

## INSPECTION REPORT

**ST PETER'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND VOLUNTARY AIDED  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Helperby, York

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121606

Headteacher: Mrs P Garthwaite

Reporting inspector: Mr Michael Raven  
3961

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> June 2000

Inspection number: 185616

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: Helperby

York

Postcode: YO61 2PA

Telephone number: 01423 360250

Fax number: 01423 360250

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of Chair of Governors: Mrs Pamela Nash

Date of previous inspection: 16<sup>th</sup> October 1995

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr Michael Raven	Registered inspector	Under fives	The school's results and achievements
		Mathematics	How well are pupils taught?
		Science	How well is the school led and managed?
		Design and technology	
		Music	
		Physical education	
Mrs Margaret Manning	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr John Manning	Team inspector	Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		English	
		Information technology	
		Art	
		Geography	
		History	

The inspection contractor was:

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The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
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London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>[ ]</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>12</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>26</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Peter's School is a voluntary aided Church of England primary school for boys and girls aged from four to 11 years. There are 62 pupils on roll, making it much smaller than most primary schools nationally. Most pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage and there are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Six pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is well below the national average for primary schools. There are no pupils with statements of special educational needs. Attainment on entry to the school is average in all the six areas of learning for children under five: personal and social development; language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

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

This is a very effective school. Attainment in English, mathematics and science is above average by the time pupils leave the school at the age of 11. Attainment in design and technology, geography, history and music is also above average by the age of 11. The quality of teaching is good overall and in about a quarter of lessons it is very good, mainly at Key Stage 2. The leadership and management of the school is very good. The headteacher and staff with subject responsibilities carry out their management roles very effectively. The governors are very well informed and involved in the strategic management of the school and they fulfil their responsibilities very successfully. Taking into account the good standards attained by the time pupils leave the school, the good quality of teaching and the very effective leadership and management, the school provides very good value for money.

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

- The school is very well led and managed
- The quality of teaching is good overall and it is often very good, especially at Key Stage 2
- Standards in English, mathematics and science by the age of 11 have been raised since the last inspection
- Relationships between pupils and their personal development are excellent
- Teachers use assessment information very well to help them plan their teaching
- Parents view the school very positively and pupils are very happy to come to school

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

- Marking of pupils' work does not give them enough advice on what to do to improve
- Pupils do not consistently take enough care over the presentation of their work
- Assessment of attainment and progress in information technology is not rigorous enough to ensure that pupils make the expected progress
- 

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

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

The school's last inspection took place in October 1995. The school has made good progress since then. Standards reached in English, mathematics and science by the age of 11 have risen. Standards in design and technology and art have also risen. The quality of teaching has improved, so that it is now good overall. The provision for pupils to learn information technology skills has been improved. There are now policies and schemes of work for all subjects and all subjects are co-ordinated by members of staff. The school has carried out an audit of its resources and these have been improved. Clear separation and designation of church and school finances have been established. Not enough has been done to improve the presentation of pupils' work.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	A	C	E
mathematics	A	A	B	C
science	A*	A	A	A

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

Results of the 1999 national tests and assessments for 11 year olds indicate that standards in English were in line with national averages, but that they were well below average compared to similar schools. Similar schools are taken to be those where there are a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals. The school feels that, in common with many other small schools in village communities, the true proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is not known, because of parents' and carers' reluctance to apply, and that therefore the 'similar' schools comparison is misleading. Bearing in mind the overall average socio-economic circumstances of the community served by the school, the inspection team supports this view. Standards in the 1999 tests in mathematics were above average by national comparisons and standards in science were well above average. At this small school cohort sizes and characteristics vary considerably from year to year. This makes it very difficult to interpret trends in standards over time, but the trend identified is broadly in line with the national trend. At present there are only six pupils in Year 6 and one of these is a very new entrant. Standards in English, mathematics and science vary between these individuals, but overall they are above average. Standards in information technology meet national expectations by the age of 11, as they did at the time of the last inspection. Standards in art have risen and now meet national expectations. Standards in design and technology, geography, history and music have risen and now exceed national expectations. The governors have set realistic targets for improvement in standards and these have been approved as appropriate by the local education authority. Given the average attainment of pupils on entry to the school and their generally above average standards by the age of 11, pupils achieve well.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are eager to learn and try hard and concentrate well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils work and play very well together, in lessons and at playtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Pupils get on very well together and help one another. The older pupils look after the youngest ones well, including those visiting from playgroup.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils attend regularly and are punctual.

Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They greatly enjoy coming to school and work hard in lessons. They behave very well in class, at lunch-time and in the playground. They respond positively to responsibilities, such as organising the recorder playing for assembly and looking after the younger pupils at lunch time. They make the visiting pre-school children feel very welcome and at ease. Pupils attend regularly and on time.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
26 lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. In almost nine out of every ten lessons teaching is good or better and in about a quarter of lessons it is very good, mainly in the juniors. About one lesson in ten is satisfactory and there is no unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching in English and literacy is good and teachers are skilled in teaching basic skills such as phonics and reading. The teaching of mathematics and numeracy is good. Teachers are good at teaching number skills, and in particular good attention is paid to mental arithmetic. Tasks are carefully planned to meet the needs of pupils of different ages in the mixed-age classes, including the more able and those who find learning more difficult. Pupils' learning is good, as a consequence of the good teaching they receive. They make a very good effort in lessons and work at a brisk pace. Teachers encourage pupils to make good use of time, for example by using an hour glass timer to set time limits for the completion of tasks both in the infants and in the juniors. Pupils concentrate well. They are helped to have a good understanding of their own learning when teachers share with them at the outset the objectives of lessons and return to these again at the end. The few pupils who find learning more difficult are well supported in lessons and helped to make good progress in their learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is well planned. It is broad and balanced and meets all statutory requirements to teach the National Curriculum and religious education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There are few pupils with special educational needs and they are well supported by teaching and non-teaching staff and helped to have access to the full curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Moral development is promoted very well, for example through acts of collective worship on the importance of saying 'thank you'. Pupils' social development is promoted very well, for instance through discussion about how to help people with disabilities, seen in the infants. Cultural development is promoted very well and pupils are helped to have an appreciation of their own culture and of the diversity and richness of a range of other cultures. For example, pupils study world religions and some of their beliefs and customs and they have valuable links with children in other parts of the world, such as Pakistan and the British Virgin Islands. Provision for the promotion of spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Teachers know their pupils well. Their academic performance and personal development are very well monitored. There are good procedures for ensuring the safety and welfare of pupils.

The school works well in partnership with parents. It is open and welcoming to parents and several enjoy helping in school and on outings. They are kept well informed about what goes on in school and

how their children are getting on. The curriculum offers a broad and balanced range of learning opportunities, including appropriate attention to personal, social and health education. It is enriched by lessons in French for the older pupils. The school offers pupils a satisfactory range of activities outside lessons, including sport. The school cares for its pupils well. The monitoring of academic and personal development is very good. The school offers its pupils very good educational and personal guidance. Assessment information is used very well to help teachers plan their next steps in teaching.

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

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher and staff work very well together as a team, sharing subject management responsibilities fairly and very effectively. The monitoring role of the headteacher and other subject co-ordinators is better developed than in most small schools.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. The governors have a very good understanding of their role in managing the school and providing leadership. They are very well involved in strategic management, for example in the development and monitoring of the school improvement plan, which provides a very firm foundation for school development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning is better developed than in most small schools. The governors have wisely allocated to the headteacher and other staff some time to monitor the work in classrooms. There is careful analysis and consideration by staff and governors of performance data, such as annual test and assessment results and the results of assessments carried out when children start school.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Funds allocated specifically for the education of pupils with special educational needs are used carefully to support their learning and help them make good progress in all subjects.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good. There is a good balance of youth and experience among the teachers and they are well supported by ancillary and administrative staff in promoting pupils' learning. The accommodation is well cared for and provides a bright and stimulating environment for teaching and learning. Resources are good and this represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. The governors and headteacher provide very good leadership and management and share a commitment to school improvement, based on a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school takes very good care to secure good value for money in obtaining goods and services.

#### 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>• They would feel comfortable about approaching the school with any problems or complaints</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> <li>• Their children like school</li> <li>• The teaching is good</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities offered outside lessons</li> <li>• The amount of homework set</li> <li>• The information they receive about how their child is getting on</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views of the school in all respects. It finds that the range of opportunities offered outside lessons is satisfactory, taking into account the size of the school and the number of staff. Homework is used satisfactorily to support the work done in lessons. The

information provided for parents is good. The inspection team endorses the positive comments made by parents at the parents' meeting about the breadth of the curriculum, including French.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. In the 1999 national tests and assessments for 11 year olds standards in English were average compared to all schools nationally. Compared to similar schools, that is to say those with similar numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were well below average. This comparison is likely to be misleading. The socio-economic background of families at the school is average overall and a considerably higher proportion of pupils are therefore likely to be eligible for free school meals than those who actually apply for them. Experience suggests that this is a feature of small schools in close-knit village communities. Standards in mathematics were above average in 1999 and they were well above average in science. Comparisons between test results last year and standards found among the 11 year olds at present must be treated with caution, because there are only six 11 year olds at present, and one of these is a very new entrant. The attainment of this group of pupils is varied, but overall standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. This reflects good progress in their learning and represents significant added value, as attainment is broadly average on entry to the school. Standards in these subjects are currently better than they were at the time of the last inspection in 1995. Standards have been rising steadily in line with national trends since 1996. Standards in information technology meet national expectations by the time pupils leave the school. In art, standards have risen since 1995 and they now meet national expectations. Standards in design and technology and in geography, history and music have risen to exceed national expectations by the time pupils leave the school at the age of 11.
2. Standards in reading in the 1999 national tests and assessments for seven year olds were average compared to all schools nationally and well below average compared to 'similar' schools. They were above average in writing and average compared to similar schools. Standards in speaking and listening were assessed by teachers as being above average. The current cohort of seven year olds is small, with only eight pupils, and this means that comparisons with 1999 test and assessment results need to be treated with caution, as with the 11 year olds' results. The inspection shows that standards reached by these pupils vary from one to another, but overall they are above average in reading and writing and speaking and listening. Trends in standards over the past four years are hard to detect reliably, due to fluctuating and often small cohorts. Standards in speaking and listening, in reading and in writing are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection. In the 1999 tests and assessments in mathematics standards were well below average by national and similar schools comparisons. Standards have risen since then, thanks to the school's early implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, and they are now average. In science, standards in 1999 were assessed by teachers as average overall, with a higher than average proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels of the National Curriculum. Standards achieved by the present small number of pupils vary from one to another, but overall they are above average. Standards in science are better than they were at the time of the last inspection. In art, standards have risen to be in line with national expectations. In design and technology standards meet national expectations. In geography and history standards meet national expectations, as they did at the time of the last inspection. No judgement can be made about standards in music and physical education, as no lessons in these subjects were seen during the inspection, there being only one lesson in physical education on the timetable, and none in music.

3. The children under five enter the school with attainment which is broadly average in all the areas of learning for children under five: personal and social development; language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development. The good teaching they receive means that they are securely on course to reach the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five.
4. The school sets realistic targets for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics by the age of 11. These have been approved by the governors and the local education authority. Progress towards these targets is appropriately monitored by the school and inspection evidence shows that pupils are on course to meet these targets in the coming year.
5. There are few pupils with special educational needs and none has a statement of special needs. Teaching and support staff support the pupils well and help them to have full access to the curriculum along with their peers. Clear and appropriate individual education plans support the work with these pupils and they make good progress in their learning. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language and the school has not identified any gifted or talented pupils. There are no significant differences in the standards achieved by boys and girls, or those from minority ethnic groups.

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

6. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They enjoy coming to school and taking part, both in lessons and school life in general. Most parents say that their children like school. Attendance is satisfactory, being broadly in line with that in primary schools nationally, and there is no unauthorised absence. Pupils' behaviour was judged to be generally good at the time of the last inspection. It is now very good, which is therefore an improvement.
7. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning and the oldest pupils in particular concentrate hard and use their time well. This was seen, for example, in a mathematics lesson when they worked on probability. In science they were very interested in the lesson content and enjoyed finding and timing their own pulse. Pupils at Key Stage 1 enjoy practical work. They worked confidently on their own when making lunch boxes for healthy food in an art lesson. A small number of these younger pupils can get a bit restless when the whole class is sitting on the carpet and listening to the teacher. In a Year 3 and 4 information technology lesson, pupils behaved sensibly even though they were hot after lunch. They followed the teacher's demonstration carefully on how to access and handle information on the computer and this helped them to learn well. The same pupils worked very hard in an art lesson and one confided "this is the favourite thing for our table to do in the afternoon".
8. Pupils behave extremely well around school and in the playground. They are naturally very polite to all staff and visitors in school and to each other also. They are very orderly when large numbers of them are together such as for assemblies and all participate very well and listen intently. At lunch-time older pupils look after younger ones, hand round food and clear the tables and help to make it a pleasant social occasion. All pupils clear away their own chairs when the supervisors tell them they can. They are very thoughtful as when Year 6 pupils in a history lesson were concerned about another pupil's leaking pen and tried to help him. Pupils play happily

together outside and incidents of unacceptable behaviour are rare. The school has had no reason to exclude any pupils and very rarely needs to contact parents over pupils' behaviour.

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

9. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. It is good overall. Teaching is good or better in almost nine lessons in every ten and it is very good in about a quarter of all lessons, mainly at Key Stage 2. There is no unsatisfactory teaching.
10. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach and this enables them to promote good learning. There is evidence of some very good subject knowledge and understanding, for example in an upper junior lesson on the circulation of the blood and the workings of the heart. This means that teachers are able to explain things well and demonstrate very clearly, so helping pupils to learn well.
11. Teachers are skilled in teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Phonic skills are taught well to the youngest children in the infants' class, with the appropriate support of a good published phonics scheme. Reading is taught well, enabling good standards to be reached by the ages of seven and 11. The school has adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and these support the work of the school well. Numeracy skills are taught well, with an appropriate emphasis on mental arithmetic. For instance, the youngest children count in order from one to 10 in their head, enjoying correcting the 'counting puppet' as it makes mistakes. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 mentally add and subtract numbers beyond 20 and they are encouraged to think quickly as they play a 'follow me' game and try to beat the timer. The younger junior pupils are given good opportunities for mental calculation, for example as they double one and two-digit numbers. The oldest pupils double and halve four-digit numbers mentally.
12. Planning for lessons is good. Daily lesson planning is appropriately detailed, based on longer-term planning, the National Curriculum and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Planning sets out clearly what the purpose of the lesson is and what the pupils will do. It identifies clearly different tasks chosen to meet the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities. Teachers often helpfully share lesson objectives with pupils at the outset, and refer to them again at the end. This helps pupils have a clear understanding of their own learning. This was seen, for example, in a mathematics lesson in the lower junior class, where the teacher explained to the pupils at the start of the lesson that they would be using mathematical skills to plan the catering for a party. This also gave pupils a good opportunity to apply mathematics to a 'real life' situation.
13. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and this encourages them to work hard and do their best. For example, in an English lesson in the infants' class a challenging task was set, requiring the Year 1 and 2 pupils to plan and write their own story based on a story they had read as a class, about the 'Pizza Princess'. They responded well to this challenge, and produced work of a high standard, many making appropriate use of punctuation such as full stops, question marks and exclamation marks, which exceeds expectations for their age. An upper junior lesson on probability made appropriate demands on pupils, stimulating them to work hard collecting and analysing data experimentally to show how many possible outcomes there are for example when dice are cast repeatedly. Teachers' expectations of the

presentation of pupils' work are too low and this results in some pupils taking too little care, although this is not true generally of the higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 2. This was an issue at the time of the last inspection and it remains a weakness.

14. Teachers use an appropriate range of effective teaching methods to promote the learning of all pupils, including those who find learning more difficult and those from minority ethnic backgrounds. Good whole-class teaching is balanced well by group and individual work well-matched to the age and ability of pupils. Lessons are well structured. For instance, an upper junior English lesson started well with an effective whole-class study of the set text, 'Black Beauty', which stimulated pupils well and made them want to work on. They then undertook different related tasks according to their age and ability and the lesson concluded with a good plenary session, returning to the text to check their understanding and to tackle a fresh challenge for homework.
15. The management of pupils is good in the infants and very good in the juniors. Parents remark that the youngest children are soon socialised into school and helped to develop self-discipline and control. They are given gentle but firm guidance on how to behave and many good opportunities are provided for them to work together as a class and in groups and this successfully promotes their social development. This is seen, for example, as the youngest children, together with those visiting from the play group, co-operate together and take it in turns to be 'green bottles' falling off the wall. The lower juniors are very well managed and good discipline is maintained, for example as they learn about and practise some of the skills for playing hockey in an outdoor physical education lesson. Firm but sensitive class control is a strong feature of the teaching in the upper juniors and this results in very good behaviour and enables pupils to make good progress in their learning.
16. Teachers make good use of the time available for lessons and this encourages pupils to work hard and enables them to make good progress in their learning. Time limits are set, encouraging pupils to make full use of the time available. This was seen, for example, in mathematics lessons in the infants and in a history lesson in the upper juniors, where pupils were given eight minutes to research the answers to some questions on the ancient Egyptians, making good use of reference books and computers. Support staff give good support particularly to the youngest children and to those who find learning more difficult. This helps them to make good progress in their learning. This was seen, for example, as the youngest children were withdrawn from a mathematics lesson to work at their own level on a 'shopping' activity, using coins. Good use is made of information technology to support the work in a range of subjects, for example as the lower juniors use CD ROMs to find out about roots as they study plants in science.
17. Teachers assess pupils' attainment and progress well, but they give insufficient written feedback to pupils on what they need to do to improve their work, particularly in the juniors. Very good records are kept of test and assessment results, particularly in English and mathematics and a good 'running record' is kept detailing pupils' achievements and difficulties, based on observations which are made on average twice a term. Good notes are made on daily lesson plans of how the lesson has gone and whether any individuals or groups have experienced any difficulty. Teachers make good use of these notes to help them plan their next steps in teaching. For example, in the infants careful note was taken of the outcomes of discussion at 'news time' to help the teacher plan to meet individuals' learning needs. Assessment information has been used well this year to help identify those pupils in need of additional literacy support in Year 3.

18. Homework is used satisfactorily in the infants and well in the juniors, to support pupils' learning in school, although a significant minority of parents replying to the parents' questionnaire were not satisfied with the work their children have to do at home. Reading books are regularly taken home by all pupils and most reinforce their learning in school as they enjoy reading with parents or carers. Older pupils have regular homework, appropriately related to what they do in class, seen for example in the upper juniors where pupils were set a homework task relating to 'Black Beauty', which they had been studying in an English lesson.

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

19. The school offers a good range of learning opportunities for pupils at both key stages and the quality of provision is also good. Pupils who are under five when they enter the school follow the national desirable learning outcomes and are well prepared to start the National Curriculum programmes of study at the appropriate times.
20. Improvements have been made since the last inspection in the way in which all curriculum policies have been developed. They are now in place for all subjects, with teachers using the guidelines provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to good effect. The time allocation for subjects is in line with the average in both key stages. Planning is very thorough. This ensures that no subject is neglected. There are some well planned links across subjects with opportunities to teach history and design and technology together, for example, in projects on Tudor houses and Egyptian pyramids, and with the use of information technology to support learning, for instance in science lessons.
21. The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully implemented. The school has introduced additional literacy support for pupils in Year 3 who did not perform as well as they should in the end of Key Stage 1 tests last year. The support has helped them to improve their standards in literacy. The school has adapted the programme well to meet the needs of specific pupils. Literacy skills are promoted widely across the curriculum. This is shown in the confident oral skills that most pupils have from an early age. They have opportunities to perform role play in assemblies and in history in both key stages. In geography in Key Stage 2, they write to pupils in different parts of the world, and they have produced a video to send to them. Also at this key stage, older pupils have a regular French oral lesson each week, which prepares them well for their studies at secondary school.
22. The school introduced the National Numeracy Strategy a year earlier than required in order to prepare them better for teaching the new programmes and to help overall curriculum planning. This has proved successful. Some teachers have adapted elements of the National Literacy Strategy to provide more challenge to higher attaining pupils by setting shorter time targets for the tasks in the group sessions. The same practice could usefully be applied to numeracy, especially in Key Stage 1.
23. The curriculum includes good coverage of personal, social and health education at both key stages. Science lessons contribute to pupils' understanding of what constitutes healthy eating. In addition to the planned study of drugs and dangerous substances, the school invites in relevant agencies, such as the police, to give pupils greater awareness of how to combat the risks they may face. There is a clear policy for sex education approved by the governors, and the school nurse supports the school in teaching older pupils when the time is appropriate.



24. There are few pupils with special educational needs but they are well provided for. Their individual education plans are clear and set out brief but suitable targets for them, mainly to improve their literacy skills but also numeracy and physical and social skills. Reviews are regular and all requirements of the Code of Practice on special educational needs are closely followed. The school has established good links with the local education authority's support services.
25. All pupils have equal access to the full curriculum and are included in the school as part of a harmonious family. New pupils are very quickly assimilated. Lessons and displays show that teachers take seriously their responsibility to teach pupils about the issues surrounding gender and race in a multi-cultural society. Boys and girls work and play together with no signs of tension at all.
26. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory for a school of this size, where several pupils are transported to school. Parents are appreciative of the visits that their children receive from theatre companies and peripatetic music teachers. The residential visit for older pupils, and the shorter educational trips for pupils of all ages help them to experience a broader view of such subjects as history, geography and art. There are music groups, good links with the community for drama, and some team games. The headteacher and governors plan appropriately to extend opportunities for more competitive team games with other schools.
27. The school has extensive contact with the community. Indeed, it is seen as a strong presence in the village. Pupils have been involved in many village activities, such as renovating buildings, helping at open days and working with the local sports clubs. There are regular links with the churches. The school is part of a cluster group of similar schools and together they plan curriculum strategies and share ideas on common issues. Teachers work well with the nearby secondary schools and Year 6 pupils are confidently looking forward to moving on next term. They all know what to expect.
28. The school makes good overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is more evident than at the time of the last inspection. Teachers are very effective in raising pupils' awareness of multi-cultural issues in very practical ways.
29. The provision of spiritual education is sound, with more strengths than weaknesses. Assemblies are peaceful and reflective occasions where pupils are allowed to participate in discussions and to think about issues which are important to them and the world generally. Opportunities to extend pupils' imagination and feelings of wonderment are sometimes missed in lessons. However, some boys showed genuine delight when they had made traffic lights work by writing programs on the computer in a control technology experiment. The recent study of major historical events in decades leading up to the millennium also had made an obvious impact on pupils.
30. Pupils' moral education is very good. The whole school works within a clearly understood moral framework and this is reinforced in assemblies and in lessons. Simple moral tales and parables are discussed, and books read in the literacy hour raise moral issues for debate, such as gender and animal rights. The school sponsors a child in Pakistan and this makes pupils aware of many facts about life in countries with contrasting economic and weather conditions.

31. There is very good provision for pupils' understanding of cultural issues. The displays throughout the school keep in their eyes the wide variety of people, religions and beliefs that exist. This is reinforced by the practical activities in geography and history lessons, such as those described above and by the 'pen pal' links with a school in the British Virgin Islands.
32. The very good social provision includes opportunities for pupils to work together as a whole class on large-scale technology problems. In recorder lessons in Key Stage 2, the girls worked very well as a group, sharing ideas, pointing out areas to improve, and taking turns to conduct. Older pupils learn to live together in a different setting when they go to their residential centre and on other visits. At lunch times different age groups sit together and there is a real sense of calmness and family. In the playgrounds and around school, visitors and new pupils are quickly made to feel welcome.

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

33. The school looks after pupils in its care well. Proper attention is paid to pupils' health and safety and the arrangements for child protection are good. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and staff know their pupils well. All this helps to create a good social and learning environment which pupils can benefit from.
34. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory. Although parents are very conscientious in letting the school know if their children are to be away, teachers do not clearly record reasons for absence in the registers.
35. The school has a very effective system for promoting good behaviour and attitudes and believes in recognising and rewarding good effort. This takes place in weekly assemblies and there are also small treats for pupils in the house which collects the most merit points during the term. School rules are simple and few and it is clear that pupils know what they are. The lunch-time supervisors are very clearly involved in the management of pupils and set very good examples for them. They know the pupils very well. As a result, there is no oppressive behaviour in school and the school has not had to exclude any pupils.
36. Pupils' personal development is very well promoted by the opportunities given to pupils. Younger pupils are individually given the responsibility of looking after four-year olds when they visit their class from the playgroup. The school thoughtfully allows parents to let their children attend part-time for the first term to help them settle in. Older pupils are expected to serve and clear away at lunch-time and to help in classrooms during wet playtimes. Good records of pupils' personal development are kept in each class for all pupils and these are very regularly updated so that parents can be kept informed.
37. The school has developed some good procedures for assessing pupils' progress in English and mathematics. This includes using the data from baseline assessments to plan work in reception and from tests at the end of Key Stage 1 to target pupils' extra literacy needs in Year 3. Assessments in subjects such as information technology are less well developed. There are plans to set out targets for individual pupils and to map these using the data more precisely. The school sets realistic end of key stage targets in literacy and mathematics, based on its assessment of the widely differing cohort sizes. Reports to parents meet statutory requirements and are

very detailed and helpful in English and mathematics, clearly showing pupils' strengths and weaknesses.

38. All teachers keep very good records of pupils' progress in individual lessons. They modify their plans to take account of the different rates of progress that pupils make in class. Some teachers give pupils different homework so that they can either consolidate or extend their learning as appropriate. The use of assessment to plan future work is very good.

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

39. Parents have very positive views of the school. All parents say they feel school is very approachable and they are welcome to talk to the headteacher and other staff. The vast majority think that the school works closely with them. One area of slight concern that a few parents have is that they are not well enough informed about how their child is getting on, but the inspection team considers that opportunities for this and the range of information provided are good.
40. The school provides good quality information to parents overall. Reports to parents are very good and regular and let them know how their children need to improve, particularly in English and mathematics. Equally good are newsletters that are sent out each term. These outline which topics pupils will be working on in each class so that parents can be ready to help their child. Parents also have the chance to find out about developments in the curriculum such as the numeracy hour, for example at a mathematics meeting being held in the autumn term. Twice a year they can come in to school to discuss their child's progress formally with teachers, but teachers are also readily available should parents wish to talk to them at other times. Documentation which the school is required to provide for parents, such as the prospectus and the governors' annual report are satisfactory but the last, in particular, is lacking in detail.
41. Parents contribute well to their children's learning at school and at home. Comments are made in reading records which are sent back to school. Parents and friends of the school give regular help with reading and take small groups of pupils, under the teachers' direction, to work on projects such as "healthy eating". They accompany pupils to the swimming baths and on visits out of school. The friends of school association raises money for items such as computer software and is currently working on a project to improve equipment in the playground.

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

42. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher and governors have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and of the priorities for school improvement. They function very effectively as a team. Together, they have a clear commitment to school improvement and a very good capacity to succeed. Governors are keen to see that all pupils are well-prepared for their secondary education and that they are well-behaved and ready to play their part in the life of the community. They fulfil all their statutory responsibilities for school management very well. The very good leadership and management has led to the raising of pupils' standards achieved by the age of 11 in most subjects, including English, mathematics and science, since the last inspection. Since then, the role of

governors has developed substantially. Members of the governing body are very actively involved in the life and work of the school. They monitor teaching and learning and standards in literacy and numeracy and listen to pupils reading. They track the progress of individual pupils who have special educational needs and accompany pupils on school outings.

43. The school publishes a simple, appropriate single aim in its prospectus for parents. This stresses the need to value all pupils equally. The work of the school fully reflects its commitment to good relationships and equality of opportunity for all, regardless of gender, background or ethnicity. This commitment to good relationships is very effective and relationships between pupils are excellent.
44. There is more systematic monitoring of teaching, learning and standards than in most small schools. This aspect of the school's leadership and management is very good. Governors have wisely delegated this role to the headteacher and all teaching staff and appropriately allocated time to allow them to undertake this important role. The headteacher systematically monitors teaching and learning throughout the school, and helpfully shares her evaluations with staff. Other staff with subject responsibilities also monitor teaching and learning and the local education authority's advisory staff monitor and feed back helpfully on lessons. The main emphasis of monitoring is appropriately on literacy, numeracy, science and information technology, but there has been some monitoring of other subjects, for example the music co-ordinator has monitored standards by teaching the subject throughout the school. There has been some appropriate training for staff on how to monitor subjects. The school and governors rigorously monitor standards, carefully analysing and evaluating, for example, national test and assessment results in English, mathematics and science. This is effective in raising standards, for example by identifying those pupils in Year 3 this year who would benefit from additional literacy support.
45. All teachers including the headteacher have been appraised, fully in line with the requirements and recommendations of the local education authority. The school is well advanced in its preparations for the new performance management procedures soon to come into force and governors have been centrally involved in these preparations.
46. Through its school improvement plan the governing body clearly identifies appropriate priorities and targets for school development. A draft school improvement plan is developed by the headteacher and staff and this is presented to the governing body for consideration. At this point governors suggest their own priorities for the plan, for example they recently added the development of information technology to the draft plan. The final plan is discussed and adopted by governors and there is then a process of regular careful monitoring of progress towards targets, this being reviewed by governors in consultation with the headteacher and staff at least termly.
47. The governors and headteacher manage the school's finances very efficiently, taking care to plan well ahead so that the budget set supports their agreed priorities for school improvement. For example, they take care to assess the likely cost of the planned development in information technology. The headteacher takes particular pleasure in financial planning and management and she carries out this function very well. She is ably assisted by a part-time bursar and by the administrative assistant, who carefully administer day-to-day financial matters, such as ordering and paying for goods and services. The governors have an effective and active finance and premises committee and this meets regularly to consider financial statements and monitor the budget. It appropriately reports at least termly to the full governing body.

48. The school makes satisfactory use of information technology in its day-to-day administration, but it is not yet connected to the Internet.
49. The school makes good use of funding specifically allocated to support the learning of pupils who have special educational needs. They are well supported and helped to have access to the full curriculum and make good progress. Additional literacy support has been appropriately funded to help some lower attaining pupils in Year 3 make better progress.
50. There are sufficient numbers of teachers and support staff to teach the full National Curriculum and religious education. There is a good balance of experienced and younger staff. They all share a commitment to school improvement and high achievement and they work very well together as a team. The youngest children and those who find learning more difficult are particularly well supported by teaching and ancillary staff. There are good induction procedures for newly appointed teachers and they are given good support and guidance to help them settle into their role. The school would be well placed to provide initial teacher training.
51. The accommodation provided by the school is good and fully supports the teaching of the curriculum. It is well cared for and attractive, both inside and out. Imaginative solutions have been found to some storage problems. The school has carried out a full audit of resources since the last inspection and resources for all subjects have been enriched. There is a good range of attractive fiction books in classrooms and there is a good varied range of non-fiction books available to pupils in the library. Resources for mathematics are good in quality and quantity. There are too few good quality computers
52. for the teaching and learning of information technology skills, but the school has appropriate plans to remedy this. There is a good range of good quality musical instruments. Resources for other subjects are generally adequate.
53. The governors and headteacher take good care to secure the best possible value for money when obtaining goods and services, for example when they recently purchased new mathematics resources after much careful consideration and comparison of materials available.
54. The cost of educating pupils is above average, but this is usual in small schools. Considering the good standards achieved by the time the pupils leave the school, in English, mathematics and science, the good quality teaching they receive and the excellent personal development and relationships which the school promotes, the school offers very good value for money.

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

In order to improve the quality of education provided and the standards achieved, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:

- See that pupils' work is marked in such a way that they are given clear advice and guidance on what to do to improve;
- Raise expectations of the presentation of pupils' work and encourage them to take more pride in what they produce;
- Ensure secure coverage of the National Curriculum in information technology by applying systematic assessment of pupils' attainment and progress.



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	26
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	25	63	12	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	62
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0
Special educational needs	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6
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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	8	6	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	13	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (100)	93 (83)	93 (100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (89)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	13	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (100)	93 (100)	93 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	8	8	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	7	8
	Girls	8	7	8
	Total	14	14	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (88)	88 (88)	100 (88)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	7	8
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	14	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (63)	94 (64)	100 (69)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (75)

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



### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
lack – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	61
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.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1998-1999
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	£
Total income	133707
Total expenditure	130316
Expenditure per pupil	1946
Balance brought forward from previous year	7932
Balance carried forward to next year	11323

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	69
Number of questionnaires returned	36

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	31	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	33	6	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	47	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	42	17	0	0
The teaching is good.	69	25	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	33	11	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	19	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	42	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	58	31	8	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	72	28	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	44	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	56	44	0	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**

50. The curriculum for the children under five is soundly planned to take account of the national desirable learning outcomes for children by the age of five, and lead into the National Curriculum. Children enter the school with attainment which is broadly average in all the six areas of learning for children under five: personal and social development; language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development. The teaching of the children under five is good and their learning is well supported by the nursery nurse. They make good progress in their learning, and by the age of five the attainment of most pupils exceeds expectations for their age.

**Personal and social development**

51. The children's personal and social development is promoted well. They come in confidently at the start of the day and settle well to an activity. They are proud of the work they do and enjoy showing it to others, including visiting children from the playgroup which meets at the school, and adult visitors. They learn to behave appropriately and parents are pleased to note that they soon start to develop self discipline and control. They are helped to know the difference between right and wrong and they learn to work in groups, to co-operate and share. For example, they enjoy reading about food together as a group in a literacy lesson and follow this up by sharing resources well to make 'breakfast' with play dough. The children are given good opportunities to learn to treat living things with care and concern. For example, they are encouraged to bring in some of their pets in connection with the 'animals' theme being followed for part of the year, and they visit the farm to see the lambs. They are helped to develop their understanding of and sensitivity to others, including those whose customs and beliefs are different from their own. They learn about Judaism in religious education lessons. They collect for the victims of floods and of drought. At Easter the children took part in a whole school Easter drama, taking the role of lambs and the donkey in the story of Palm Sunday. The children are encouraged to develop good personal independence, taking themselves to the toilet unaided. They manage changing for physical education lessons and getting ready to go home or out to play.

**Language and literacy**

52. Language and literacy is promoted well. The children learn to listen attentively and enjoy listening to stories, for example as the whole class reads the story of the 'Pizza Princess' together with the teacher. They have good opportunities to talk about some of their experiences, about their families and past and present events of importance to them, so increasing their vocabulary and speaking skills. For example, at 'news time' they talk about what they have been doing at home, what they have done at the weekend, recount visits to the doctor or dentist and one girl told about her hearing test. The children enjoy using books. They know how books 'work' – that print carries meaning, that we read from left to right and from the top of the page to the bottom in English and that pages turn. They recognise their own name on coat pegs and on their work storage drawers. The use of a good published phonics scheme helps the children recognise the letters of the alphabet by shape and sound, for example as they enjoy learning about the letter 'H' with the aid of the 'Hairy Hat Man'. By the time they

are five more than half of the children write their name with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters. For example, they write their name to label their own pictures.

## **Mathematics**

53. Mathematical skills are promoted well. The children have many good opportunities to use mathematical language such as 'more than', 'less than', 'bigger', 'smaller', 'full' and 'empty', for example as they play with balances, in the water tray and 'shopping'. They recognise and create mathematical patterns, for instance as they thread beads and produce repeating patterns on the computer. They are familiar with many counting games and rhymes, such as 'Ten green bottles' and 'One, two, three, four, five'. By the age of five they recognise and order the numbers one to ten, for instance as they help the 'counting puppet' to get the numbers in the right order, and as they arrange the numbers on the 'washing line'. As they solve practical number problems they start to develop an awareness of number operations such as addition and subtraction. For example, they sort the bears into red bears and blue bears, and work out how many of each there are, how many more red ones than blue ones, and how many altogether.

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

54. The school promotes well the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. They go on regular walks around the village and look at new buildings, the shapes of doors and windows and count the railings, for example. They look at similarities and differences in what they see, at patterns and change, for instance as new buildings go up. They talk about what they see and sometimes record these experiences, often by drawing, writing or both. They have made models of some of the buildings they have seen. They have good opportunities to explore and select a range of materials and equipment, for example as they make 'junk' models, developing skills such as cutting, joining, folding and sticking. The children make good use of the computer, for example they sort mathematical shapes, sort pictures into 'fruit' and 'vegetables' and enjoy dressing the teddy, which involves developing mouse control skills.

## **Physical development**

55. Physical development is promoted well. The children have good opportunities for large muscle control and development, for example as they climb and balance with increasing confidence, using the large apparatus in the school hall. There are no large wheeled toys for their use, but they occasionally bring in their own from home. Through the use of tools such as scissors and glue spreaders, pencils, pens and paint brushes, they develop good small muscle control.

## **Creative development**

56. The children's creative development is promoted well. They have good opportunities to explore sound, for example as they follow the 'sound' topic they experiment with making sounds using bottles, empty, full and half-full. They make their own instruments, such as shakers, and record some of the sounds they make. They make models, paint, use malleable materials such as papier mache, clay and play dough. They dance, for example to the 'Let's Move' tape, and make up dances based on some of the stories they have heard.

## **ENGLISH**

57. Standards in English are inconsistent from year to year because the intake varies greatly in size, and in small cohorts a few pupils with higher or lower attainment and those with special educational needs can unduly influence test and assessment results. At present there are only eight pupils aged seven and six aged 11, one of whom has joined the school this half-term. Comparisons with 1999 test and assessment results must therefore be treated with caution. In 1999, reading was in line with the national average but well below similar schools at the age of seven. In writing, however, standards were above the national average and in line with similar schools. Over the last three years results in reading have fluctuated widely but writing has always been above or well above the national average. Although the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level 2 in 1999 was well above average, fewer than the average proportion of pupils reached the higher levels and the average points score was, therefore lower.
58. At the age of 11 in 1999, standards in English were in line with the national average but well below similar schools' results. In previous years, the school's results were well above the national average. Again, the percentage reaching the higher level in 1999 brought down the average points score, even though a much higher than average proportion of pupils reached the expected level, Level 4.
59. Inspection evidence shows that in lessons and work observed, attainment by the age of seven is above expectations in all aspects of the subject. Pupils come into school with average levels of competence in literacy and they make good progress by the end of Year 2. By the time the pupils leave the school at the age of 11, speaking and listening and reading skills are above expectations. Pupils produce the standard of written work expected for their age. They too make good progress overall. Sometimes their writing is let down by careless presentation. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into classes and the work set allows them to achieve well.
60. In speaking and listening, pupils in the infants' class get good opportunities to practise different oral tasks. The teaching uses a very good range of resources to stimulate discussion, such as asking pupils to explain to various puppets how to pronounce words correctly. This activity also reinforces pupils' command of spelling as they have to repeat blends of letter sounds. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in these activities. In groups most pupils show a wide understanding of vocabulary. In speaking about the books they read, many display a mature grasp of the structure of a story and they can say why certain characters behave in a particular way.
61. Pupils in the juniors continue to develop this confidence in oral work. They answer questions at length and can draw inferences about story settings from the language that writers use, recognising some irony and exaggeration. This was seen in discussions about the issues raised in novels by Anne Fine and Anna Sewell.
62. Reading is good throughout the school. Pupils keep records of their reading which teachers update and which parents can see each week. Reading homework is regularly set and younger pupils have support from adult helpers in school. The supply of fiction is good, with very attractive modern stories and poetry on display and available to children. All pupils can work out the sounds of letters and also use a range of other clues to help them recognise new words. The most confident read excellently with dramatic expression, bringing the stories to life. All are keen to read in class. Most pupils have good research skills and use dictionaries and information technology, such as CD ROMs and thesauruses, to support their project work.

63. Writing is good in the infants and more variable in the juniors, although higher attaining pupils succeed in writing some lively extended stories in this key stage in response to challenging titles set by their teachers. By the age of seven, pupils use writing frameworks to good effect and produce interesting ideas following an accurate sequence, on topics such as stories of mystery. They are prepared to try out different and imaginative new vocabulary of increasing complexity, spelling words phonetically. They start their stories very well and can write in clear sentences. More accomplished writers use speech marks effectively. The main weakness is in sustaining a narrative to the end. Most endings tend to fall a little flat.
64. In the juniors, the most able write well. Adaptations of "The Pied Piper" and from Conan Doyle stories are well crafted. One pupil captured the atmosphere of the Sherlock Holmes era, using phrases like "old boy" and "walking briskly into the tea-room of the steam train". Her mastery of tone and pace was very well maintained. Other pupils lack this consistency but try hard. Spelling is at least sound overall, but presentation could be more careful. Pupils in both key stages are given the chance to write in a range of styles and they are especially clear in their factual writing.
65. Teachers promote an awareness of literacy across the curriculum. In history and geography pupils have the chance to write from different perspectives. They are provided with real audiences for their letters and they are encouraged to use computers to check their work and to draft some pieces. They use writing frames in design and technology. The additional literacy programme is proving very useful for lower attaining pupils in Year 3, where many are starting to show gains in their reading competence due to a challenging but structured programme supported by classroom assistants.
66. Pupils show good attitudes to English in all classes. They respond well to firm teaching where the objectives of the lesson are made clear. Some younger ones still need to concentrate more in the whole class activity but they work hard in their groups especially when the work extends them. Pupils in the school show a real sense of independence and get on with their individual projects promptly and with no fuss.
67. The quality of teaching is never less than good and there are some very good features. The good teaching contributes to positive attitudes and good standards in English. There is uniformly good planning and teachers know their subject well. They have a significant presence in the classroom. Their questions take into account the level of understanding of different pupils, and teachers assess progress as the lesson unfolds. This ensures that pupils with special educational needs are fully involved. These pupils are receiving good guidance, especially in their reading comprehension.
68. Some of best features of the teaching are the clever use of resources backed up by attractive display, and the teachers' genuine enthusiasm for the work. Teachers give the pupils interesting things to do so that they are keen to take part in the lessons. The plenary sessions in the literacy hour usually offer the pupils something extra to think about and do not simply reiterate what has been done. The homework set is often different according to what individual pupils are capable of. There are no significant weaknesses in the teaching of English.
69. Since the last inspection the school has taken steps to develop pupils' oral skills and to improve their reading fluency. Pupils are also more competent in their use of information books and the tasks given to them are more purposeful. The library is much more attractive and enticing than reported last time. Standards of presentation

remain an area for improvement. The school has done well to raise standards in English, considering that most pupils come to school with average skills in literacy.

## **MATHEMATICS**

70. In the 1999 national tests and assessments for 11 year olds, standards in mathematics were above average compared to all schools nationally and average compared to similar schools, that is to say, schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Inspection evidence shows that attainment in mathematics is currently above average overall, although there are only a small number of pupils of this age at present and attainment varies from one to another. The school feels that the comparison with 'similar' schools is misleading, as the true proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is not known. Experience of inspecting small village schools suggests that this is likely to be true. By the age of seven, standards in the 1999 tests and assessments were well below average compared to all schools and similar schools. The inspection shows that standards have risen since then, although comparisons must be treated with caution because of the small number of pupils aged seven at the present. Although attainment varies considerably from one pupil to another, overall standards are average. The rise in standards is likely to be due to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, which the school started to teach a year early, and which has now been in place for very nearly two years. Standards are currently higher by the age of 11, and similar by the age of seven, to those found at the time of the last inspection.
71. The 11 year olds are adept at mental calculation and they have plenty of good experience of this type of work every day. They all double and halve four-digit numbers in their head. They multiply decimals and give answers correct to two decimal places. They collect data, for example carrying out a chocolate bar survey, and analyse the data they gather and represent it in a graph. They know about equivalent fractions and percentages, and can work out, for example, that one-half is equal to 0.5 and 50 per cent and that one-quarter is equal to 25 per cent or 0.25. This exceeds expectations of attainment for their age. In a good lesson seen on experimental probability, upper junior pupils collected data on the outcomes of events such as casting dice. By the end of the lesson the younger and less able pupils could use and understand the language of probability, such as 'fair', 'certain' and 'likely/unlikely' and the 11 year olds could use a fractional scale to represent probability outcomes.
72. Seven year olds also have good regular opportunities for mental calculation. For example, they enjoy competing against the timer as they play a 'follow me' game, reading out problems of addition and subtraction and solving them quickly in their head. They add money to 20 pence and work out change in 'shopping' problems. They double numbers from two to 20. They know what a fraction is and can use halves and quarters. All this work is at the level expected of seven year olds.
73. The teaching of mathematics to the oldest pupils is very good. Class control and discipline are very good. This means that pupils are well-behaved, quiet and attentive and are able to get on well and concentrate, and so they use their time well for learning and make good progress. Good use is made of time limits to encourage pupils to work hard and stay on task. Questioning is used very well to involve all pupils in whole-class explanations and demonstrations, such as that seen on experimental probability. Lessons are well planned, setting out clearly what it intended pupils will learn. This enables the teacher to focus closely on learning and so promotes good progress. Pupils' understanding of their own learning is promoted well as the

objectives of lessons are shared with them at the outset and referred to again at the end of the lesson. Good notes are taken of how lessons have gone and of any difficulties experienced by individual pupils, so that planning for subsequent lessons can focus on what needs to be done next. The marking of pupils' work is a weakness. It does not give pupils enough feedback on what they do and advice on what to do to improve.

74. The teaching of the infants is satisfactory. Tasks are well matched to the age, abilities and interests of pupils, enabling them to make satisfactory progress in their learning. There is some good use of assessment to help plan future teaching, seen for example where a lesson on counting was modified in light of difficulties experienced by pupils the previous day. The pace of lessons is not always as brisk as it might be and so pupils are not always fully engaged and working hard. Although class control is satisfactorily secure, some pupils can be restless and fidgety during whole-class teaching and they are not always as well controlled as they might be. Marking is a weakness. It gives pupils too little feedback on what they have done and too little advice on what they need to do to improve.
75. The headteacher leads mathematics well as co-ordinator, and the staff co-operate together well in managing the subject. The headteacher monitors teaching and learning, and the local education authority's advisor and the numeracy governor monitor and give helpful feedback to staff to help them improve their performance.

## **SCIENCE**

76. In the 1999 national tests and assessments for 11 year olds, standards in science were well above average compared to all schools nationally and compared to similar schools. Comparisons year-on-year must be treated with caution in this small school. The number of pupils varies markedly from year to year and results can be skewed by one or two pupils' higher or lower attainment. The present upper junior class contains only six 11 year olds and one of these is a newcomer to the school this half term. The inspection shows that their attainment varies from one to another, but overall standards in science are above average. At both key stages, standards have improved since the last inspection.
77. Teachers' assessments of pupils' standards in science at the age of seven in 1999 showed that an average proportion of pupils reached the expected level and a much higher than average proportion reached the higher level of the National Curriculum, although this represented only two pupils. Inspection evidence shows that standards vary amongst the eight pupils currently at this stage, but overall they are above average.
78. By the time they leave the school at the age of 11 pupils know about the components that make up electrical circuits. They can use a diagram with the correct scientific symbols to represent circuits with varying components. They know about resistance in a circuit and that the more bulbs there are in series the dimmer each bulb will burn. They know that some substances conduct electricity and others do not and they understand what 'conduction' means. They know about seed dispersal and its role in the reproduction of plants and what photosynthesis is and that it takes place in the green part of a plant. Pupils learn about the human heart and the circulation of the blood. They know the major functions of the heart and in this respect their attainment exceeds expectations for their age. They know that the pulse is a measure of heart rate. Pupils have very good opportunities to find out what happens to the heart and pulse rates after exercise, as they compare their pulse before and after skipping,



jumping and touching their toes. They know that the blood circulates around the body and to and from the lungs. They know that the lungs exchange carbon dioxide in the blood for oxygen and that the muscles need more oxygen during exercise and therefore the heart beats faster. Pupils know that arteries carry oxygenated blood and veins carry de-oxygenated blood.

79. Seven year olds know about some of the conditions necessary for plant growth. They plant seeds in various different situations, for example with or without water or light, and observe what happens to them. In a good lesson on healthy eating pupils displayed a good knowledge and understanding of appropriate vocabulary, such as 'energy', 'pulses' and 'dairy products'. They understand that the body needs water for life. Pupils build well on their knowledge and understanding of plants in the lower juniors, for example as they experiment with osmosis by placing white flowers and sticks of celery in food dye and watch them change colour. They understand that plants take in water through their roots and that water is transported through the stem to other parts of the plant.
80. The teaching of science is very good in the upper juniors and good in the rest of the school. The best lessons feature very good, clear planning, which sets out clear and appropriate learning objectives. They are characterised by very good subject knowledge and understanding, which enables teachers to explain and demonstrate things very clearly and so promote good learning. For example, in an upper junior lesson on the circulation of the blood very effective use was made of jugs of water to illustrate how much blood the heart pumps around the body. Pupils were fascinated to see this and it helped their understanding and retention very well. Teachers make good use of information technology to support pupils' learning in science. For example, the infants sort objects into fruit and vegetables on the computer, and the younger juniors use CD ROMs competently to find out about plants' roots. Assessment information is helpfully noted down on daily planning sheets and used to help teachers plan their next steps in teaching. The marking of pupils' work does not give them enough advice on what they need to do to improve, and this is a weakness.
81. Science is co-ordinated well and staff co-operate well together to manage the subject as a team. The subject co-ordinator has been trained to monitor teaching and learning and will make a start on this next term.

## **ART**

82. Standards of achievement in art are better than reported at the time of the last inspection. Pupils now produce the standard of work expected of them at the end of both key stages.
83. In the infants, teachers integrate the elements of art and craft and design well, enabling pupils to produce some careful pieces of collage work using a range of different fabrics and materials. Their observational drawings are good, with particularly vivid depictions of musical instruments, such as the recorder. In science they have drawn accurate representations of flowers and seeds, showing good powers of concentration and an eye for detail. Some have used a range of media to

show the different parts of their chosen plants more clearly. Large scale painting work is often bold and shows pupils' ability to mix colours and to control their paint brushes. Reception pupils, under the close support of the nursery nurse, have produced very effective three-dimensional models of fruit, which they use as part of their resources for learning about number. Older pupils in the infants produce posters in science to show the benefits of eating healthy foods.

84. In both the infants and the juniors, teachers take the opportunity to allow pupils to practise their art skills alongside other subjects. In information technology, they have good opportunities to use art programs to develop their understanding of colour, line and texture in paintings. In history in the juniors, there are clear portraits of Henry VIII and his wives. Pupils have designed houses from ancient Egypt and painted them in bright colours which replicate the period and locality very well. As a display they make an attractive tableau. On residential field trips, pupils in the older classes use the opportunity to observe and draw large-scale objects such as churches. Their efforts are reasonably well controlled, though some pupils struggle to understand perspective.
85. All pupils enjoy art and show none of the frustrations reported last time. They are confident and experiment with a range of media. They control a variety of tools well and work safely. Pupils of all ages offer constructive comments about each other's work. Those with special educational needs enjoy their art work and take a full part in all lessons making good progress.
86. The teaching is always at least satisfactory. Some of the teaching in the juniors has very good features, such as ensuring that pupils know what they have previously achieved before moving on to developing the next stage of their work. The pace is brisk and pupils produce a lot of work by the end of lessons. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves about the different media to use to get the best results. In the infants, they are given good stimulus material to copy. Throughout the school teachers give pupils a good grounding in the lives and works of famous artists.. Displays tie in the different periods in history, music and art, such as Renaissance, classical and modern periods. The work of Seurat, Dali and Monet is displayed to show pupils the range of techniques that can be used. As a result, some effective "impressionist" paintings have been produced.
87. Guidelines to support the subject are satisfactory and teachers use the support material from other agencies well to supplement their understanding of art. The subject is well co-ordinated.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

88. At the time of the last inspection standards in design and technology were below average by the age of 11 and no judgement was made about standards in the infants. The school has reviewed its provision and taken appropriate advice from the local education authority's advisory service. There has been some helpful staff training. As a result, standards have risen in the juniors where they now exceed expectations. In the infants, standards meet national expectations by the age of seven. No teaching was seen in the infants and only one lesson was observed in the upper juniors. The teaching seen was good, with good clear demonstrations and explanations of skills to be used as pupils worked on constructing a pyramid. Pupils enjoyed the lesson and worked hard and with great enthusiasm. They gained a lot from the good level of challenge offered by the task, and learned a lot from their struggles to construct a

pyramid. Judgements on standards are based on the one lesson seen, the scrutiny of pupils' work at both key stages and the examination of teachers' planning.

89. In the infants, pupils have made model houses in lessons which linked well with their work in history and geography, as they learned, for example, what homes were like long ago. The lower juniors have made very effective Tudor houses in connection with their work in history. The upper juniors have designed a World War II propaganda poster in connection with their work in history. They have designed and made a flying aeroplane and helpfully evaluated their design. They made pop-up books telling the Easter story, using at least two different pop-up techniques.
90. Design and technology is enthusiastically and ably co-ordinated by a part-time member of staff and all staff contribute effectively to its management.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

91. No teaching of geography was observed in the infants. Judgements made are based on the scrutiny of work completed and talking to pupils. This shows that they have covered the work planned and that they are reaching satisfactory standards. Some of the work in geography is linked to religious education, for example, in looking at the jobs of people who help them. Pupils have a clear idea about the location of their school, the various rooms in the school and they learn how to explain directions to their home. The journey that Barnaby Bear made from their home corner to the residential centre was recorded in photographs for the younger pupils by pupils in Year 6. The infants were then able to give their opinions on the make-up of a range of geographical features such as waterfalls, caves and steep cliffs. In talking about their holidays, teachers make pupils aware of the different locations of places in the world.
92. In the juniors standards of achievement are often above expectations. Geography is taught in a very practical way, drawing relevant connections with history and English. Teachers have created excellent links with other countries and have built up a good resource bank to aid pupils' understanding of different places, their climate, their economy and their people. The school sponsors a child from Pakistan, and pupils have a very good knowledge of this area. In lessons in Years 3 and 4, they can talk with assurance about the importance of road links to industry and, at a basic level, describe the difference in the daily life of a village in Pakistan and their own village.
93. In Years 5 and 6, 'pen pal' links with the British Virgin Islands have resulted in most pupils having a good knowledge of that region. The teacher has used this interest to make sure that pupils' knowledge of world geography, especially weather conditions, is good. She regularly tests their knowledge of different places and climate regions.
94. Pupils carry out field work in the locality and on a residential field trip, and these occasions help them to extend their knowledge of the character of the British landscape. They learn how to use Ordnance Survey maps and world atlases. Some have trouble with explaining how to interpret an index reference to locate a place, and they are not all totally clear about how to use the co-ordinates of latitude and longitude.
95. Pupils enjoy geography because it is practically taught and they can see the purpose of their work. They work hard and have a genuine interest in finding out about different countries and life styles. The subject makes a valuable contribution to their social, moral and cultural, especially multi-cultural, education.

96. The teaching observed was always good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and they plan well, using resources to good effect. They set challenging work such as expecting pupils to produce a video showing the main features of their village. They reinforce pupils' oral skills in discussion, setting questions which make them think. Lessons are well structured in that they build on pupils' earlier learning, giving them the knowledge and confidence to develop their ideas.
97. The subject is well co-ordinated and, since the last inspection, standards have been maintained at the age of seven and are improving by the age of 11.

## **HISTORY**

98. No teaching of history was observed in the infants but from pupils' written work and their understanding shown in responses to questions, standards of achievement are judged to be as expected for their age. Pupils have looked at the toys they have and how they are different from those in their parents' childhood. Teachers have organised visits to a local museum to let them see the changes that have taken place in the type of toys and games from different periods of history. Other local visits have raised their awareness of changes over time. For instance, they have compared the different types of housing in the village and talked about them from an historical point of view. In a topic on holidays pupils have looked at the different costumes people wore at the start of the twentieth century. They also looked at the difference between post cards then and now.
99. By the age of 11, standards of achievement are often above expectations. When studying the Tudor period, pupils have done good extended writing on what conditions were like. Some of their diaries show a good understanding and empathy with people of that time and the great gap between the rich and the poor. They have also written a log of the "Golden Hind" and considered the plight of those who went to live in the new world. Older pupils have done a lot of research into Ancient Egypt. In their lessons and in talking about their work, they show that they have learned a lot about the life of the pharaohs. Teachers have linked this work appropriately with a geographical study of the River Nile.
100. The teaching of history observed was very good. The displays around the school show that the teaching of history has a high profile. Time lines are much in evidence and pupils have studied major historical events in the decades leading up to the millennium. Pupils respond to the work very enthusiastically. For example, in a discussion on the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamen, they eagerly and independently set off to check the accuracy of their facts, using a variety of sources in the library, in the classroom display and on the CD ROMs. The teacher made pupils think for themselves. She set very precise time limits for their work and then reinforced their learning afterwards by checking their understanding of certain words. She was particularly effective in ensuring that pupils with special educational needs were given appropriate tasks. These matched the areas of need described in the individual education plans.
101. The success of history teaching and the good standards of work are directly linked to the enthusiasm and knowledge of the teachers. Since the last inspection the school has been keen to stretch the pupils' independent research skills and this has been largely achieved.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

102. Judgements on information technology are largely based on the evidence of pupils' individual activities, pair work and the observation of small groups, together with discussions with teachers and pupils about their work. Some evidence was gained from the work scrutiny.
103. Attainment at the end of both key stages is securely in line with national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress in most aspects of the subject. Some pupils make good progress in word processing in the infants, and in control technology in the juniors. Pupils with special educational needs similarly make sound progress overall. Teachers introduce pupils to the full range of information and communications technology, including media equipment such as cameras, sound recorders and video recorders.
104. In the infants, most pupils are confident in their work on the computer and understand what they are required to do. For instance, a boy in Year 1 was able to describe clearly how an art program worked. He demonstrated techniques for enlarging lines, for changing colours and for rubbing out unwanted sections without any assistance. They can all use the word processor for drafting their stories and news items.
105. In literacy and numeracy lessons most boys and girls show independence in loading and saving programs to support their work. They can operate the programs themselves and keep a record of what they have done by printing out their results when necessary. There was less evidence of pupils producing pictograms or using control aspects of the subject with a floor turtle, for example. Most pupils are secure in using the computer to create pictures in art, and they understand that computers can help them to find a range of information quickly.
106. In the juniors, pupils consolidate their skills in word processing and are more adept at using the computer to check their work. They are encouraged by their teachers to experiment with different fonts to create writing for different purposes such as newspapers, poems, letters and stories. In English they used the computer to lay out a poster presenting the rules for using the apostrophe, to display in the classroom.
107. Some of the work in the scrutiny showed evidence of pupils mingling text and pictures. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 had produced good projects on how CD ROMs can be used to find out information. They understood that it is possible to access different files to build a larger picture according to the type of information that is required. In a history lesson they used a CD ROM without prompting as part of an investigation into the discovery of Tutunkhamen
108. Pupils were able to describe how they had created different pictorial representations of their various surveys. For instance, some had produced graphs, while others had decided to use bar charts and pie charts. Older pupils had made a video of their village in a geography project and this had been sent to a twin school in the British Virgin Islands. Also in geography, they had printed out rainfall charts showing the contrasting temperatures between two locations. Others talked about how the Internet and email systems work, although the school does not yet have these facilities. They could explain technical terms like "modem", "web-sites" and "server" with clarity. Pupils were observed working in pairs with a teacher to learn about how to control traffic lights using on and off switches. By the end of a short session they could write simple programs to operate the procedure, learning the correct terminology as they did so.

109. Pupils are enthusiastic users of information technology and during most play times and lunch times they take the opportunity to use the computers for a variety of activities. For example, they play a detective game which obliges them to use their knowledge of maps and geography generally to solve certain problems. All are able to operate computers confidently. They show a real interest in the wonders of modern technology and studying the subject adds to their understanding of the developing world.
110. Little direct teaching was observed but teachers are competent in their knowledge of information technology and have ensured that all aspects of the National Curriculum are covered. They are well supported by a volunteer teacher coming in to work with small groups of pupils in the upper juniors for a short period each week. The school plans show that more support for the training of teachers in information technology is a priority. With the introduction of extra funding from next term the subject should assume a higher profile. The only real shortcoming is that assessments of pupils' attainment in the different elements of information technology are informal rather than based on secure evidence. As a result the school has no real record of how well each pupil has progressed over time.
111. The school has managed to improve certain aspects of the subject since the last inspection. The main improvement is in the planned range of applications for information technology which now take place across the curriculum.

## **MUSIC**

112. Only two lessons were available for observation during the inspection, both in the juniors. Both lessons seen were recorder playing sessions and in the upper juniors only girls took part. Judgements can only be made about the performing element of music, and only at Key Stage 2. In the lessons seen the teaching was good and standards of performance exceeded expectations for pupils of this age. In this respect, standards are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection. An examination of teachers' planning shows that all the required elements of the National Curriculum are planned for satisfactorily. The pupils sing enthusiastically in assembly and they listen to music as they enter and leave the hall. In the infants, much music is taught incidentally, for example as the teacher and pupils sing the register.
113. Music is effectively co-ordinated by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable member of staff. The school has a good range of good quality musical instruments. The music curriculum is enriched for some pupils by instrumental tuition, for example on the saxophone.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

114. Only one games lesson was seen during the inspection, in the lower juniors. The teaching seen was good, based on sound subject knowledge and understanding, which enabled the teacher to give clear demonstrations of ball control techniques in hockey, and promoted good learning. The standards of pupils' work were in line with expectations for their age, and similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. The scrutiny of teachers' planning shows that the full National Curriculum is planned for. There are swimming lessons, as required for the older pupils.

115. The school has adequate resources for physical education and there is a hall for gymnastics lessons, with appropriate balancing and climbing apparatus, and an adequate field.