods. There are few comments on the books and most of the marking consists of a tick at the end of a piece of work. In mathematics when work is marked 'incorrect', there are no corrections or follow-up work undertaken.
19. Time at the end of lessons is sometimes used well, for example, when teachers assess the progress made by pupils. It is not, as yet, used regularly to involve pupils in assessment of their own learning and progress. A similar situation is evident at the start of some lessons when pupils are not always told what they are expected to learn.
20. The quality of pupils' learning at Key Stage 1 is good and at Key Stage 2 satisfactory. Pupils respond well to the challenge of acquiring new skills. They usually work at a good pace and maintain their concentration for sustained periods. Most show good understanding of the activities they are doing. In lessons where teachers negotiate targets with pupils for their attainment and progress, for example, in literacy and numeracy at Key Stage 1, pupils express clearly how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve further.

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

21. At the time of the last inspection, the school was not covering fully all aspects of the National Curriculum, which hampered the educational standards achieved by its pupils. It now meets the requirements of the National Curriculum with the exception of information technology, where provision at Key Stage 2 is insufficient to meet statutory requirements in all aspects, for example, control technology. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced and many aspects of provision are good. There is, however, no formal programme for personal, social and health education, which would ensure the development of those personal qualities, skills and attributes necessary to enable pupils to make informed choices later in life.
22. Every pupil has equal access to all parts of the curriculum and to the wide range of additional activities provided by the school. Good arrangements are in place to ensure pupils throughout the school have access to the teaching of basic skills. The relevance of the curriculum is enhanced by many well-chosen and carefully planned visits, for example, to the Lake District and the local beach, where pupils gain first-hand experience of the topics they are covering. The curriculum for the youngest pupils is generally sound. However, there are insufficient opportunities for these pupils to learn at their own pace through exploration and investigation as, for example, in structured play activities. For older pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2, there is a lack of activities, which enables them to investigate for themselves and take responsibility for their own learning. Where this is the case, there is not sufficient

challenge, particularly for the higher-attaining pupils.

23. In some subjects, computers are used well to support pupils' work, for example, in literacy when word-processing a story, and in science when recording findings during investigations. In other subjects such as mathematics, however, computers are not sufficiently integrated into the curriculum to support pupils' attainment so that opportunities for learning are missed.
24. Sound provision is made for all pupils with special educational needs. Their individual education plans provide appropriate targets and are reviewed regularly. In lessons, they are supported well by their teachers, by classroom support assistants and by voluntary helpers.
25. Extra-curricular provision is very good and pupils participate with enthusiasm in a wide range of after school activities. Excellent use is made of the community and locality to enhance the curriculum. For example, a member of the community recently ran a local history club at the school. Many local people with specific skills or knowledge come into school to talk to the pupils and, as a result of these many and varied experiences, pupils are highly motivated to learn.
26. Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural education is good. The school offers a wide range of stimulating activities to introduce pupils to features of their own locality. For example, a group of artists and musicians worked with the children to portray the history of a local ancient pathway as part of the Millennium celebrations. A production to celebrate this aspect of the local heritage was put on in the village hall, which was well attended by the local community. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' understanding of their own cultural heritage. The values and beliefs of other cultures are introduced through art, literature, dance and religious education. Provision for pupils' spiritual education is satisfactory, but could be enhanced, for example, by greater opportunity for involvement in quiet reflection in assembly. The moral development of pupils is good and all staff are good role models and have high expectations of pupils, who respond positively. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong, and codes of behaviour are made clear to pupils. The social development of pupils is good. The quality of relationships and respect shown for one another contributes to this area of development. Pupils care for one another at all times and parents commented on the way that pupils of all ages mix happily together.
27. Links with other schools in the locality are good. Teachers meet regularly with colleagues from other schools to share ideas and discuss educational matters. Members of the governing body are also involved in similar meetings. Pupils visit the high school for swimming lessons. These visits enable the pupils to become familiar with, and accustomed to, the much larger size of the school, which eases transition.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

28. The measures, which the school adopts to support, guide, and secure pupils' welfare, continue to be good. The school provides pupils with a good level of support and care in a friendly and positive learning environment.
29. Very secure procedures exist in the school's arrangements for child protection.



These will be further enhanced with the imminent introduction of a formal policy document by the governing body.

30. Much of the knowledge that staff have of pupils is informal. There are no procedures for the monitoring of pupils' personal development. Thus, it is not possible to ensure that pupils' personal development is nurtured, supported and enhanced with a systematic development of life skills and knowledge.
31. The procedures for evaluating and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils very well and keep detailed records of their progress. Since the last inspection, the introduction of individual target setting, to assist in the assessment of pupils, has proved a very good asset in planning pupils' future learning.
32. The policies and procedures for ensuring the health and safety of pupils are satisfactory. Pupils work safely at all times and are reminded about safety precautions as necessary, for example, when going out to look around the village in a geography lesson or using scissors in a design and technology lesson. First aid procedures and fire precautions are very sound, but outcomes of health and safety audits are not recorded as required.
33. The completion of registers does not conform to statutory requirements in that registers are not always fully completed. The procedures to be implemented in the event of unauthorised attendance are unclear.
34. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good. All adults successfully provide consistent reinforcement of good behaviour from pupils. Staff exert a generally quiet, calm discipline throughout the school and, as a result, the school functions as a very orderly community. Parents are pleased with the high standards of behaviour.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

35. The partnership established with parents is very good, which represents a vast improvement since the last inspection. Parents are very positive in their views about the school. Staff know parents well and relationships between the school and parents are developed informally both before and after school, as well as formally through meetings. Parents receive detailed information, both verbally and in writing, about events at the school.
36. The recent introduction of the Home/School Agreement has further strengthened the partnership and was welcomed with enthusiasm and commitment from all involved.
37. Annual reports to parents provide useful and informative details of pupils' progress over the year and what pupils can do, together with targets for improvement. Parents are invited to make written contributions to reports and have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress at parents' evenings.
38. A particular strength of the school is the readiness of staff to address parental

concerns. Parents are actively encouraged to help in school. A large number of parents and people from the village regularly help in school and on educational visits. Staff value their contribution which has a very positive effect on standards attained.

39. A very active and enthusiastic Parent and Friends Association exists, which includes members of the village community, and holds a number of successful fundraising and social events. It contributes greatly to the work of the school and raises substantial amounts of money, which is prudently spent, under the direction of the headteacher, on resources to enhance the quality of pupils' education, for example, the outdoor climbing frame, computers and books.
40. A further strength of the school is its links with the local community and Church. It has a well-defined and carefully planned sequence of visitors and visits, for example, a local park ranger, artists, musicians and environmentalists, all of whom contribute significantly to pupils' personal development. The value of these visits and visiting specialists is much appreciated by parents.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

41. There have been significant changes in the leadership and management of the school since the last inspection. A new headteacher has been appointed who provides clear educational direction for the work of the school. She plays a central role in all management, curriculum, communication and finance issues. The aims of the school reported at the last inspection as vague are now clearly defined and published. Staff are working hard to meet these stated aims and objectives. Parents are very supportive of the school, they appreciate the headteacher's commitment to their children and that she is very approachable. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, which reported a loss of confidence in the management of the school.
42. Subject leader roles are now more clearly established in the school. Initiatives, for example, joint teaching, monitoring of standards of work and exchange of classes, have been successfully used to enable an overview of pupils' progress in some subjects to be gained. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
43. The school has begun to evaluate its work, so that the headteacher and governors have better knowledge of its strengths and areas for development than at the last inspection. A school improvement plan to bring about further developments has been established. This plan is well structured, with appropriate priorities selected following consultation with staff and governors. The school is committed to improving the curriculum and teaching in the pursuit of raising standards, but monitoring and evaluation of the impact of developments so far on the attainment of the pupils is weak. Professional development is linked well to priorities identified in the school development plan, but the content of training delivered in school is not planned with sufficient clarity and focus to ensure it impacts on pupils' attainment. Appraisal of teachers is not undertaken and so is not used to judge the effectiveness of the teaching or to assist teachers in their development.
44. The governors are fully supportive of the school and many are regular visitors, supporting the pupils in their work. There are good links between the governors and staff. Governors are well informed about the work of the school through

headteacher reports, visits and working with staff on training days. They have begun to undertake some monitoring of the curriculum and the quality of teaching. This programme of classroom visits, together with attendance at local education authority courses, ensures governors have a sound knowledge of the work of the school. The governing body has managed the use of financial resources satisfactorily, but there are areas that need attention. In the past year, additional grants have been given to the school, which have not been efficiently controlled. For example, there was duplication in the salary for the new secretary, so that she was paid twice from two budget sources. Recent changes in the office administration computer systems at the same time as the employment of a new secretary have brought about a lack of clarity over the school's true financial position, which has created some difficulties for the chair of the finance committee. At present there is insufficient forward financial planning of the budget. The day-to-day administration of the school by the secretary is satisfactory, but financial checks on expenditure are not adequate at present.

45. Teaching and support staff are well qualified, included appropriately in training and used effectively to support pupils. Resources are generally adequate to meet the needs of most subjects. There are inadequacies, however, in appropriate equipment and software for implementing fully the information technology curriculum, and resourcing for the under-fives in both larger equipment for physical development and the range of resources to provide for learning through self-initiated activities. Accommodation is generally adequate, but the lack of a suitable hall restricts opportunities for physical education. Although there are still issues to be addressed in monitoring the quality of teaching and financial expenditure, significant improvements have been made since the last inspection and the school is well placed to improve further. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

46. In order to improve the quality of education provided, the staff and governors should now -

- (1) Ensure that the information technology curriculum is fully implemented and that information technology is used to support pupils' learning across the curriculum by:

- enabling Key Stage 2 pupils to engage in control technology (paragraphs 6, 21, 45, 90);
- focusing information technology training for staff where knowledge or confidence are lacking, as in control technology, and the use of other external equipment, for example, the digital camera (paragraph 91);
- planning to teach information technology skills to pupils via a systematic and developmental scheme (paragraph 93);
- assessing information technology skill development consistently and evaluating pupil progress (paragraph 93);
- planning information technology to support learning across the curriculum (paragraphs 23, 72, 96).

- (2) Meet national requirements to appraise teachers by (paragraph 43):

- implementing a scheme by which the quality of teaching is appraised;
- ensuring that any scheme to evaluate teacher performance is linked to appropriate professional development, which is well planned and

- focuses on raising pupil attainment;
  - linking appraisal of staff to the raising of attainment.
- (3) Evaluate rigorously the quality of the curriculum offered and the teaching by:
- agreeing criteria for classroom observations (paragraphs 43, 44);
  - establishing a climate where professional dialogue can take place about what constitutes effective teaching (paragraphs 43, 77);
  - ensuring the foundation stage is planned to meet the needs of the reception pupils (paragraph 48).

#### **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

- (1) The lack of procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development (paragraph 30).
- (2) The purpose of marking and implementation of the school's present policy (paragraphs 18, 63, 70).
- (3) Completion of registers and procedures for checking the reasons for a pupil's absence (paragraph 33).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed   | 23 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 21 |

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0         | 4         | 52   | 35           | 9              | 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                                      | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 0       | 28      |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals        | 0       | 6       |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs   | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | 0       | 0       |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 0       | 4       |

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

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 3 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 0 |

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

|                           | %    |
|---------------------------|------|
| School data               | 4.15 |
| National comparative data | 5.4  |

### Unauthorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 0.3 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete 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                           | 28           |
| 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   | 0            | 0         |
| Black – African heritage     | 0            | 0         |
| Black – other                | 0            | 0         |
| Indian                       | 0            | 0         |
| Pakistani                    | 0            | 0         |
| Bangladeshi                  | 0            | 0         |
| Chinese                      | 0            | 0         |
| White                        | 0            | 0         |
| Other minority ethnic groups | 0            | 0         |

This table gives the number of exclusions 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) | 2.1      |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 13.3 : 1 |
| Average class size                       | 14       |

### Education support staff: YR – Y6

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 2  |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 15 |

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

## Financial information

|                |      |
|----------------|------|
| Financial year | 1999 |
|----------------|------|

|  | £      |
|--|--------|
| Total income                               | 100803 |
| Total expenditure                          | 99005  |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 4715   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 7060   |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 8858   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 0 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 0 |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Total number of education support staff | 0 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 0 |

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 0 |
|--------------------------------|---|

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 28 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 22 |

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 59             | 41            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 77             | 14            | 5                | 5                 | 0          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 73             | 23            | 0                | 0                 | 5          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 77             | 23            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The teaching is good.  | 82             | 18            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 77             | 23            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 77             | 23            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 86             | 14            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 68             | 32            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 82             | 18            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 73             | 23            | 0                | 0                 | 5          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 68             | 27            | 5                | 0                 | 0          |



## **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**

47. Children enter school at the start of the year in which they are five. As there are such small numbers joining the school each year, it is difficult to make an overall judgement of their attainment on entry. Looking at the children who have joined the school in the last few years, attainment is at a level that would be expected at this age, with some having higher attainment. Most of the children who join the school have had some pre-school experience. Parents appreciate the school's flexible approach to admissions and the induction programme, which helped their children settle into school very quickly. There were only two children under five at the time of the inspection. These children are making satisfactory progress and are likely to reach or exceed the expected outcomes for learning.

#### **Personal and social development**

48. By the age of five, the children all reach or exceed the expected outcomes for learning in personal and social development. They generally play well together and have good relationships with adults. Some are aware of the needs of others and take turns in sharing equipment reasonably. They respond positively to the activities presented to them, even when these require them to continue with one activity for a long time. They have good concentration and persevere with tasks. Staff acting as good role models aid the children's personal and social development. The teacher reinforces good behaviour and reminds children of her expectations of them. Staff deal with the children in a calm and helpful manner, which enables them to feel secure and develop confidence. There is no planning, however, for this important aspect of the children's learning. Although children have a time to choose activities within the classroom, this is regarded as their 'free time', and there is no structure to what the children do or monitoring of which activities they undertake, so that potential for developing children's personal and social awareness through these activities is lost.

#### **Language and literacy**

49. The children make good progress overall in language and literacy and most will exceed the expectations of the Desirable Outcomes for children by their fifth birthday. Their speaking and listening skills are developing well. They listen attentively to stories, for example, and are keen to anticipate what will happen next. They express themselves clearly in whole class discussions where they answer questions confidently. The children enjoy looking at books, handle them carefully and understand how they are made up of pages with words and pictures. They know the sounds of most letters, recognise some words and read simple texts with some accuracy. The teaching of reading is a strength, as appropriate emphasis is given to the importance of this area. The children are encouraged to read, and individual targets are set for them to achieve with the help of their parents. Good use is made of stories to foster an enjoyment of books. Pupils' knowledge of letter sounds is beginning to be used in their writing. The children write their names and copy words with appropriate upper and lower case letters. They are beginning to write with confidence and are encouraged to write freehand and to word-process work using the computer. The importance of presentation is emphasised in the way

children's work is displayed and mounted into books to be kept. Language and literacy is well developed through structured activities and special activities involving visits and visitors, but the potential for developing language through a variety of play activities is not always recognised.

## **Mathematics**

50. The attainment of the children in number is above average and they are aware of numerical order. They count confidently to ten and recognise most numerals to 20. They participate well in the whole-class introduction to the numeracy lessons. The teacher competently targets questions to assess understanding and knowledge and to enable the youngest children to participate in the session. For example, questions about placing numbers in the correct position on a number square were confined to the numbers one to ten for the under-fives. Children carry out a wide range of activities to aid their learning, but there is an over-emphasis on recording their work. Games are used well to help pupils' understanding, for example, in a frog game where children had to guess which number the frog would hop to when counting on in fours. There are few opportunities for children to apply what they have learned in play contexts.
51. The teacher makes good use of assessments to check children's understanding, with next steps for learning recorded in their mathematics books. Planning indicates activities for the youngest children, but, when working in groups, the responsibility for these children is sometimes relinquished entirely to parents or classroom assistants. On occasions, this involved the children in work that was too demanding or a task that was carried on too long so that children became restless and bored. The teacher remained working with other children and failed to intervene. This is not satisfactory.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

52. The children have a higher than average knowledge of their world, particularly in relation to the history and geography of their environment. For example, on a walk through the village, the under-fives knew that a bell was missing from a gable end on what was once an Elizabethan school. They also knew that some of the walls are built of stone, flints and chalk. They open a program on the computer and navigate through a simulation of a house in search of a missing mouse. They are very confident in their use of the computer. The children have used an art program effectively to produce some interesting patterns. Skills of cutting, joining and fixing are taught effectively and the children use these skills independently, for example, when using a small paper cutter to cut paper strips before joining them with sellotape to make chains. The teacher plans exciting experiences to develop understanding and language, for example, a trip to the beach and a nearby Sea Life Centre, which contribute to children's knowledge and enthusiasm.

## **Physical Development**

53. No physical education lessons were observed during the inspection. Children are on their way to meeting expectations of physical development by the age of five, although opportunities for physical development are limited by the restricted space within the school.

54. The classroom area is small and there are insufficient opportunities for children to move or engage in physical activities. Large apparatus is not provided for the under-fives, although they have the use of a climbing frame outdoors at lunchtimes in fine weather. There is no secure area for the youngest children for outside activities. There is also no hall, although a dining hut can be used for some physical education and dance. Pupils' fine motor control is developed well through pencil, crayon work and painting. Their confident use of the computer mouse indicates good control.

### **Creative development**

55. Children have made good use of a computer program to explore patterns and colour. They have experience of a range of materials in controlled situations. Few opportunities exist for children to explore ideas and communicate feelings through self-initiated activities. Although a role-play area is provided, children are not encouraged to make use of it, which restricts opportunities for imaginative play.
56. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Good relationships are formed with the children and the teacher develops their self-esteem well. Teaching of basic skills is undertaken well. The teacher has a clear idea of what the children are expected to learn in directed activities, but, at other times, children choose from sometimes inappropriate activities with little learning potential, for example, 'colouring in' sheets. They have too few opportunities to initiate activities or to explore their own ideas. The teacher has no record of which activity children engage in during 'free choice' time and is, therefore, unable to monitor their progress. There are few interactive displays through which children explore materials and their properties.

### **ENGLISH**

57. The small number of pupils tested annually by the national end of key stage tests means comparisons with the national results are not justified statistically. Attainment in English, by the end of both key stages, judged on the work seen during the inspection, is in line with that found nationally. Attainment in writing is close to the average and for reading it is above average. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning.
58. By the end of both key stages, standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory. Since the school was last inspected, attainment in this aspect of English has improved. Some higher-attaining pupils express themselves very clearly in discussions and when answering their teachers' questions. This is particularly evident at Key Stage 1 during the shared reading and writing parts of literacy lessons. At both key stages, teachers use questions effectively to extend pupils' vocabularies. Pupils explain the meanings of new words and, when prompted appropriately by the teachers, are able to enhance the explanations they offer.
59. By the end of both key stages, attainment in reading exceeds that found nationally. Many pupils are enthusiastic readers and they read regularly for pleasure. At Key Stage 1, pupils read fluently. They hesitate infrequently and are usually able to correct themselves. When this happens, they apply their phonic skills well by breaking words down into syllables. Higher-attaining pupils read polysyllabic words

easily and read with expression. At Key Stage 2, the best readers read with timing and rhythm, using their reading skills to interpret aspects of the text, for example, punctuation to add appropriate emphasis and feeling to make their reading more interesting to the listener. Occasionally, pupils read some words such as 'whimsical' and 'bombastic', without understanding their meanings. However, when prompted, they use the context of the story successfully to establish the meaning.

60. Standards of attainment in writing are close to the national average. Pupils at both key stages write well for a range of purposes, adapting their writing for different audiences. Those at Key Stage 1 write letters, stories and factual accounts. They write imaginatively and take pleasure in sharing their writing with their teacher and others. Connectives are used well to extend sentences and basic punctuation is becoming well established. Higher-attaining pupils make their writing more interesting when challenged by their teachers to include alternative adjectives. They also make good use of computers to review the structure of their writing and to refine the final drafts, which they do well. This leads to high standards of presentation. At Key Stage 2, pupils collaborate well when planning extended writing. They write chapters for stories based on outlines presented by their teacher, which they bring together in the form of a book. The oldest pupils adapt their writing for different audiences and their formal writing style is distinct from that of their stories. Some aspects of writing at this key stage are less secure. For example, speech is not always punctuated correctly, and some pupils do not use paragraphs to separate their ideas effectively.
61. Standards in spelling are satisfactory. The strategies, which teachers use to develop spelling, are effective. The spelling of polysyllabic words by younger pupils is often phonically plausible and they usually spell monosyllabic words correctly. Older pupils use dictionaries well to ensure their spelling is correct. The practice of attempting to spell a word and then checking to see if the attempt is correct is well established. Teachers are good at ensuring the words in regular spelling tests are suitably challenging and well matched to the abilities of their pupils.
62. Pupils' handwriting is good when they undertake specific practices. The school's policy of teaching joined-up handwriting at an early stage is starting to impact on presentation. However, some pupils do not apply this skill to other parts of their work and some of their writing in other subjects is presented poorly.
63. The quality of teaching in English is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. At both key stages, lessons are planned well with clear objectives for learning. The plans also contain details of how the needs of pupils with differing abilities will be met. During lessons, teachers respond well to the needs of their pupils, providing them with significant support and guidance for improvement. However, at Key Stage 2, when pupils complete their tasks, the teacher has not always prepared additional materials to ensure they continue to work. When this happens, pupils tend to wait to be told what to do rather than continuing to work without encouragement from the teacher. Teachers encourage pupils to have positive attitudes to their work. This, together with pupils' good behaviour, makes a significant contribution to their attainment and to the progress they make. At Key Stage 1, pupils' work is marked frequently and often includes a helpful comment to support further improvement. Marking at Key Stage 2 is less thorough, with some pieces of work unmarked and showing no evidence of scrutiny by the teacher.

64. Arrangements to assess pupils' attainment and progress during lessons are effective. Teachers make good use of the plenary section of literacy lessons for this purpose. However, during this part of lessons, pupils tend to share what they have done and do not have sufficient opportunity to explain how they feel they have improved or to consider what they might do to improve further. At both key stages, teachers set individual targets for improvement, which they discuss with pupils. At Key Stage 1, pupils are frequently reminded of these targets and this helps to motivate them in their learning.
65. Teachers make satisfactory use of homework to enhance pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in reading and spelling. Detailed records are kept of pupils' progress in reading, and teachers, parents and pupils all contribute to these records.
66. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced effectively and is helping the school to raise standards in English. It has made a significant impact on the quality of spelling and on the range of writing contexts which the pupils experience.

## **MATHEMATICS**

67. Comparisons with national averages in National Curriculum assessment tests are unreliable as a result of the small numbers of pupils in each year group. Over the past four years, however, boys have always under-performed against girls in the tests at both key stages, with no boy achieving level 3 at Key Stage 1 at all.
68. Attainment of pupils at Key Stage 1 is good. Pupils make good progress and achieve standards above the national average. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The National Numeracy Strategy has provided a clear framework for the teaching of mathematics and has been implemented well by the teachers. Pupils' number skills are good. They know odd and even numbers and can confidently state where a number fits into a number sequence up to 100. The teacher uses questions skilfully to enable pupils to explain how they knew an answer, for example, "how did you know where to put that number on the number square?" Their answers indicate a secure grasp of place value. For example, they know that 56 has five tens and six units and is placed on the fifth row in the sixth square. Pupils count on and backwards in tens, fives and some in fours with accuracy. Pupils were challenged with number problems, which they answered successfully. For example, some higher-attaining pupils were asked to count backwards from random two-digit numbers in tens and fives. Setting problems with individual scoring targets proved a very motivational activity and was met by much enthusiasm. The quality of teaching is generally good, particularly when plenary sessions are used well to consider with pupils what they have learned.
69. At Key Stage 2, attainment of pupils is satisfactory overall, although gaps identified in calculating strategies and basic number knowledge identified by HMI in 1997 still remain. For example, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils find difficulty in following a sequence involving more than one operation, such as when asked to find missing

numbers, which required them to detect a pattern of adding one and then doubling the next number. When undertaking number work, only one pupil from a group of Year 5/6 pupils was able to identify the fraction one-third. The effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, with its emphasis on mental mathematics, however, has brought about some improvement in pupils' facility with number and their speed of mental recall of number facts. The Key Stage 2 teacher is aware that further attention to this aspect still needs to be given.

70. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teaching the National Numeracy Strategy across a whole key stage presents particular difficulties. The teacher manages this well by splitting the class into two and planning separately for those groups. Thus, the structure of the teacher's planning contributes to this efficient management of the class. While planning provides well for teaching the different year groups, tasks are sometimes insufficiently differentiated for pupils within year groups. For example, in a Year 5/6 group, some pupils finished a task quickly, while others found it a struggle. Pupils who finished early had no extension activities set, and lacked the necessary independence to continue any other work, relying on the teacher or classroom assistant to tell them what to do next. In some cases, this involved pupils waiting for an adult and wasting time. The teacher's introduction to the lesson is used well to ascertain pupils' understanding. Questioning at an appropriate level to reflect pupils' knowledge is used well to target specific pupils, either to aid their understanding, for consolidation, or to move their thinking on. The pace in this initial part of the numeracy lesson is sometimes slow, which reduces progress. Resources, for example, number fans and word cards, are used well to support pupils' learning, but marking is not used efficiently to aid and enhance their learning. At Key Stage 2, some work is unmarked. Where work is marked, there is often no follow up to marking so that corrections are not undertaken.
71. The quality of learning at Key Stage 1 is good and at Key Stage 2 satisfactory. Using skills learned to solve problems is now a more regular feature of mathematics in the school than at the last inspection. Pupils enjoy their mathematics work, especially the mental and oral activities at Key Stage 1. They respond well to their teachers and work together well. Their behaviour is good. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make satisfactory progress. A particular strength of the teaching at both key stages is setting class targets for a topic, and individual targets for improvement on a regular basis, which is enabling steady progress to be made. Pupils are involved well in their learning by establishing and assessing progress towards these targets with their teacher. A note containing the date a target is achieved, together with the next target to work towards, is sent home to parents. Parents, who feel they are well informed about their children's progress, particularly appreciate this system. At Key Stage 1, the teacher refers to these targets in lessons when appropriate. At both key stages, pupils are not always informed about what they are to learn at the start of a lesson, or how long an activity should take. Conclusions to lessons at both key stages are not used consistently to reinforce the learning intentions of the lesson. For example, in one lesson on pattern, the end session became a repeat of the introduction rather than an opportunity to highlight the key facts learned. During this final session, there is also insufficient opportunity for pupils to consider what they have learned during the lesson.
72. Recording of pupil progress in achieving the National Numeracy Strategy key objectives is efficient. Information technology is used in mathematics lessons, but is not yet used effectively as a support for pupils' learning. Satisfactory links and use

of numeracy skills are made with other areas of the curriculum, for example, in science, through estimating, measuring and recording.

## SCIENCE

73. The small number of pupils tested annually by the national end of key stage tests means that comparisons are not statistically significant. Pupils' attainment in science, based on work seen in lessons, discussions with pupils and the scrutiny of their work indicate that standards in science have improved since the previous inspection of the school. Attainment at both key stages is above the national average.
74. In lessons, attainment in science is above average by the end of both key stages. At Key Stage 1, pupils have good knowledge of living things and classify them into groups correctly. For example, in their study of the seaside, they differentiate correctly between animal and plant life. They also recall accurately the names of flora and fauna seen during their visit to the beach and some characteristics of creatures at the Sea Life Centre.
75. At Key Stage 2, pupils use electric motors successfully to power the models they have made during design and technology lessons. They apply their understanding of electrical circuits well in this context. During the inspection, pupils designed an experiment to test the factors that affect the rate at which liquids evaporate. They identified the variables which needed to be considered in this process and applied them to ensure a fair test. They also considered appropriate questions during their experiments, for example, why some types of glass container do not break when their contents are heated in a flame. Similarly, they know how heat is transferred through metals. They make good suggestions regarding the presentation of their scientific findings, for example, using graphs to present data mathematically.
76. The quality of teaching in science is good at both key stages. Teachers use their good subject knowledge in presenting information to pupils to help them acquire new knowledge and skills, thus enabling them to make significant progress during lessons and over time. Particularly effective use is made of questions, phased in a way which encourages pupils to think for themselves. The teachers do this well, resulting in enhanced understanding. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and build effectively on what their pupils have learned previously. Lessons are well organised with suitable resources prepared and readily available, which contributes significantly towards pupils' learning.
77. Sometimes the two classes combine and are taught together by the subject leader, enabling teachers to share their expertise. This practice contributes effectively towards monitoring the quality of provision for the teaching of science, but has yet to be extended to monitoring the quality of the teaching. This practice also enables the younger pupils to benefit from the support of their older peers, while the older pupils in turn extend their understanding by providing thoughtful explanations for the younger pupils.

78. Pupils' attitudes to their learning and behaviour in lessons are very good. At Key Stage 1, pupils show considerable interest in their work. They listen well and contribute to discussions with confidence and enthusiasm. Pupils at Key Stage 2 organise themselves well. For example, they form into groups to undertake experiments, appoint 'scribes' to record their findings and design their own apparatus. They also offer realistic explanations to justify their findings, for example, why household objects like toasters and hairdryers promote evaporation.

## **ART**

79. No lessons were observed during the inspection and judgements are based on the samples of pupils' work retained in folders and on display. Standards at the end of both key stages are average.
80. At Key Stage 1, pupils produce good pencil sketches to illustrate their project work in the humanities and in the stories they write. The majority of these sketches are produced carefully and some are very detailed. Many pupils at this key stage also paint well and show understanding of the impact of colour. Their teachers provide them with opportunities to improve their skills with watercolours and with oil paints. Good results are evident in both these mediums and pupils' work is celebrated in the Key Stage 1 art gallery.
81. At Key Stage 2, pupils also produce pencil sketches that indicate progress in their skills, for example, greater attention to detail and use of line and shading for emphasis. Sketching enhances their work in other subjects, for example, in history when sketching Greek artefacts, and in multicultural education where they have drawn Hindu hand patterns. They also produce very precise observational drawings of body parts, including eyes, hands and mouths. Good work is also noted in the pupils' response to the study of well known artists, such as Seurat. They have experimented with painting in dots and produced very effective paintings in the 'pointillism' style. The application by pupils of blue lines to produce 'cold water patterns' is particularly effective.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

82. Only one lesson in design and technology, at Key Stage 2, was observed during the inspection. Judgements are based on this lesson and on samples of pupils' work on display. Across the school, attainment in design and technology is satisfactory.
83. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are planned well and teachers ensure pupils use basic tools, such as Stanley knives and steel rulers, correctly. They provide their pupils with sound technical advice, which enables steady improvement and refinement of models to take place. For example, pupils test their designs in paper before making their final products from card and other materials.
84. Pupils show good attitudes to their learning and behave well. They work hard and sustain their concentration well. The highest-attaining pupils take great care to measure, draw, cut and paste accurately. Some lower-attaining pupils tend to rush their work and apply their skills with less precision, for example, when printing on 'pop-up' Mothers' Day cards.
85. Pupils benefit from a well-attended design and technology after-school club by



being able to put into practice skills learned in lessons.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

86. Geography and history are taught on a rolling programme of topic themes. During the inspection no lessons were observed in history, and only one lesson was observed at Key Stage 1 in geography. Consequently, there is insufficient evidence to make secure overall judgements on attainment and learning at the end of the key stages.
87. The lesson observed at Key Stage 1 involved a visit to the village to look for environmental changes. The pupils are very interested in their environment, and their knowledge of local history and geographical features is good. The level of questioning used by the teacher encouraged pupils to consider clues about change. For example, when one pupil remarked that a house was new rather than old, the teacher asked how they knew. Answers included “it looks clean”, “it’s built of bricks” and “it has a garage”. Pupils were able to see very recent changes that have occurred in their lifetime too, for example, the closure of a Post Office, which is now a house extension, and work in progress to convert old barns to holiday homes. On return to the classroom, discussions about the effect of change on their future took place, with concerns raised about whether there would be any employment for them as the shops, the hotel and a farm in the village have closed. Thus, the beginnings of a good grasp of the economic effects of change on a community were evident. The teacher’s extensive personal knowledge contributed much to this lesson.
88. At Key Stage 2, pupils describe clearly the differences between their own village and other places, such as villages they visited in the Lake District. They know well the characteristics of different settlements and how humans affect the physical environment.
89. Clear policies for both subjects are in place, which outline the experiences pupils should have, the areas of work to be covered and how planning and assessment should be undertaken. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority schemes of work are used to provide structure. Teachers maintain records of curriculum coverage and undertake assessment of pupils’ learning at the end of each topic. At both key stages, work is often made into books as, for example, in a book on the Greeks at Key Stage 2. These are used as resources or are placed in the village Church and a new local museum. Pupils are given many opportunities for first-hand experiences through visits and visitors to school, for example, a country park ranger who helped the pupils to make a tepee as part of a history topic on American Indian Culture. Trips to the Sea Life Centre and the beach for Key Stage 1 pupils and to the British Museum for Key Stage 2, enhance pupils’ learning.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

90. Only one specific information technology lesson was observed during the inspection. However, a number of lessons were observed where pupils were working at the computer and samples of work produced using the computers were scrutinised. Discussions were also undertaken with staff and pupils. This evidence indicates that at Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in their learning, and standards of attainment at the end of the key stage are above the national expectation. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. At Key Stage 2, while good progress has been made since the last inspection, the pupils

do not experience the full statutory curriculum for information technology. Pupils' attainment overall is, therefore, below the national expectation, as they do not have sufficient competence and experience in using equipment for control technology. Pupils at both key stages are interested in, and enjoy, their information technology work. They have frequent opportunities to use the computer, including lunchtime and breaks if staff are available.

91. Pupils at Key Stage 1 are confident in their use of computers and have a good understanding of its capabilities as a tool. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher introduces a new skill and then works with pupils individually, as appropriate, to ensure they make progress. For example, during a lesson on word-processing, the teacher demonstrated to one pupil how to alter font colour and another was shown how to get text to wrap around an inserted picture. The teacher's well-timed and sensitive interventions ensured that pupils' learning was moved forward. Pupils at Key Stage 1 know that their work is stored in 'My documents' and are able to open and retrieve their work. They are confident in word-processing, using shortcuts and drop down menus appropriately and with ease. Higher-attaining pupils use the 'insert' menu to choose and insert a picture to match their text. The digital camera is not used at Key Stage 1 as the teacher is, at present, lacking in confidence. This is an area for development, as it would considerably enhance the very good work undertaken where pupils, for example, make visits outside school.
92. At Key Stage 2, a great deal of progress has been made since the last inspection in pupils' use of information technology and in updating and extending the information technology resources available for pupils. Pupils use computers more independently than was the case in the previous inspection. In some subjects, computers are used to support pupils' work well, as in literacy when word-processing a story. In other areas, however, computers are not sufficiently integrated into the curriculum to support pupils' attainment so that opportunities for learning are missed. For example, in science pupils are learning about evaporation, but available sensing equipment connected to the computer was not included in planning for the work. In mathematics lessons, the computer was not used, except on one occasion where the teacher directed two pupils, who finished set work early, to work on a mathematics program. The level of task selected by the pupils was too easy for them, so that it neither supported nor extended their learning. Pupils at Key Stage 2 know how to load a compact disc and how to handle it correctly. They use search facilities efficiently to access information in a multimedia encyclopaedia and are proficient in using the Internet. They have successfully integrated pictures taken using the digital camera into their work. Information technology is not used efficiently to support pupils with special educational needs.
93. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work is in place to support work in information technology. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Information technology, however, is not yet identified in planning across all areas of the curriculum. There is some guidance for teachers as to which programs are appropriate for their pupils to use and the subjects they cover. This is awaiting an update, as new software has been purchased and more is currently on order. Staff intend to establish a software 'map', detailing which program is most appropriate to

support skill development in each year group. A program to ensure systematic information technology skill development is being devised with local education authority advisers, but is not yet in place. Assessment of pupils' work in information technology is not systematically undertaken. This affects the rate of pupils' progress in information technology skill development, as, at present, teachers are responding to individual needs rather than planning ahead for the next progressive step. The teacher's confidence at Key Stage 1 in using information technology has been considerably enhanced by participation in the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency project, which assisted the school by donating a lap-top computer and some training. The Key Stage 2 teacher's information technology competence is good. Training for both teachers is continuing, and the impact of all these initiatives can clearly be seen in the progress made in information technology since the last inspection.

## **MUSIC**

94. Only one music lesson and singing in assembly were observed during the inspection. This was insufficient evidence to make secure overall judgements about the teaching or pupils' learning and attainment. In the lesson observed, the teaching was good and pupils responded well, maintaining concentration throughout the lesson. Pupils demonstrated a good grasp of dynamics and rhythm that they were able to sustain. The pupils' singing in assembly was tuneful, if a little lacking in enthusiasm. Music was judged to be satisfactory at the last inspection and the limited evidence available indicates that this standard has been maintained.
95. The school has a policy for music containing appropriate aims relating to singing, playing, performing, listening and response, comparison of other traditions and cultures. This indicates a wider perspective than the definition of music within the policy, which refers only to 'the arrangement of sounds of one or more instruments'. Planning relates mainly to topic work in each class with some activities related to special events, such as the Millennium celebrations. Here, professional musicians led a celebration of a local ancient path 'Peddars Way'. Parents at the meeting spoke enthusiastically about such events, which enrich their children's experiences.
96. There is at present no scheme of work to ensure there is progression in the development of pupils' musical skills, knowledge and understanding. Staff are waiting for publication of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work for music. There is no mention of information technology in the music policy and work with sound is underdeveloped.
97. A suitable range of instruments, including some from different cultures, is available for pupils to use and these are readily accessible on a trolley. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. A reasonable selection of music for listening is available, including music from around the world. There is no extra-curricular music provision at present, as clubs change each term, but provision has been made in the past.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

98. Only one physical education lesson was seen during the inspection. This shows that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are above those expected of pupils of this age.
99. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers give appropriate attention to safety issues. They plan their lessons well and this ensures activities are well matched to

the stage pupils have reached. Grouping them by age for practices also ensures they make good progress in lessons. Teachers recognise and respond quickly to any weaknesses that they identify, providing sound advice, which helps pupils to improve. For example, in netball when pupils make the ball bounce too high, teachers explain how to pass successfully with a lower trajectory.

100. The good attitudes and behaviour shown by pupils makes a positive contribution to their attainment and learning. They work hard in practices, sustaining their interest and effort for long periods. In netball, they apply the new skills they have learned effectively in games. For example, they pass and move well and take up good positions to receive the ball. Often they are able to link a series of passes together leading to the scoring of a goal.
  
101. The school has good sporting links with its receiving high school and pupils visit regularly for swimming lessons. They also participate successfully in a range of sporting activities organised by their local cluster group of schools.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

102. Religious education was the subject of a separate inspection under section 23 of the Education Act.