

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

**The Cooper Perry Primary School**  
Seighford

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique Reference Number: 124195

Headteacher: Mr S Hall

Reporting inspector: Mrs C A Field  
9479

Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707783

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
Type of control	County
Age range of pupils	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
School address	Seighford Stafford ST18 9PQ
Telephone number:	01785 282210
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr W Brown
Date of the previous inspection:	December 1995

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs C A Field Registered Inspector	Equality of opportunity	Attainment and progress Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Teaching Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Dr J Telfer Lay Inspector		Attendance Support, guidance and welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and resources
Mr D R Carrington	Mathematics Information and communications technology History Geography	Leadership and management The efficiency of the school
Mrs P Patterson	English Art Design and technology Physical education Swimming	The curriculum and assessment
Mr G Warner	Science Music Religious education Special educational needs Provision for children under five	

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- Very good provision is made for pupils in their early years, and this gets them off to a flying start in their schooling.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in mathematics, information and communications technology and science are above the national average.
- The quality of teaching was never less than satisfactory in the lessons seen, and good overall, although more consistently good or better in pre-Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils make good progress over time.
- The teaching and learning in science and music are strengths in the school.
- The pupils' behaviour is very good, they develop very good relationships with other pupils and the staff, and have good attitudes to work and life in school. This ensures that a very purposeful working atmosphere is achieved.
- Very good quality provision is made for the pupils with special educational needs, and this enables them to make good progress against individual targets.
- Good overall provision is made for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Wide community involvement contributes very effectively to the breadth of the pupils' experiences.
- The school gives a warm welcome to parents and friends: a very effective 'army of helpers' makes a significant contribution to the quality of the teaching and learning, and this is a strength.
- The school management is highly efficient and effective in setting a clear agenda for future action, and is well placed to make improvements.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. The drive to raise standards, especially in English and at Key Stage 1 in particular, has not been forceful enough.
- II. The pace in a few lessons, and levels of challenge, especially for higher attaining pupils, are inconsistent
- III. The use of assessment in setting targets and in providing information to parents lacks sharp focus.

**Cooper Perry is a good school that enables the pupils to leave with a good all-round education by the time they are eleven. The weaknesses identified above are far outweighed by what the school does well, but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.**

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

Since the last inspection, major staffing changes, together with the headteacher's time-consuming involvement with the PFI project, have slowed down the progress made in responding to key issues raised. Standards have not yet been raised to the level anticipated. Issues concerning monitoring and evaluation work have yet to be fully addressed. From the beginning of this term, a new thrust has been given to tackling the priority areas for development. Clear focus has been given to what needs to be done to improve quality. The appointment of a new deputy headteacher, two new teachers and re-allocation of roles and responsibilities amongst the staff are already making a difference in improving the quality of education, and moving the school forward. The teaching is better than it was at the time of the previous inspection, the team of staff works very effectively together and morale is very high. The implementation of national literacy and numeracy strategies has been positive. Changes made to the curriculum, and to how English and mathematics are taught, show good indications of helping to lift standards to the levels projected. The school's capacity to make sustained improvement is good.

## Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
			<i>Well above average</i> <i>A</i> <i>Above average</i>  <i>Average</i> <i>C</i> <i>Below average</i>  <i>well below average</i> <i>E</i>
English	C	E	
Mathematics	B	C	
Science	B	C	

The findings from inspection show that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are average in English, and above average in mathematics and science. Preliminary analyses of the 1999 National test results shown in the above table, confirm the findings of inspection. National test results at Key Stage 1 are not as good as in Key Stage 2. Standards at Key Stage 2 in information technology are above average and in religious education they meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

## Quality of teaching

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

The teaching is better than when the school was inspected previously. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed in the eighty observations made. In just over three-quarters of lessons, the teaching was of good or better quality, and in a quarter it was very good or better. The quality of the teaching is good overall and occasionally it is outstanding. The best teaching was in the early years, in Year 4 and in Year 6. The music teaching is of a particularly high calibre. Science is consistently taught to a good or better standard throughout the school and results in above average standards achieved at both key stages. Strong features of the very best teaching are confident, well planned methods, very good subject knowledge, good management of pupils, and lessons that are firmly based on the needs of all pupils. However, the teaching would be further improved by sharing the very best practice more widely and by raising expectations of what pupils can potentially achieve. The pace in some lessons, particularly in group-work needs to be quickened. Work in assessing how well the objectives set for learning assist subsequent target setting lacks consistency.

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

### Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good. The pupils show respect for one another and for adults, and are courteous and polite. High levels of self-discipline and very positive attitudes to work underpin their very good responses to learning.
Attendance	Good. The pupils enjoy coming to school and almost always arrive on time.
Ethos*	Very good. Cooper Perry is a school where everyone works hard and there is a strong determination to succeed.
Leadership and management	Good. The headteacher gives very purposeful and successful leadership, and is building a united team of governors and staff who have the best interests of the pupils at heart.
Curriculum	Good. The pupils are given reasonable access to a broad, balanced and enriched curriculum. The procedures in place for assessing the pupils' attainment and the use of the information gathered are although successful in keeping track of progress, but they are not yet sufficiently tied into target setting work.
Pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The pupils with special educational needs are identified appropriately and very effective provision meets their needs through well-devised individual education plans.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. A very good set of values and principles are taught. The staff are positive role models and pupils are successfully enabled to become responsible future citizens.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good. The school's attention to the appointment, support and development of all its staff and volunteers makes a significant contribution to the good quality of education provided. The resources are adequate. The school makes imaginative and purposeful use of unsatisfactory accommodation.
Value for money	Good. The resources are very well managed, funding is targeted well at essential provision and the quality of education is good. Since the pupils make good progress to above average standards, in most subjects, the school gives good value for money.

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

### The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the School	What some parents are not happy about
IV. The positive way in which the school involves them in the education of their children. V. The good quality of education provided and high standards achieved. VI. The very good standards of behaviour expected and achieved. VII. The 'family values' and caring ethos promoted. VIII. That children like school and are keen to attend.	IX. The staff absences having a negative impact on X. Job share arrangements. XI. Inconsistent homework practice.

Eighteen parents attended a meeting with the registered inspector and thirty-four per cent of parents responded to a questionnaire. The parents were overwhelmingly positive in their comments. Those who have criticisms were also very strong in their belief that the school is doing a good job. The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. The team recognises that staff absence is a cause of concern but finds that the school is doing all that it reasonably can to alleviate the impact this has



on the pupils' progress. The job-share arrangements work very successfully and the pupils in these classes are getting a very good deal. Homework practice has been given attention and is now more consistent. However the expectations for each group are not expressed sufficiently clearly to be useful to parents.

## · **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

In building for the future, and in working towards lifting standards to levels that compare more favourably to similar schools, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

### **1. Build on the undoubted strengths of the teaching to ensure that all pupils reach their personal best at a demanding pace, especially in English, by:**

- sharing and exchanging the best practice in the teaching in school;
- raising all the teachers' expectations to the best level found in the school about what pupils, especially high attainers, can achieve and how much work can be completed;
- making more consistent the use of precise learning objectives which take account of the range of pupils in a class or group;
- involving the pupils more in self-assessment so that they know how to improve their work;
- tying the teachers' assessment of how well pupils are learning across the curriculum more securely into the targets being projected for their next steps in learning.

(Found in paragraphs 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 31, 36, 43, 102, 105, 106, 107, 110, 112, 118, 120, 123, 142, 156, 166, 171, 179))

### **1. Enhance monitoring systems so that all staff are actively involved in establishing the strengths and weaknesses of standards, progress and provision by:**

- continuing to give time to staff to undertake observations of classroom practice, so that everyone has awareness of how the curriculum is being taught and learnt;
- giving time, opportunity and training to ensure that the teachers have the necessary skills to analyse the detailed information being collected to assist target setting;
- sharing targets with parents in written reports in the core subjects;
- ensuring that the various strategies being pursued to improve language and literacy skills are dovetailed, and that there is awareness of the impact each of these is having on individual progress;
- making more regular use of the information gathered to check that school targets are likely to be met.

(Found in paragraphs 13, 21, 32, 34, 37, 40, 42, 43, 51, 63, 65, 66, 112, 125, 126, 143, 167, 172, 173)

The following are not key issues but other matters for governors to take on board in their action plan:

- ♦ Undertaking more systematic assessment of risks, and fencing off the pond to make it safe; (Paragraph 54)
- ♦ Attending to training in child protection matters; (Paragraph 54).
- ♦ Monitoring the impact on their learning overall when some pupils miss parts of lessons for music or additional basic skills support; (Paragraph 57, 64)
- ♦ Reviewing the prospectus, the governors' annual written report to parents and the individual pupil reports to make sure they contain the required detail in the information provided. (Paragraph 67)

## .. INTRODUCTION

### .. Characteristics of the school

1. The Cooper Perry Primary School is situated to the east of Stafford and serves the local village communities of Seighford, Derrington, Great Bridgeford and Whitgreave. The school is slightly smaller than most primary schools with 185 pupils on roll: 97 girls and 88 boys aged from four to eleven years. Admission arrangements follow the local education authority guidance, and the children enter the pre-reception class in the term after their fourth birthday. Thirteen children in the pre-reception class were attending mornings only during the week of inspection, and there were six children under five in the reception class. Most of the children who start in the reception class have experienced pre-school education. Standards on entry are average overall.
2. Seventeen pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and this is below average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need and receive specific support. No pupils in the school speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is low compared to the national average. Parents show a keen interest in the work of the school, and many give valued support to its daily life.
3. The school is very popular, and the number on roll has risen over the last few years. Some rooms are cramped and space is at a premium. The best use is made of available accommodation, although many pupils are taught in temporary mobile classrooms which are not ideal. However, plans are well advanced for new buildings to be completed under the Private Finance Initiative (PFI), by the Spring of 2001.
1. The school has a number of aims that together intend to make the maximum effective use of all available resources to realise the potential of each child at every stage and in every area of development, within a caring, stimulating and positive environment.
2. The school's recently adopted mission statement is:  
'To educate the hearts and minds of everyone associated with the school so we can all be better tomorrow than we were today'.
6. **Recent areas for development have been to:**  
review English;  
successfully implement the National Numeracy Strategy;  
develop information and communications technology;  
establish schemes of work for all subjects;  
produce a behaviour policy;  
implement revised assessment procedures, including records of achievement;  
extend the use of target setting;  
review and develop new management roles and responsibilities;  
continue developing the PFI major new building project.
3. **This term the focus is on:**  
improving the quality of teaching and learning;  
raising teachers' expectations about what standards pupils can achieve;  
improving pupils' attitudes to learning.

## Key indicators

### 1999 SAT results:

#### Attainment at Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
For the latest reporting year: 1999		1999	14	13	27
National Curriculum	Test/Task Results	Reading	Writing	Mathematics	
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	10	10	11	
	Girls	13	13	13	
	Total	23	23	24	
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	85 (93)	85 (93)	89 (86)	
	National	79 (80)	83 (81)	86 (84)	

Teacher	Assessments	English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	11	11	13
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	24	24	26
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	89 (93)	89 (90)	97 (86)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

#### Attainment at Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
For the latest reporting year: 1999		1999	16	12	28
National Curriculum	Test/Task Results	English	Mathematics	Science	
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	11	11	15	
	Girls	10	10	12	
	Total	21	21	27	
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	75 (68)	75 (76)	97 (88)	
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)	

Teacher	Assessments	English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	11	13	15
	Girls	11	11	12
	Total	22	24	27
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	79 (68)	85 (80)	97 (92)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year  
 Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

### Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed

Through absence for the latest complete

Reporting year:

		%
Authorised Absence	School	5.1
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0
	National comparative data	0.5

### Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age)

During the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

### Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	26
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

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

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

#### **7. Attainment and progress**

4. At the time of the previous inspection in 1995, standards overall were sound, with some good achievements in science, music and design and technology. Levels of challenge were identified as in need of boosting and more advancement required in developing literacy skills. The managers have been successful in maintaining strengths, but standards are not yet at the level anticipated. This is in part because time spent in pursuing the major task of school re-building has had a negative impact on the drive to raise standards at the pace required. The school has recognised that the levels of challenge and the promotion of higher level skills need to be improved further. English standards although average throughout the school, could be better. This term, the emphasis has been on making significant improvements to the quality of the curriculum and to teaching and learning. There are good indications from class observations that improvements are already making a significant difference, and that standards look set to rise throughout the school.
5. When the children enter the pre-reception class, standards are average. By the time they are five, most have made very good progress in acquiring the skills and knowledge necessary to take full advantage of the broad and rich curriculum provided by the school. The parents are very supportive of the school and their involvement impacts positively on the progress that the pupils make. At five years of age, virtually all pupils are achieving above what would be expected for their age in the areas of learning concerning their personal and social development, language and literacy skills, and mathematical knowledge and understanding. Most are achieving in line with expectations in the creative and physical areas of learning.
6. In the 1998 national tests at Key Stage 1, the pupils achieved results that were above average in reading, average in writing and below average in mathematics. The teachers assessed them as above average in science. When the results are set against the standards found in similar schools, they are below average in reading and writing, and well below average in mathematics. The preliminary results from the 1999 national tests show pupils attaining average results in reading, writing and mathematics. This indicates a slight improvement in the schools' results. When set against similar schools results however, performance does not compare favourably, being well below the average overall. The science results remain consistent and are assessed as being above average.
7. In the 1998 national tests at Key Stage 2, the pupils achieved results broadly in line with the average in English and above average in mathematics and science. When these results are set against the standards found in similar schools, they are well below average in English and close to the average in mathematics and science. The preliminary results from the 1999 national tests show the pupils attaining results that are above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. The indications are that more pupils achieved the higher level 5 in all subjects than in the previous year. The results across the three subjects are average when set against those of similar schools. Clearly, in a school of this size, cohorts will vary year on year. However, the trends over time show the pupils' performance to be above average overall against the national averages, but below that of schools of a similar type.
8. The findings from this inspection, based on extensive and reliable evidence, confirm that, at the end of Key Stage 1, standards are average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Standards are average in information and communications technology, and in religious education are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus for pupils of seven years. Most pupils make sound progress in English, mathematics and

information communications and technology throughout Key Stage 1, but the rates of learning are not as brisk as they should be, especially for the higher attaining pupils. This has been identified as a key issue for the school to continue to address.

9. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are average in English and above average in mathematics, science, information and communications technology and religious education. The pupils make good progress over time, reflecting the teachers' expectation of what can be achieved, and more consistent teaching methods and organisation. The results in science have been good for a few years at both key stages. This is largely due to the consistently well-planned curriculum with regular assessments built in, good quality of guidance to support the teaching and learning and the high standards expected by an effective coordinator who has been leading development for some time. In general, however, insufficient attention has been given by the school to rigorously checking why some aspects of provision are working better than others. Clearly, there are lessons to be learnt from the successes in science which could usefully be applied to English and mathematics. This aspect of work is also a key issue for the school to address.
10. The school has identified that there is a need to raise standards further in English and mathematics whilst maintaining breadth and balance in the curriculum. This term, new approaches to reading and writing have been introduced and greater emphasis is being given to the planning and implementation of the Literacy Hour. Benefits are already identifiable in the pupils' work and in their very good attitudes to learning. Through a significantly enriched, well-planned and well-taught curriculum, the pupils are provided with worthwhile experiences in art, design and technology, geography, history and music, and make good progress as a result. Sound progress is made in physical education. There is some outstanding achievement in music.
11. The pupils with special educational needs are well served by the school and make good progress in meeting the individual targets set for them. The quality of support is good, both in class and when pupils are withdrawn to work in small groups, or one-to-one with staff. The work programmes are well matched to the pupils' individual need, and good attention is paid to improving basic skills. Some pupils are benefiting from a variety of strategies, and, although this is a positive feature, monitoring is required to check what the overall impact is on individuals in terms of the progress they make. In some lessons, the work is too easy for high attaining pupils who are capable of doing more work of higher quality.
12. The pupils' literacy skills are of an average standard throughout the school, although their speaking and listening attainment tends to be more advanced. When the pupils first enter the school, their achievement is in line with what would be expected, and, by the time that they are five, most are achieving at a higher level than that expected for their age. Their progress slows down in Key Stage 1, is steady throughout Key Stage 2, but is better in some years than others. Although their skills, knowledge and understanding are consolidated well, there is potential for their learning to be more advanced, particularly for higher attainers. A very good start has been made in leading and managing English by the new coordinator, in partnership with the headteacher, governors and colleagues. The new reading scheme has been received positively, and new books for the library have been purchased with the Parent/Teacher Association funding. The library is a useful resource, but has an insufficient range of books. The nature of the accommodation restricts its use by pupils for research purposes.
13. Levels of numeracy are good through the school; the pupils are keen mathematicians and their progress over time is good. The starting level of mathematics is broadly average and the pupils' pick up speed in their learning in the early years. Their progress reaches a plateau through Key Stage 1 but then accelerates at a good pace through Key Stage 2. This is true in all aspects of mathematics, including basic number and arithmetic because the Numeracy Hour is already having a good impact. One particular strength of the pupils'

attainment is evident throughout school that is, they develop good problem solving and investigation skills because the work focuses firmly on the study of pattern, relationships and the development of flexible methods. Most lessons include a good numeracy element at the start. Not only does this strengthen the pupils' knowledge of tables and number bonds, for example, but it also provides good insights into the process of finding an answer. However, the pupils' speed of calculation is still rather slow at times and although some work is done against the clock, this is not widespread.

14. Standards in science are good throughout the school, and the pupils make good progress. This reflects confident, well-informed teaching and good use of assessment data in assisting the next steps in learning. This good practice offers useful pointers to aiding improvement in the other two core subjects. The pupils enjoy science and demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning. Investigative and experimentation work is a central core, and good attention is given to building the pupils' confidence to 'have a go' at finding out how and why things happen. The pupils have well-developed scientific vocabulary and show good knowledge and understanding of key concepts when explaining their approaches to setting up a fair test, for example. Their recorded work is presented well.
15. Standards in information and communications technology are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 and good at the end of Key Stage 2. Because most pupils have good computing facilities at home, standards are boosted. The pupils make the expected progress in Key Stage 1, building a strong platform of skills and knowledge for development in Key Stage 2. Accordingly, between the ages of seven and eleven, the pupils make good progress. There is a firm focus on the use of computers to support work in other subjects, with the best examples to be found in Year 6. The work completed in previous years, whilst of satisfactory quality overall, is not as wide ranging in coverage as in the current year. Because the cross-curricular aspect of the work is now on a firmer footing, the pupils are extending their skills and knowledge of handling computers and allied technology at a better rate and standards are boosted. However, there is still room for improvement in the pace of some lessons and in the challenge provided for all pupils. More consistent use of information and communications technology is still something the school has to work at.
16. Attainment in religious education at both key stages is currently in line with that expected by the locally agreed syllabus. The pupils are making sound progress in learning about Christianity and some other major world faiths. They make good progress in situations where they have opportunities to consider what belief means to different people, for example in sharing the experiences of one of the mums who spoke in assembly about Diwali celebrations. The pupils have very good understanding about what it means to be a 'good person'. In an assembly taken by a local minister, they expressed opinions openly and honestly in discussing what makes someone a saint or a sinner. They enjoy their lessons in religious education and respond well to questions and the invitation to use evidence to solve problems. They demonstrate caring and tolerant attitudes to one another, staff and visitors. The subject is identified as in need of development to reflect its raised status as part of the core curriculum. There is, as yet, insufficient guidance yet available to the teachers to ensure that rates of learning are as good as they could be throughout the school.
17. Senior managers' expectations of work are high. The new teaching team has considerable strengths and is determined to raise the pupils' performance to levels that compare more favourably with benchmark standards found in similar schools. No one in the school is complacent, and there is a sense of purpose and focus on making the best use of the expertise and experience available. School targets set for literacy and numeracy, in conjunction with the local education authority, have been based on projected performance and are realistic but insufficiently demanding. The school is well on course to meet these. The tracking of the pupils' individual progress is at an early stage of development, however considerable data is being collected to aid analysis to support school improvement. As monitoring and evaluation work becomes more refined, it is likely that these targets will



need to be reviewed to reflect more explicitly the ambitions expressed.

21. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

18. Since the time of the previous inspection, the good quality learning has been sustained. The pupils are happy to come to school and are very willing to work hard. Relationships are very good and support well the pupils' high levels of confidence and good self-esteem. Parents hold very positive views about the ways in which attitudes, behaviour and the pupils' personal development are promoted by the school. Cooper Perry School is a happy, purposeful and a productive place to be.
19. The school has a very good ethos. The pupils, including those in the early years, enjoy being at school and have a lively interest in their work. Their attitudes to learning are good. Boys and girls show equal enthusiasm for learning and get on well together at work and play. The pupils concentrate well, work hard, and respond very positively to the challenges provided. Very good relationships enable successful collaborative work to take place, for example when Year 6 pupils who have special educational needs support Year 1 pupils with reading. The pupils are courteous and trustworthy, showing respect for other people and for property. The school has a calm and orderly atmosphere.
20. Standards of behaviour are very good throughout the school and in the pre-reception class. The pupils know what is expected of them and they respond well to the positive approaches made by their teachers. They are well motivated by receiving the stars and stickers that can accrue to the highest accolade - a special headteacher's award. There are clear arrangements for dealing with bullying, and the pupils say they feel safe and free from harm at school. There have been no exclusions and no instances of bullying or harassment were observed.
21. The pupils' personal development is good. In all classes, there are job rotas set up which involve everyone taking responsibility for the organisation of an aspect of class life. In Year 6, some pupils are chosen to be House Captains, and many Year 6 pupils organise lunchtime activities for younger children. The pupils' personal and social skills are considerably enhanced by the many opportunities to organise appropriate aspects of self-study; for example, through researching information about history and geography topics, through the various community events, such as organising stalls at the Summer Fayre, and through taking gifts at Harvest Time to local senior citizens. Annually, the older pupils spend a residential week at Shugborough where they learn cooperative team working and develop personal leadership skills.

25. **Attendance**

22. The level of attendance of the pupils is good and compares favourably with other schools. However, it has deteriorated from the previous very high level, due to an increase in the number of parents taking their children on holiday in term-time.
23. Punctuality is very good. The pupils enjoy coming to school and almost always arrive on time. The lessons start promptly and very little time is wasted.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

24. In 1995, at the time of the previous inspection, the teaching was judged to be mostly good at Key Stage 1 and sound in Key Stage 2. Although no overall judgement was given, the report highlighted that there were a few instances of either of very good teaching or of

unsatisfactory practice. During this inspection, the teaching observed was never less than satisfactory throughout the school, and was of either very good or better quality in twenty-six per cent of lessons. New appointments and the re-allocation of responsibilities to teachers have given a significant boost to the quality of both the teaching and learning. The teaching is better than when the school was inspected previously and is now of good quality overall.

25. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed in the eighty observations made. In just over three-quarters of lessons, the teaching was of either good or better in quality, and in a quarter it was either very good or excellent. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and occasionally teaching is outstanding. The best teaching was observed in the early years and in Years 4 and 6. In these classes, the teachers ensured that the objectives set for learning were promoted consistently. Through well-matched work for different groups and individuals and clear expectations of the quantity and quality to be achieved, the teachers ensured that by the end of the session it was clear what needed to be done next to improve. The music teaching is of a particularly high calibre, and the use of the specialist teachers makes a very positive contribution to the quality of the learning. Science is consistently taught to a good or better standard throughout the school. This results in above average standards achieved at both key stages. Well-informed, confident and influential subject leadership, coupled with very effective guidance for the teachers, are some of the reasons why science comes through as a teaching strength. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is also good. Their needs are met by a mixture of in-class support and withdrawal to work with staff in either very small groups or one-to-one. In all situations, the quality of the teaching enabled the pupils to make good progress towards their individual targets.
26. Strong features of the very best teaching are confident, well-planned lessons, very good subject knowledge, good class management, and lessons that are well matched to the needs of individual pupils. This was well demonstrated in a very lively mathematics lesson in the reception class when the pupils were working with numbers from zero to twenty. The teacher used questioning very skilfully to draw out what the pupils knew to begin with, and then set appropriate but demanding tasks by matching practical work very carefully to individual need. The teacher made clear her expectations for the quality and quantity of work to be completed, and encouraged and supported her pupils very well. As a result, they made gains in their knowledge, understanding and skills in working with numbers. By the end of the lesson, the pupils had made excellent progress in number recognition, counting with dice and sequencing the resulting numbers. Both speed and accuracy in working with numbers had improved significantly, and the pupils had thoroughly enjoyed the experience.
27. The teaching would now be further improved by sharing the very best practice more widely to make it more consistently applied throughout the school, and to raise expectations of what the pupils can potentially achieve. The Literacy and Numeracy Hours have been successfully introduced into all classes. The introductory sessions in the Literacy Hours are usually very well focused and the pupils generally make good progress in reading shared text and improving their language skills when discussing literature. The first part of the Numeracy Hour clock-face is also well taught. However, the pace in both numeracy and literacy lessons, particularly in group-work needs to be quickened. Some teachers are not making full use of assessment data to check how well the objectives set for learning can assist target setting.
31. **The curriculum and assessment**
28. Since the previous inspection, good attention has been paid to maintaining the school's strengths and to developing the curriculum overall, although work in improving advanced skills in reading and writing has been too slow. The excellence of the school's partnership with the community has recently been recognised by a Schools Curriculum Award.

Assessment policies, though satisfactory, have not been used with sufficient rigour to set targets geared to raising standards at the pace required. A re-allocation of roles this term and new appointments of key staff have given a significant boost to raising the quality and standards of attainment. The school's managers now need to ensure that the staff are more involved in monitoring the curriculum and checking its impact on the pupils' learning. This is a key issue.

29. The school's curriculum is broad, and balanced and of good quality. The statutory requirements to teach the National Curriculum subjects are met. All pupils have appropriate access to the good quality of education provided. The curriculum has been amended to make time for literacy and numeracy lessons in a way which still gives pupils a very worthwhile experience of foundation subjects. The school has worked hard to provide very rich curriculum experiences and this makes a strong contribution to the all-round development of its pupils. Religious education is taught to the existing locally agreed syllabus, but not enough time is allocated to this subject currently. The quality of the curriculum for children under five is good. It is broad, balanced and relevant, enabling them to build on their earlier experiences and to make very good progress. The curriculum prepares the children very successfully for the National Curriculum and the next stage of their learning. There are satisfactory arrangements for personal, social, health and sex education.
30. The school has good quality policy documents to support the curriculum, but the schemes of work for some subjects are not firmly in place. The reviewing of documentation has been delayed by the introduction of national initiatives in literacy and numeracy and the proposed new National Curriculum. Nevertheless, the teaching is guided appropriately to ensure that worthwhile experiences are given across all foundation subjects. The school's strategies for the implementation of literacy are sound. After a slow start last year, the Literacy Hour is now firmly in place in all classes and is having a positive impact on the quality of lesson planning. Nevertheless, there is still scope for greater impact on the pupils' progress and standards of attainment, which will come with time if the present momentum continues. The introduction of the Numeracy Hour this term has been successful, and already it is clear that the new approach to planning and teaching is stimulating better quality learning. The homework policy is implemented satisfactorily and is complementing the curriculum provision. However, the expectations for each year group are not expressed sufficiently clearly to be useful to parents.
31. The planning of the curriculum is satisfactory. All of the subjects in the curriculum are appropriately planned on a half-term basis. Medium-term planning follows a consistent format and has a positive effect on the way subjects are covered in each class. However, insufficient attention is given to the progression of skill development in some subjects such as physical education. There are good cross-curricular links in the teaching of the various subjects in both key stages.
32. The short-term planning procedures are good. The teachers sometimes plan different work for pupils with differing levels of attainment who are in the same class. They are also working very hard to increase the effectiveness of this in the Literacy Hours. In some lessons though, the planned activities provide too little challenge for high attaining pupils. In both key stages, the teachers' expectations regarding the quantity of work to be done are too often not clearly articulated to the pupils. This means that the rate of progress of which some pupils are capable, particularly in group work, is curtailed. Monitoring of the curriculum by coordinators has begun and is continuing to develop greater focus. The sharing of good practice is already making a difference to the quality of the Literacy Hours. The planning and time-tabling of additional literacy support (ALS) is working effectively.
33. The curricular provision for the pupils with special educational needs offers breadth, balance and relevance and is organised to give them full access and opportunity. Joint planning between the teachers and support staff establishes precise targets to ensure that

pupils with special educational needs have similar curriculum experiences to their peers. As yet, however, there has been no monitoring of the various strategies being used for basic skills development (for example, ALS, multi-sensory input, success-maker) in order to assess what impact each of these is having on an individual's progress.

34. The curriculum is very considerably enriched by educational visits and visitors to the school, including professional artists. Education in both the arts and technology is very well provided for. The school has developed effective partnerships with a range of people, organisations, businesses and industry in the local area. For example, the pupils have visited Stan Robinson Transport, Fosters Nursery and W H Smith. International links have been made with St Paul's Bay Primary School, Malta, and the International School, Krakow, Poland. In addition, a wide variety of other activities take place, such as dancing on the village green and a sports morning for the younger children. A wealth of valuable experiences for all pupils is provided. The school's excellent work in extending community links has been recognised by a School's Curriculum Award.
35. A very good extra-curricular programme, which includes sporting, musical, dance, writing, gardening and environmental activities, is offered for pupils during the year. This term, six teachers and a parent provide these opportunities and 179 girls and boys are involved in the programme. This provision makes a very positive contribution to the pupils' personal and social education.
36. The school's systems for assessing the pupils' attainment are satisfactory overall. The requirements in respect of the annual pupils' report are met, but insufficient detail is given to parents about an individual's progress in subjects, especially information and communications technology which does not have its own section in the report. Moreover, target setting is not a feature of the written reports, even though the teachers and parents meet to explore these every term.
37. The procedures for assessing the children in their early years are very good, and the resulting information is used well in the curriculum planning. The good attention paid to curriculum and assessment in early years underpins the good and often very good progress these children make. The assessment of the progress made by the pupils with special educational needs is secure. A number of tests are used and the achievements of individual pupils are evaluated continually. The staff work together on this and the information is collated by the coordinator who then uses it in the planning of future work.
38. There is a clear assessment policy which is now under review to meet the current and imminent changes to the National Curriculum. A number of useful procedures which contribute to assessing the pupils' achievement, are in place across the school. Besides the statutory standardised assessment tests and teacher assessments, the school makes effective use of published tests. The tracking of the pupils' progress and the projection of their likely future achievements have just begun, but not all the teachers are confident about either its purpose or its reliability. Various other strategies to aid the tracking of progress are used, including close observation of four pupils in each class per week and skilful questioning of all pupils in lessons. Class booklets are used to chart the curriculum coverage for every child and this information is passed on to the next teacher, though the procedures are identified by the school as in need of review. The staff are assembling a collection of the pupils' work to form a portfolio of moderated work in the core subjects which can be matched to levels of the National Curriculum. With further development, this will help the staff to match the work of other pupils to the correct level. At present, there is no mechanism for moderation between schools. Clearly, a lot of information is being gathered but it is not yet used in a consistent or uniform way.
39. At the various levels, the use of assessment in the process of curriculum planning is satisfactory. The gathering of data to use in planning is rudimentary at present, and the staff are developing their experience and improving their skills in this area. Already the

interpretation of test results is impacting positively upon the teachers' planning. The baseline assessment is very well used to identify the specific needs of the youngest pupils and to select appropriate experiences from the six areas of learning for them. In both key stages, most of the lesson plans identify the learning objectives clearly, but they are not always consistently pursued during the lesson, thus making any focused assessment of the pupils' progress difficult. In lessons, where the learning objectives are pursued and progress is assessed, the information is successfully used to identify the specific things that need to be taught and learned in the next sequence of work. The practice of setting individual targets for pupils and sharing them with parents has usefully begun. As this experience grows, the school intends to give more definition to the targets and to involve the pupils in the process fully, so that they can be more involved in evaluating their own work.

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

40. When the school was inspected previously, it was judged to provide sound attention overall to this aspect of education, with good provision made for the pupils' social development. However, attention to cultural diversity was found to be under represented in literature and the arts. Since that time, the strengths of the provision have been maintained, and good attention has been given to raising the pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem through the 'You can do it' programme. In addition, some attention has been given to cultural diversity, for example by inviting people with a range of beliefs and lifestyles to come into school to share personal experiences, and through the developing links with schools in Malta and Poland. The school now makes good overall provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development, and this is an improvement. Parents positively support the school's work in this area and show strong agreement that 'family values' are successfully promoted. The pupils are being well prepared to become responsible future citizens.
41. The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is good. Within the curriculum there are good opportunities for the pupils to celebrate the work of others. In music and dance they listen to the work of great composers and then respond in the way it makes them feel. Through the study of literature, the pupils learn about the spiritual dimensions of life, and, as in the poem 'Hiawatha', the effects of inspiration and the sense of purpose. The daily acts of collective worship are appropriately planned and make a beneficial contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. There is time for the pupils to express their views and to reflect, often through prayer, about their own and others lives. Visitors from local churches, who sometimes lead worship, make a good contribution to the pupils' experiences and to their spiritual development. For example, during the week of inspection one mum came into school to share her personal experiences of Diwali, the Hindu festival of light, and the pupils listened respectfully, showing great interest in someone else's belief.
42. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The teachers ensure that principles of right and wrong, justice and fairness are explored and applied in day-to-day situations. This was well demonstrated in a Year 4 Literacy Hour where the pupils had studied "The chicken gave it to me" by Ann Fine and were writing follow up letters to the Ministry of Agriculture, arguing passionately in favour of banning battery hen farming. The pupils have clear understanding of the need for honesty, truthfulness and high standards of behaviour. In many lessons, the teachers took care to highlight and praise pupils who showed responsible attitudes and behaviour.
43. The pupils' social development is very well provided for. The very good quality of the relationships among all members of the school community has a very tangible impact on the pupils' social development. The 'You can do it' programme is effective in promoting positive attitudes to learning, an aspect of school improvement that the school has been successfully developing this term. The school places great emphasis on care and support for others, and the pupils respond very positively to the adults' expectations. The curriculum and the extra-curricular activities provide a range of occasions for the pupils to work collaboratively with partners or in groups. The provision of games equipment and opportunities for older pupils to help supervise lunchtimes encourages good social play. The pupils have valuable opportunities to take responsibility for organising class resources, arranging charitable events, managing house-based competitions, and collecting and organising the money for the school bank. Residential visits also provide useful opportunities for the pupils to develop team building and leadership skills.
44. The school is making sound provision for the pupils' cultural development. Nevertheless, there are still too few planned opportunities for pupils to find out more about the richness of multi-cultural society in which they live. Cultural experiences are appropriately provided across the curriculum. In music, for example, the pupils listen to the work of

great composers. Visitors come into school to share their talents in paper sculpture, Morris dancing and knowledge of Viking history. A troupe of Indian dancers is scheduled to perform at the school later this term. Links with industry and visits to local places of interest, such as Stafford town for local study work and Shugborough to learn about Victorian times, extend the opportunities for pupils to find out more about the world about them. Participation in village events reaffirms the pupils' local cultural traditions and enables them to contribute to the culture of the whole community.

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

45. The school provides good support and guidance for its pupils and promotes their welfare well. The high quality of this aspect of the school's provision has been sustained since the previous inspection. Parents strongly approve of the help and support provided for their children. Almost all parents state that their children are happy at school.
46. The procedures for monitoring the pupils' progress and personal development are good. The adults in the school know the pupils well. They are open and approachable and respond to the pupils' needs with care and sensitivity. Relationships are very good throughout the school community and they successfully underpin the pupils' learning.
47. Almost all the pupils enter the pre-reception class from one of two playgroups which enjoy close links with the school. Very effective induction procedures ensure that the pupils are confident and well prepared for school life. Formal baseline assessments are carried out very early and are supported by thorough day-to-day monitoring of the pupils' strengths and areas of difficulty. In this way, the work is appropriately tailored to meet the pupils' needs and they are helped to overcome any problems they may be experiencing. The teachers are beginning to be set targets for the pupils in English, mathematics and personal development, in consultation with their parents. These targets are currently rather too general to be fully useful to the pupils. Those with special educational needs are identified early and a well-structured programme of guidance and support is planned by the coordinator for special educational needs, in conjunction with the class teachers. The specialist advice of external agencies is sought and made use of as appropriate.
48. The monitoring of behaviour and the promotion of discipline are very good. The staff are very effective role models. They share high expectations of the pupils and a common philosophy, aiming at the fostering of self-esteem, self-confidence and mutual respect. Praise is used well throughout the school. Whilst response to minor in-discipline is occasionally inconsistent, any correction is always based on reference to a shared charter of moral values, rather than threats of punishment. There is a comprehensive and appropriate policy for rewards and sanctions, which has been supplemented since the last inspection by a detailed policy for responding to any incidents of bullying. Such incidents are rare and are effectively handled.
49. The school's arrangements for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. The registers are kept in accordance with statutory requirements, and the procedures for the notification of absence are clearly explained in the prospectus. Attendance levels are frequently monitored and are used to set performance targets. However, the statistics for absence are not reported to parents either in the prospectus or the governors' annual report as legally required. This deficiency in the report, was also noted at the previous inspection.
50. The child protection procedures are appropriate and conform to locally agreed policy. Through the programme of personal and social education, the school effectively equips the pupils with the knowledge and skills to protect themselves and others from harm. However, the staff have not recently received training to raise their awareness of child protection issues. The school gives due attention to most aspects of health and safety, but formal risk assessments are not recorded. The arrangements for security and for the supervision of pupils before and after school and at playtimes and lunchtime are good. The pupils are taught to be aware of safe practices in lessons.

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

51. The partnership that the school has established with parents is very good. It continues to make a powerful contribution to the standards attained by the pupils. The school welcomes and involves parents in many aspects of its day-to-day work, as well as giving them the



encouragement and knowledge to provide effective support for their children's learning at home. Parents are very positive about the school, many having chosen to bring their children from out of the catchment area. A very high proportion strongly approves of its encouraging and approachable attitudes. Most state that they feel well informed about the curriculum and about their children's progress.

52. The quality of information provided by the school is good overall. The prospectus clearly conveys its philosophy, curriculum, routines and expectations. Further information on a range of current developments is shared in the governors' annual report. However, both documents fail to meet fully the statutory requirements, for example absence data and the provision for special educational needs are not reported with sufficient detail in either document. Parents are very well informed about the work to be undertaken by their children through a range of high quality publications, supplemented by a good programme of curriculum meetings.
53. The information supplied to parents on their children's progress in their annual reports is barely satisfactory. Progress in English and mathematics is usually adequately covered, but most other subjects receive too little attention, particularly information and communications technology, which does not have a separate section of its own. Music is usually well reported. Targets for an individual's next steps in learning are implied rather than specified explicitly. A full range of opportunities for consultation meetings is offered to parents, and attendance is very good. These discussions are effectively focused on the pupils' performance and shared strategies for improvement. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the assessment and review processes.
54. The parents play a full role in the life of the school. The school arranges courses for them to increase their confidence and effectiveness, and their views on school developments are canvassed. A very active committee organises fund-raising and social events, providing substantial sums for school purposes.
55. The excellence of the school's partnership with the community has recently been recognised by a Schools Curriculum Award. Mutually beneficial projects have been established with a wide range of organisations, contributing very effectively to the breadth and relevance of the pupils' education. Links with local engineering companies give the pupils experience of design, manufacture and marketing. Work with the ambulance service furthers their understanding of science, while their awareness of geography has been fostered by a link with a transport company. Their understanding of citizenship is promoted by widespread involvement in their community, such as in planning a millennium wood, singing to charitable organisations, performing at the museum and preparing a leaflet for a local hospital trust. There are close links with the church, with the local vicar leading very effective assemblies and the church being used for recording the pupils' entry for a choral competition. Exchange visits to Malta and more recent links with Poland have contributed to the pupils' awareness of the wider world.

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

### **Leadership and management**

56. Since the time of the previous inspection in 1995, the management has pursued the key issues of raising standards and monitoring and evaluating work with mixed success, because for much of the time it focused on the one target of obtaining better accommodation. This initiative has been successful and the school awaits the new building programme with keen anticipation. The management has now returned to its former, broader agenda, but the recent changes have yet to have the predicted impact.
57. The headteacher has now re-focused the drive for raising standards of attainment. He gives

very strong personal leadership that is very effective in motivating other people to success. There is a potent sense of team building in the school, with new and long-serving staff and governors all pursuing better standards. The staff and governors are eager to take on more responsibility for school management, morale is very high and there is a determination that the pupils should get the best education that the school can provide.

58. Several members of staff are new to the school and they have brought a reinvigorating and refreshing approach to the work, whether they are senior members of staff or newly qualified. The existing staff have been assigned to different classes and management responsibilities and they have welcomed the new comers unreservedly. It is clear that relationships are very good. It has not taken long for all staff to settle to the demands the new school year has brought, and there is now the atmosphere of "must-do and can-do" that the school appeared to have lacked for a time in the past.
59. The revamped team is faced with a number of key tasks to bring improvement. Not least among these is the need to build a monitoring system that will show the strengths and weaknesses of the school clearly and effectively. Some good monitoring has been carried out in the past, but the small number of people involved limited its scope and effect. There is now recognition of the fact that this is a task for the whole team, but a rigorous system of monitoring is soon to be in place. To date, the staff and governors have expressed interest in the idea of monitoring, and everyone welcomes the chance to be involved, but tentative steps only have been taken to bring the best of intentions to fruition. Standards in English have been identified as the number one target for improvement and the staff have some idea of what needs to be done. English standards are lower than those for other core subjects, and the impact of the Literacy Hour has yet to bring the same improvement as the Numeracy Hour.
60. The governing body is alert to its responsibilities and keeps well in touch with events in school. There are very good links between staff and governors that ensure channels of communication are free flowing. The governors have a central task in school development planning and express interest, concern and approval, in the spirit in their role of 'critical friend'. They demand, reasonably, that standards should improve and are beginning to link their decision making to the evaluation of the initiatives undertaken. It is evident that governors act as good managers of the school, though they need to ensure that the parents are kept fully informed, through the prospectus and their annual report, of all necessary information required by law.
61. The school development planning is effective and efficient. All staff and governors have an active role and parents are consulted formally at meetings and through school improvement questionnaires. The school development plan identifies the many priorities for managers to pursue, but does not prioritise the principal quest boldly enough. However, the emphasis on the need to improve standards is clear and everyone is committed to achieving its targets.
62. There are a number of other issues for attention. Whilst progress towards the statutory targets for mathematics by 2002 is good, it is less assured for English. The setting of specific targets for learning that are made plain to the pupils is at an early stage of development, and, although there is some very good practice, it is evident only in parts of the school. The managers have set realistic targets based on projections agreed with the local education authority. As analysis of the large amount of data now being collected is refined, it is likely that new targets will need to be set to reflect managers' declared ambitions of raising standards to a level that compares more favourably with benchmark schools.
63. In general, the pupils are not denied access to the rich curriculum offered by the school, though the managers do little to monitor whether those withdrawn from class, for whatever reason, miss important elements of the work. Nor has there yet been an evaluation of the

impact the various strategies are having on pupils' rates of learning or indeed on those individuals in Year 3 and Year 4 who are receiving additional basic skills support in a variety of ways.

64. In other respects, the management of the school is sound. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good across all key stages, as a result of the hard work and commitment of the coordinator. This enthuses other staff and results in lessons of high quality. Withdrawal learning is balanced by a small amount of in-class support that is also well managed because it is devised jointly by the class teacher and special educational needs coordinator.
65. The school successfully meets its aims and the requirements of its policies, and develops a very good set of values in the pupils. There is a clearly defined and tangible quest for improvement, the lessons are pleasantly productive, and the overall ethos of the school is very good. This is a significant strength of the school.
66. The school is providing its pupils with a good education. That standards must continue to improve is indisputable. Equally obvious is the fact that progress on this front has been uneven. Nonetheless, there is a concerted and resolute effort to meet this challenge and to build on the many strengths of the school. The prospect for future improvement is good.

70. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

67. The number, qualifications and experience of the teaching and support staff match the demands of the curriculum well. There have been many recent appointments and changes of responsibility. These have been strategically made in order to enhance the developing curriculum and management structure. All the teachers concerned have taken up their new responsibilities in a very professional manner and the clarity of their understanding of their roles is an improvement since the last inspection. Detailed job descriptions have not yet been written as these are awaiting the completion of the school development plan. The curriculum coordinators for English, mathematics and science have established appropriate individual action plans. Staff absences last year were a cause of concern for some parents who felt that their children had not progressed as well as they might because of the interruption. The school is doing all that can reasonably be expected to make appropriate arrangements. During the week of inspection, both the teaching and learning were judged to be at least satisfactory throughout the school with effective provision being made in all classes.
68. Four teachers share classes in 'job-share' arrangements. These are highly successful, due to careful planning and the skill and commitment of the teachers concerned.
69. The non-teaching staff, including the educational support staff, lunch-time supervisors, caretaker and school administrator make very good contributions to the life and ethos of the school. A large number of peripatetic music teachers contribute well to the range and quality of the instrumental tuition available to the pupils. Skilled voluntary help from a range of parents also effectively supports the pupils' learning throughout the school. These parents are well trained and appropriately supported in their roles, and are encouraged to feel full members of the school community.
70. The arrangements for the professional development of all staff and volunteers are given a high priority by the school and their impact is very good. This is a major improvement since the last inspection and has led to the achievement of the Investors in People Award. The induction of newly qualified teachers and those taking on new responsibilities is thorough and effective. Staff appraisal is successfully undertaken through the school's process of monitoring and evaluation. The priorities for in-service training are appropriately linked to school improvement as well as to the individual needs of staff.

71. The accommodation of the school is unsatisfactory. Many classrooms are overcrowded. The lack of access to water supplies restricts practical aspects of the curriculum for art or science. The hall is too small and does not have sufficient space for apparatus for physical education, which limits the pupils' progress. In the morning, it is used as a classroom for the reception pupils, and the need for them to move to a different classroom for the afternoon, whilst well managed, is far from ideal. Plans for the replacement of the temporary buildings and the refurbishment of the remainder of the school are well advanced. In the meantime, the arrangements for the shared use of the hall are very efficient and the buildings in general are used to their maximum capacity.
72. The resources for learning are adequate in range and are of satisfactory quality for the school's curriculum and the age of the pupils. The high quality resources for science are very well organised and well matched to the strands of the National Curriculum. The resources for design and technology and history are also good. The provision for children in their early years is good, with resources accessible and in constant use in pre-reception and reception classes. However, the resources for religious education are unsatisfactory and have not been sufficiently improved since the last inspection. There is a shortage of artefacts and of books on some of the religions studied in the locally agreed syllabus.
73. The library has a barely adequate stock of books to support curriculum areas, but these are enhanced by borrowing from the county loans service. It is underused by the pupils as a resource for independent research due to its position and its frequent time-tabling for peripatetic music lessons.
74. A good range of visits to the locality, including residential visits to field centres and trips to a television studio, museums and the swimming pool, enriches the curriculum. The resources are appropriately supplemented by loans of books, artefacts and musical instruments from the local authority.

78. **The efficiency of the school**

75. The analysis of the previous inspection showed the school to be an efficient organisation where finance was very well managed, though the link between its priorities and finance was difficult to track. The school's involvement in the Private Finance Initiative has sharpened and improved all its financial practices. The weak aspects have improved and those which were good are now very good.
76. For much of the recent past, the school's number one priority was to attract the funding required to provide new buildings. This has been achieved, though the actual building programme is still some way off. The quality of financial planning and control needed to meet the rigours of the Private Finance Initiative bid are now applied to all forms of financial management, and so budgeting, spending and accountability are all secure.
77. Besides its regular budget and the extra monies generated by the Private Funding Initiative, the school receives additional funding to support a number of other priorities. This money is accounted for well. As an example, finance for the pupils with special educational needs is used to employ an appropriate number of experienced staff and to provide the necessary learning resources to enable these pupils to enjoy motivating learning experiences and to make good progress.
78. Underlying these good financial management arrangements is a very effective administration system. It is successfully operated by the school bursar/administrator who has a key role in the school management and who combines efficiency with cheerfulness.
79. Because the school operates so efficiently, all forms of resources are utilised well and provide a good quality of education for the pupils. All the staff are assigned well to their roles and responsibilities, the learning resources are fully exploited and the far-from-ideal

accommodation is used imaginatively.

80. In the main, the impact of the school's spending is good or very good. The quality of the teaching is good, the pupils have rich learning experiences, the standards in most core subjects are above average and the pupils' progress is good. This results in good value for the relatively low expenditure per pupil. Attention to better standards in English will move the added value up a further notch. The prospect for this is good.

**AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

81. There are three admission times every school year, with the children entering a pre-reception class at the beginning of the term after their fourth birthday. After either one or two terms, they move into the reception class whilst still aged under five. At the time of the inspection, there were twenty-eight children in these two classes with nineteen children under five years of age. The children in the pre reception class attend for the morning sessions only, but the six children in the reception class who are nearer to their fifth birthday attend full time. Nearly all of the children in the reception classes have had pre-school experience in one of two playgroups with whom the school has good liaison. The baseline assessment is made two weeks after the children enter the pre-reception class, showing, overall, that their attainment is in line with the standard expected for their age. Their progress is generally good in all areas of learning and sometimes very good in mathematics and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The children get off to a flying start and, in most respects, achieve standards that are above expectation by the time they are five. They are very well prepared to commence the National Curriculum programmes of study.

**Personal and social development**

82. The children make good progress in their personal and social development and their achievements are above what would be expected for five-year-olds. They are very responsive to the welcoming environment that is created for them in both the pre reception and reception classes. They settle very quickly into the routines and are very sensible about following rules such as tidying toys and equipment away into their proper places. They listen carefully to adults and to one another in class discussions and are well supported in this by a group of well-trained support staff and voluntary helpers. In lessons, the children develop cooperative skills appropriately because their learning is well controlled. This was evident, for example, when four children at a time played in the home corner and prepared for a wedding. There is a good carousel arrangement of activities and the children know that they will all have a chance to enjoy all activities, over a period of time. They share equipment such as Lego readily and learn to help one another to make wheeled vehicles. The children take a great deal of pleasure out of working together on tasks, but are very responsible when they are working independently, for example when measuring the amounts needed to fill buckets in the sand tray. They behave well both in lesson time and around the school. The children in the reception class show particularly good self-control as their classroom is also used for assemblies for the whole school and on a daily basis for the serving of dinners when they are required to move out. All children under five show good self-control as they move in and out of classrooms to take part in physical education lessons.
83. The quality of the teaching of personal and social development is good. The teachers, nursery nurses and voluntary helpers work as a team at all times and provide a secure learning environment for the children. All have good relationships with the children and provide a good range of opportunities for them to use their initiative. For example, all children are expected to attempt to take off and put on their clothes and shoes when a physical development lesson is part of the programme of learning. Any necessary support is given sensitively and without fuss. Appropriate attention is given to personal hygiene when children are reminded about washing hands after going to the toilet and before eating their lunches.

**Language and literacy**

84. Standards in language and literacy are above those expected and progress in learning is

good. The children listen to stories with great care and high levels of concentration. This is confirmed by the sensible answers that they give to teachers when they are asked about events in stories. For example, in a creative development lesson, a story is used as an illustration of how important it is to recognise different colours, and the children automatically name the colours that the nursery nurse has used in drawing and colouring a jumper for them. The children's speaking skills are equally well developed, and by the time that they are five they are achieving above the level expected for their age. They enjoy sharing their news with everyone and often ask interesting and perceptive questions of one another about their work. Many of the children have a wide vocabulary and talk at length about a range of topics, which are often connected with their work. For example, they talk about the different ways of catching and throwing whilst enjoying a physical development lesson. They interact well with one another in pairs and hold sensible discussions as they share their understanding of matching numbers together. The children understand that books are read from left to right, and most are able to identify and match words accurately to the print. They enjoy sharing Big Books together and when, they are given opportunities to use books on their own, they handle them with great care. By the time they are five, the majority of children know a set of familiar words and can read simple text. Most are beginning to form letters accurately by the time they are five because they have been given ample opportunity to write in their follow-up activities to reading books together. Some higher attaining children have progressed well and are able to write logically developed sentences and to spell words correctly by using their collection of words in their word bank.

85. The teaching of language and literacy is good. The teachers and nursery nurses plan as a team and provide a balance of independent activities and carefully structured work that will support the children in developing their skills in the Literacy Hour. The teachers and nursery nurses use role-play in the structured play activities to promote the children's speaking and listening skills particularly well. They also capitalise on the children's enjoyment of books to generate understanding of good writing. All the language and literacy experiences are organised well and ensure that the children participate with pleasure.

### **Mathematical development**

86. The children enjoy working with numbers and matching and recreating patterns. They make good progress and develop their mathematical skills to a standard above that they would be expected for their age. They are able to show understanding of the notion of 'more than' and 'less than' when dealing with numbers up to ten, and some higher attaining children are able to extend this to numbers up to twenty. They use accurate language to describe the comparisons they are making when they are working in pairs or small groups on things that are more and less than others. The children use the practical equipment that they are given, such as the socks, to create patterns by colour, shape and size. They use these resources capably. They make very good progress where the activities are well resourced and their accuracy is well monitored on an individual or small group basis.
87. The teaching of mathematical concepts is very good. The lessons are very thoroughly planned, very well organised and good quality, practical resources are provided for the children. The teachers and nursery nurses use questioning perceptively so that the children discover for themselves and have their learning reinforced as they use practical materials to help their understanding. The teachers and nursery nurses also have high expectations, to which most pupils respond very well. The lessons are purposeful and enjoyable for children, who gain maximum benefit from their learning in consequence.

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

88. The children have good opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. As a result, their progress is good and, by the time they are five, they develop

standards above what would be expected for their age. They talk in some detail about their immediate world as they consider harvest and the changes in colours of leaves in the autumn. They know a great deal about journeys. Some come from the immediate area around school and are able to walk to school or have a short car journey, whilst others come from villages further away and have to come by a bus that picks them up and takes them home. This difference between lengths of journeys helps them to begin to understand the passage of time. They have opportunities at news time to share different activities, such as Bonfire Night and parties, which the teachers and nursery nurses use as stimuli for meaningful writing. Similarities and differences are shared with them when they compare their understanding of Bonfire Night with Diwali celebrations, which a Hindu parent tells them about in an assembly time. The children handle tools and equipment with confidence as they use construction toys in a structured playtime. For example, they use Lego to make double-decker buses with which many of them are familiar through their journeys to school. They make accurate and well-informed decisions about objects that will float and sink after they have taken opportunities to test them out in small groups and when they have had adult support to help them. They work at the computer with confidence as they produce print outs of designs that show relationships of shapes.

89. The teaching is good in most areas of learning. It is very good in enabling pupils to explore scientific aspects to promote their knowledge and understanding of the world. All lessons are well planned and effectively organised with good deployment of staff, so that pupils are being targeted to ensure that maximum learning is taking place.



## **Creative development**

90. The children are able to develop their creative skills in a range of ways. They do so to a level above that normally expected for their age and their progress is good. They recognise and readily name the colours of a jumper drawn for them by a nursery nurse, as they listen to a story about the need to differentiate between colours and as they take up opportunities to paint subjects that they have chosen for themselves. They enjoy taking part in role-play in the home corner and use imaginative but accurate language as they prepare to leave 'home' for a wedding. Their enjoyment has increased as a result of their teacher joining in and being dressed by them as well. They sing very tunelessly together with other children. They are able to control their voices to make high and low sounds as well as loud and soft sounds. They join in with action songs and are able to make echo responses to the teacher when they are taking part in an assembly. They enjoy and move well to tape recorded music because they listen very carefully to instructions.
91. The teaching in this area of learning is good. A wide range of opportunities to develop skills gives the children a considerable amount of confidence, and they explore their responses with great enjoyment, in consequence. Illustrations and resources are used to good effect to stimulate the children's knowledge, skills and understanding. The teachers and nursery nurses work as a team to provide a rich curriculum across all areas of creative development.

## **Physical development**

92. The children's physical development is in line with what would be expected for their age and they make steady progress in their learning. Most children are able to manipulate scissors safely and accurately and can use paintbrushes appropriately to make pictures that are meaningful to them. They can also use constructional equipment to make models that are sometimes of real objects and sometimes imaginative representations of objects. They are beginning to develop control of their bodies as they practice throwing and catching balls and beanbags with reasonable accuracy, when working in pairs in the playground. They are also able to respond with controlled actions as they come back together as a whole class and return to the classroom having used the larger space of the playground sensibly.
93. The teaching in this area is good. The teachers have a good understanding of children's needs as well as knowledge of the area of learning. The activities are well resourced, and the support staff are well deployed to give maximum learning opportunities to children. Outdoor play is well controlled in a playground area that is not entirely appropriate for the children's needs.
94. Good teaching enables the children under five to make good progress in all of the areas of learning. They gain the necessary confidence to take full advantage of the rich variety of opportunities that are created for at later stages in the school.

## **98. ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **98. English**

95. Since the previous inspection, too little has been done to raise attainment in English, especially that of the high attainers. Consequently, standards have remained static. However, there has been a renewed impetus this term to improve both the teaching and learning. Well focused monitoring by the new coordinator and a boost to the Literacy Hour are having a significant impact on improving the quality of the work and are helping to raise standards.

96. The results of the 1998 national reading tests for seven-year-olds were above the national average but below average in comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The test results in writing were average compared with all schools but below average when compared with similar schools. The results of the 1998 national tests for eleven-year-olds in English were average compared with all schools and well below average for similar schools.
97. Preliminary analysis of the 1999 English results of the school contained in the 'Autumn Package' show standards overall as being broadly average at Key Stage 1 and above average at Key Stage 2. Results are below that of similar schools. There is indication that pupils are achieving significantly better at the higher level 5 than nationally, and in line with that of similar schools. There is no significant variation in the performance of boys and girls.
98. The inspection findings show that standards in English are average at both key stages. There are indications that in some classes standards are set to rise as the impact of good, and sometimes very good, teaching enables the pupils to make better progress. Good attention paid to improving the attainments of pupils with special educational needs, who make good progress in learning as a consequence. The Literacy Hour is well structured and the teachers are now identifying and communicating clear objectives for learning. The teaching approaches are now more focused on the pupils' contributions. Nevertheless, in group work throughout the school, there is still too little attention given to ensuring that the pupils have sufficient guidance to enable them to work independently and to the clearly the amount and quality of the work that is expected. Whole class sessions are used effectively to re-visit the objectives established at the outcome but there is too little emphasis given to carrying these forward as individual targets to aid each pupils' future learning.
99. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment in speaking and listening are above average. The pupils listen attentively to their teacher and make good contributions in class discussions. In a lesson based upon a story of two grandmothers, a Year 2 child observed that one was dressed in quite "posh" clothes compared to the other. This was shared spontaneously with others in the group and stimulated a good discussion about other differences. Many pupils have good ideas and can explain them clearly, particularly on an individual basis. They listen well to other children's views.
100. At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in reading is in line with the national average and a number of pupils are achieving higher than this. The majority of pupils enjoy books and read with a good level of accuracy. They can talk about the types of stories they prefer and the parts that they most enjoy. Most pupils regularly take their books home and read to a member of their family. They understand terminology such as title, author and characters. They use a range of strategies for tackling new words confidently.
101. Attainment in writing is broadly average at the end of this key stage. Without help from adults, many pupils are able to write sentences with basic punctuation and simple spellings reasonably correct. They do this for a range of purposes in different lessons, but few pupils include interesting vocabulary and ideas. They know how to label diagrams and complete charts, but are not producing a sufficient range of creative writing of their own. In the retelling of the story of 'The Ugly Duckling', most pupils' writing provided little detail and few complex sentences were used. Some higher attaining pupils are structuring their writing quite well and using a cursive style of handwriting. The pupils vary considerably in their ability to write neatly. Their handwriting is usually legible and the letters are mainly formed correctly, but not necessarily evenly. Not all pupils can use lines appropriately. The presentation of their work, therefore, varies in quality.
102. In Key Stage 1, progress in English is satisfactory overall and good in speaking and

listening. In the reception class, the clear focus on the development of the pupils' speaking and listening skills in all areas of the curriculum enables them to make good progress. For example in Year 2, the follow up lesson on the story of Guy Fawkes provided the pupils with opportunities to develop their performance skills. They were excited yet nervous about using the tape recorder and microphone, but gradually their voices became stronger and some pupils became quite dramatic as they told their part of the story. Sometimes, however, opportunities to challenge the higher attaining pupils to explore ideas and justify choices are missed. This has a limiting effect on their progress. The Literacy Hour is making a positive contribution to the satisfactory progress being made in reading and writing. Routines for guided reading are becoming established and are supporting the pupils' progress in tackling challenging text and in reading with appropriate expression. The arrangements provide for progression in the acquisition of basic reading skills and an interest in words and sentences is developed, but it is low key in some lessons. The progress that the pupils make in reading is enhanced by the recording of their reading activities in their own 'Pupil's Day Book' and by good support from their parents. The teachers encourage their pupils to become confident independent writers, capable of writing in different ways for different purposes. They clearly progress in their ability to do this but opportunities to write creatively and for real purposes and real readerships are too limited. The progress that is made in presenting work correctly is not satisfactory throughout the key stage.

103. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards of attainment in speaking and listening are above average. The majority of pupils listen carefully in lessons and make useful contributions to class discussions. For example, one pupil was able to define streamline as "a shape to enable the train to go faster". Generally, the pupils use appropriate language and tone to communicate clearly when answering their teachers' questions. However, the skills of talking with confidence in front of the class and developing a well-reasoned argument for presentation and debate have not been systematically developed across the key stage, which has had a limiting effect upon standards.
104. At the end of this key stage, attainment in reading is also average. The majority of pupils can read their texts with the expected levels of fluency and understanding. They understand key terms such as index, contents, glossary and bibliography. Most pupils can use skimming and scanning techniques and are able to locate information accurately in a page of text. They are able to express personal preferences for certain types of literature and make judgements about the books that they are currently reading. They know how to use the library and CD ROMs to support their work in English and other subjects such as history. Short research tasks to find particular information are undertaken regularly.
105. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in writing is broadly in line with the national average. The majority of pupils are able to plan and structure their work in a logical manner. They have an appropriate understanding of grammar. Many Year 6 pupils can write in a variety of forms; for example, they understand what an explanatory text is and are practising their skills in this area. These pupils are writing information leaflets about how particular items work, such as a mincer, a pencil sharpener, and a paper strimmer. A few pupils use interesting vocabulary and expressions, for instance the strimmer was described by one pupil as having a 'transparent finger guard'. The majority of pupils spell common words correctly and write legibly in a cursive style. Nevertheless, there is potential for improving the quality of writing content and the standard of presentation. The pupils know how to draft work but significant improvements are not always made to the quality of writing, and mistakes are sometimes repeated in the final draft. No significant variation in the attainment of boys and girls was found in either key stage.
106. Progress in English at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall, but is good in the lower key stage classes. The additional literacy support given to the pupils in Year 3 is contributing positively to their progress. Throughout this key stage, good progress is made in speaking and listening. There are many opportunities for the pupils to share ideas with the class and

as they work together in small groups. Not all aspects of speaking and listening skills are developed consistently, though. For example, the practice of exploring ideas and valuing individual pupil's views, yet putting forward counter views, is developing well in Year 4. This was illustrated when the pupils were encouraged to offer their responses to a story about Attila the Hen and battery farming. Many of the pupils considered carefully what might happen to the old hen and contributed their ideas confidently. They became very involved in the subject but still showed respect for each other's views. The reading skills acquired in Key Stage 1 are further developed, enabling the majority of pupils to make satisfactory progress. Some pupils make very good progress. Guided reading as part of the Literacy Hours is providing valuable learning support to pupils. They are exposed to a range of texts with challenging vocabulary and given good opportunities to develop their understanding through discussion. The modelling of good reading skills by staff is also proving very helpful. Across the key stage, the pupils have opportunities to write in a range of forms but have less experience of poetry writing and sustained creative work or research for real purposes. Their progress over time is satisfactory, but progress in lessons is beginning to accelerate due to the higher profile given to the subject this term.

107. The pupils' attitudes to learning are good throughout the school. The majority of pupils are attentive; they generally concentrate well and stay on task. They show respect for each other and for the staff, and they care for materials and classroom equipment well. Many pupils have very good cooperation skills and very good relationships with each other.
108. The quality of the English teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, with some very good teaching of speaking and listening skills. In Key Stage 2, the teaching is good overall. The staff have worked very hard throughout this term to secure the planning of the Literacy Hours. They are conscientiously evaluating their lessons and supporting each other in making modifications. This is increasing the good features in lessons and if this impetus continues, the impact upon the progress that pupils make and the standards they achieve will soon become more significant. In lower Key Stage 2, some very successful lessons were observed. In these lessons, the careful plans were carried out effectively and appropriate learning objectives were explained to the pupils so that they knew clearly what their teacher expected them to achieve. The pupils also participate in evaluating and improving their own work. Specific learning objectives are referred to consistently by the teacher in interactions with the pupils, the pace is brisk, and progress is reviewed at the end of the lesson. The lesson objectives are used to assess the pupils' learning and form the basis of marking and praise. Some effective techniques for class reading were also observed, together with a very good open questioning style which motivated pupils to really think and participate fully in the lesson. The organisation of group work generally has a positive impact on the pupils' learning, but the level of challenge in some activities is not well matched to their needs and abilities. All teachers give clear instructions to their class, use resources effectively, and have good relationships with their pupils.
109. The new coordinator has made a very good start in leading and managing English, in partnership with the headteacher, governors and colleagues. An audit of needs was carried out and a plan to meet the needs was implemented immediately. This includes a range of activities such as in-service training for staff, purchasing of new resources, and the monitoring of colleagues' lessons, followed by useful and encouraging feedback. There are now sufficient good quality resources available and accessible to the staff and pupils. The new reading scheme has been received positively and new books for the library have been purchased with Parent/Teacher Association funding. The library is a useful resource with an adequate collection of books. The nature of the accommodation restricts its use by pupils for research purposes.

#### 113. **Mathematics**

110. The previous inspection report showed that standards in mathematics were satisfactory overall and that the pupils had acceptable levels of basic numeracy. In addition, the quality

of teaching was sound, with some weaknesses in Key Stage 2, and there was inadequate management because there was no subject coordinator. In 1999 it is evident that mathematics is an improving subject, though there are still some inconsistencies.

111. For example, in the 1999 National Curriculum tests, overall standards were above the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. However, in comparison to the standards achieved in similar schools the picture was not as strong, as the school's results were only at an average level. The pattern in 1998 was similar at this key stage.
112. The results in the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests were not as good as those in the second key stage in either year. In 1999, the results matched the national average but fell well below the average found in similar schools. In 1998, standards were, overall, even lower in Key Stage 1.
113. On the other hand, there is good evidence from these tests that the higher achieving pupils do well on the whole. In 1999 the proportion of pupils achieving level 3 at Key Stage 1 and level 5 at Key Stage 2 was in excess of the national average. This proportion stands good comparison with similar schools at Key Stage 2 but is not as favourable at Key Stage 1 as the results were only average.
114. Thus, the picture in National Curriculum tests is better at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1. This is borne out by the findings of the inspection. The evidence from close study of the pupils' past work shows that standards are good in mathematics by the end of Year 6. Standards are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1, but the higher achievers are not always given work that is demanding enough. However, evidence from the current year shows a better match of work to the pupils' levels of attainment and improved standards all-round. This trend sets the school well on-track to meet its statutory targets for attainment by the year 2002. On the evidence of last year, this goal would have been very demanding at Key Stage 1. This year, the indicators are more positive because of the renewed impetus to boost standards.
115. Over time, the pupils' progress is good. The starting level of mathematics is broadly average, and the pupils pick up speed in their learning in the early years. Their progress reaches a plateau through Key Stage 1 but then accelerates at a good pace through Key Stage 2. This is true in all aspects of mathematics, including basic number and arithmetic because the Numeracy Hour is already having a good impact. The pupils with special educational needs are given effective support. The work is well geared to their needs and they often achieve at better than expected levels. Overall, the pupils with special needs make good progress in both key stages. In some lessons, more demands could be made of high attaining pupils.
116. One particular strength of the pupils' attainment is evident throughout school. They develop good problem solving and investigation skills because the work focuses firmly on the study of pattern, relationships and the development of flexible methods of solving problems. Most lessons include a good numeracy element at the start. Not only does this strengthen knowledge of tables and number bonds, for example but it also gives the pupils good insights into the process of finding an answer. However, their speed of calculation is still rather slow at times and although some work is done against the clock, this is not widespread.
117. The pupils' ability to process mathematical data is enhanced by the use of computers and allied technology. By the age of seven, they can sort, match, compare and contrast objects and data and they speak clearly of their findings. The information gathered is purposefully presented in graphs and charts. During their time in Key Stage 2, the pupils develop these skills further and produce some quite complex statistical data which they represent on pie charts, intricate Venn diagrams and frequency tables. By Year 6, some of this work is clearly at level 5. Similarly, work in measurement and shape and space also shows good

development to the end of Key Stage 2, and there is strong evidence this year of work at the higher level.

118. The pupils show a positive response to mathematics and as a result the quality of their learning is generally good. Their behaviour is predominantly good, though there are a few occasions when a small number of boys in particular become distracted and waiver off task. There is some limited evidence from National Curriculum tests results in the recent past to show that overall, the boys do not always make the same progress as the girls. The quality of relationships is very good in mathematics lessons and the pupils' personal development is well taken care of because of the firm emphasis on doing and thinking mathematics rather than just writing it.
119. The good quality of learning stems from good teaching. Throughout the school, the teaching has improved over the years. At both key stages, a high proportion of the lessons showed good teaching with many strong features. The chief of these are teachers' good subject knowledge, planning, management and methods. Teachers' raised expectations, and to some extent the pace of group work in some lessons, and the consistent setting of targets and sharing them with pupils are aspects for further improvement if standards are to lift to compare even more favourably with benchmark schools.
120. The typical mathematics lesson starts with ten minutes or so devoted to basic skills in number, which is well dovetailed into the theme for the main part of the lesson. This was seen, for example, when the pupils in the Year 2 class started work by in counting well in fives as a preparation for the work to follow on telling the time. The good impact of the work was shown when one pupil stated confidently that half past two on the clock face was shown as 2.30 on a digital clock *'because it goes up in fives, 0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30'* This lesson, as many others, ended with a skilful drawing together of the learning so that the pupils knew the key facts to remember.
121. The mathematics curriculum is capably managed, though the subject coordinator was on long-term absence at the time of the inspection. The chief shortcoming is the inadequate monitoring of the teaching and learning in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses and to specify priorities for improvement. Nonetheless, there is a good overall drive for standards, and the working ethos in mathematics lessons is productive, happy and enjoyable.
122. For the future, the evening out of provision and standards to the best of current practice is the key to improvement. After that, the all-round quest for excellence is an achievable target. Present indicators show that the school has made a good start this year in its bid to do the best by its pupils.

126. **Science**

123. At the time of the last inspection, standards in science were good. They remain so, and science is a continuing strength of the curriculum.
124. At the end of Key Stage 1, the teacher assessments in 1998 show that standards were above the national average in three strands of science. These assessments also showed that the pupils achieve well at the higher level 3, except in the life and living processes strand, where they are well below the national average. Compared to those of similar schools, the teacher assessments show standards are broadly in line with national average at this higher level.
125. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in National Curriculum tests in 1998 were well above the national average at both level 4 and level 5. When compared to similar schools, standards were above the national average. The trends from 1996 to 1998 show consistently above national average standards in science and that the girls perform better

than the boys. Boys' performance follows that of boys nationally.

126. The inspection findings confirm that standards are above average across both key stages. A preliminary analysis of the 1999 National Curriculum tests indicates that, compared to the school's results last year, achievement has been maintained at both key stages.
127. At Key Stage 1, the pupils find out about buoyancy and discuss their findings using accurate scientific terminology about the weight, size and nature of various materials. They do this with confidence and certainty. They explore the use of the senses to recognise that materials have many properties, whilst still using scientific vocabulary. They establish similarities and differences before drawing together their findings in order to record their conclusions on a survey sheet. They collaborate well and undertake investigations with confidence. In Year 2, they organise themselves well as they present scientific evidence on their bodies in a range of ways. They include making tables, using illustrations and producing posters to promote good health. They particularly enjoy the practical investigations, which have a positive impact on their learning.
128. At Key Stage 2, investigations and experiments remain a central core of the pupils' learning. In Year 3, for example, they collect evidence of human organisms by using disclosing tablets and a mirror before cleaning their teeth. This experiment in the life and living processes strand of the National Curriculum is well supervised by a support adult, but gives the pupils the opportunity to make their own observations. They are able to make comparisons with one another and identify trends in their results, which are recorded on a diagram. The pupils continue to use scientific language when comparing solids and liquids in Year 5, but their recording is self chosen and is appropriately and imaginatively varied. In Year 6, the pupils consider reversible and irreversible changes in materials whilst working in mixed ability groups. They employ 'fair testing' procedures and use equipment skilfully. They make precise observations that are then shared with the whole class in accurate scientific language, in the knowledge that their information is going to be used at a later stage of their study of 'changes'.
129. In both key stages, the pupils make good progress. Their progress is best when they solve their own problems and make their own decisions about how and what they are going to record. They explore and investigate with precision and develop their knowledge and understanding capably. Both boys and girls make good progress and generate a good pace to their own learning. They carry out their tasks in a confident way. The pupils with special educational needs make equally good progress as they are fully involved and supported in the groups by both other pupils and adults. This valuable support confirms their progress in their understanding of science.
130. The pupils have particularly good attitudes to science where the teaching is at its best. Although excited by some of their investigations, they share their findings with one another sensibly and in a controlled way so that they are understood by everyone. They talk, listen and research with confidence as they investigate and experiment. They support one another effectively in drawing accurate conclusions.
131. The quality of the teaching is good in both key stages and has some very good features. Where the teaching is at its best, the tasks are well planned and resourced, and clear instructions are given. The pupils' knowledge and understanding are developed by using their skills in researching, making decisions and drawing accurate conclusions. The teachers are confident about what they are teaching because they are well supported by a good policy statement and a scheme of work based on the National Curriculum requirements and guidance. Teachers plan work carefully to meet the range of needs in the class, including high attainers. They organise practical tasks that are not only interesting to pupils but also give them ample opportunity to explore and investigate for themselves.
132. There is a well-informed coordinator who works with commitment and enthusiasm to

promote the subject. She ensures that the resources are of good quality and quantity. They are particularly effectively stored in a school that has very little storage space so that they are readily accessible. As a result of the coordinator's work, there are good assessment systems in place that are being effectively used by teachers to assist pupils' next steps in learning. The very good management of science is underpinning the positive standards that are being consistently achieved.



136.

## OTHER SUBJECTS

### Information and communications technology

133. Last time round, the inspectors concluded that standards in information technology were satisfactory across all years. They also found that the generally sound quality of the teaching was providing the pupils with a worthwhile experience in mastering skills and knowledge in the use of computers. Recent developments such as new staffing, additional resources and better levels of expectation, have led to improvements in the subject, including the broadening of the curriculum to encompass the use of the Internet and multimedia packages to locate and communicate information.
134. Today, standards in information and communications technology are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 and good at the end of Key Stage 2. Because most pupils have good computing facilities at home, the standards are boosted. The pupils make the expected progress in Key Stage 1 and this means they build a strong platform of skills and knowledge for development in Key Stage 2. Consequently, between the ages of seven and eleven, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
135. There is a firm focus on the use of computers to support work in other subjects, with the best examples to be found in Year 6. Equally evident is the fact that this was not always the case. The work completed in previous years, whilst of satisfactory quality overall, is not as wide ranging in coverage as in the current year. Because the cross-curricular aspect of the work is now on a firmer footing, the pupils are extending their skills and knowledge of handling computers and allied technology at a better rate, and standards are boosted.
136. There is some imaginative work to help the pupils understand the intricacies of the electronic handling of data. The pupils in Year 1, for example, listen to different sound tracks and not only recognise a bell or motor horn, but also say what information these noises are giving the listener. This prepares them well for the process of locating and identifying simple information as presented by the computer. So, their understanding is enriched, as well as their physical skill in handling the mouse and the keyboard.
137. The best work is found at the end of Key Stage 2. The school has recently signed up to *Schoolnet2000*, a commercially sponsored Internet service that Year 6 pupils were observed using to good capacity. In some cases, they were word-processing text to post via email to other schools; in others they were entering data collected in class as part of coordinated work with other users of the site. These pupils are adept at logging on, giving passwords, observing the necessary Internet protocol and in conducting structured searches for specific data. Additionally, Year 6 make very good use of computers in many aspects of their work. In a very good history lesson, for instance, the computer was used as a source of historical evidence which complemented that found by talking to eye witnesses, by studying original documents, by watching video clips, and that found in books. All this helped the pupils to grasp what history is, and to understand the advantages and shortcomings of different sources of evidence. The pupils are clearly enthused by such learning opportunities, and as in most lessons, their resulting behaviour is good and, relationships are very well developed.
138. This type of lesson represents the best in the school's current practice. Elsewhere in the school, information and communications technology is not used to such immediate effect. Overall, the quality of the teaching is sound at Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. The teachers have the expected level of subject knowledge, they plan good learning opportunities that are well organised, the pupils are managed effectively and there is a good variety of activities. What remains for enhancement is the pace in some lessons and the challenge provided for all pupils. More consistent use of information and communications technology is still something the school has to work at.

139. The management of the subject is much improved this year. The new coordinator is well versed in both knowledge and skills and has an enthusiasm for the subject that is infectious. The immediate impact has been in her own class, Year 6. The task is now to spread this calibre of provision across all classes. This will require more regular and rigorous monitoring, better assessment and a programme of staff development to maximise the teachers' knowledge and expectation.
140. The school anticipates its new buildings and the associated provision of much enhanced computer facilities with enthusiasm. In the meantime, it is well placed to build on the strengths of information and communications technology in order to take standards one step nearer excellence and to take full advantage of the future level of resourcing.
144. **Religious education**
141. In 1995, standards in religious education were satisfactory and the teaching quality was sound. This situation remained the same until the beginning of the current year, when changes were made to the staffing. A temporary coordinator has undertaken an audit to discover how the subject should be taken forward and has given clear interim guidance to the staff to support current learning, whilst a policy document and a scheme of work are developed. The quality of the teaching is good and some good progress in learning was observed. However, the planning of the curriculum and time available for teaching and learning are not yet ensuring consistently good continuity and progression in learning.
142. Attainment in religious education at the end of each key stage for both boys and girls is in line with the targets in the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, acquire knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and make good progress overall.
143. In Key Stage 1, the pupils begin to understand the different celebrations of contrasting religions as they consider what Christmas means to Christians and what Diwali means to Hindus. During the week of inspection, one parent came into school to share personal experiences of the Hindu faith, which raised the pupils' awareness significantly. In this session, the parent brought in divas and other religious artefacts with her in order to give the pupils actual knowledge of how they are used in Hindu celebrations. This made the experience much more meaningful to the pupils, and enabled them to gain good insights into an aspect of religious belief of which they had little previous awareness.
144. The effectiveness of real life learning in religion is effectively continued at Key Stage 2. This is evident, for example, in Year 6 where the pupils use previous discussions to develop their understanding of a more difficult concept concerning the ways in which people gain inner strength in order to deal with difficulties. They listen carefully to one another as well as to their teacher and make intelligent contributions to whole class discussions. They order their thoughts clearly before recording their opinions in a personal format. Their good progress is confirmed by the confidence with which they contribute to the discussions, listen to others respectfully, and are able to move on to recording their feelings appropriately.
145. In both key stages, the pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are able to express themselves confidently, voicing opinions openly and honestly, whilst also carefully considering the views of others. They concentrate well and when their imagination is caught by the topicality of events, for example when sharing personal reactions very readily to events such as the Egyptian air crash and the situation in Orissa.
146. The quality of the teaching is good in both key stages. In the best lessons, the planning is effective. Questions are used skilfully, and are well distributed to ensure the fullest participation of all pupils. Good pace is maintained and the lessons are effectively

managed. At the end of Key Stage 2, good use is made of every day research of news in the media,' enabling the pupils to make effective contributions to discussion.

147. The subject is being temporarily coordinated by a teacher who is covering for the post-holder on long-term sick leave. The temporary coordinator has only taken over responsibility since the beginning of this term and has concentrated on making colleagues aware of the need to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. This has resulted in the good teaching and progress being made in lessons, but the pupils' attainment is still only satisfactory because there has been no improvement in the provision of resources since the previous inspection. This inhibits the meaningful teaching of other faiths as required by the locally agreed syllabus. The resources, particularly artefacts, are unsatisfactory. The temporary coordinator is aware of the need to enhance the provision, but sees that other priorities, such as the drafting of a curriculum policy, need to be fulfilled first in order to establish clearly what resources are needed. There has not yet been a review of the time allocation to ensure that this subject is now afforded its new core status.

151. **Art**

148. At the last inspection, standards were judged to be sound. Through the provision of worthwhile experiences, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are now enabled to make good progress in learning at both key stages.

149. Progress in Key Stage1 currently is good. The pupils can recognise a range of colours, shapes and patterns. They use this understanding in their work to represent what they see and feel. They are able to use a variety of materials successfully, including paint, card, fabric and wool, to create pictures and models. They have mixed paints to achieve a range of skin colours for their self-portraits. Other experiments with paint include vegetable printing and making 'bubble' pictures. Year 2 pupils show good progress in their abilities to use pencil. They investigate and create line patterns using a variety of thick and thin marks. Many pupils concentrate well and demonstrate careful attention to detail. Their pencil drawings of scenes from the Guy Fawkes story show good awareness of size and space.

150. Progress in Key Stage 2 is also good. In this key stage, the pupils are confident in experimenting with a variety of techniques and materials which include clay, leather, wire, and textiles. They can express what they have seen in imaginative ways. In a Year 3 lesson, the pupils use books to inform themselves about Viking designs and then reflect aspects of these in their own work. They show good progress in designing and making a variety of items such as brooches, spinners, bookmarks and pendants and can talk about them with understanding.

151. The pupils respond well to the range of opportunities provided for them in art lessons. Many are enthusiastic and clearly enjoy both doing and talking about their activities. They work diligently and show appreciation of each other's efforts. They treat materials and equipment with respect.

152. On the basis of the small percentage of lessons observed and the scrutiny of pupils' earlier work, the quality of teaching in both key stages is judged to be good. A wide variety of experiences are provided for pupils both in lessons and by visiting artists to the school. The assessment and recording of the pupils' progress is inadequate. Sufficient resources of good quality are provided for the pupils. They are stored and maintained appropriately. Access is satisfactory.

156. **Design and technology**

153. There were few opportunities to see design and technology lessons during the inspection week. Evidence was gained by examination of the pupils' previous work, scrutiny of

displays and discussions with pupils. From this evidence, it is clear that good teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the planning, designing and making aspects of design and technology.

154. Progress is good in Key Stage 1. The pupils design and make products using a variety of re-cycled materials. They are competent in assembling and joining in a variety of ways to make models. For example, the pupils in the reception class show very good progress in understanding the basic functional features of a soap dish, regardless of its novelty design. They are improving their ability to talk about their ideas and explain why they have made particular choices.
155. The pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 is also good. In a Year 5 lesson on 'moving toys', for instance, the pupils try very hard to deepen their understanding of the role of cams in transferring rotary movement to linear movement. Their vocabulary is expanding as they start to use words such as pivot, off-centre, cam and follower. They show good progress in thinking of ideas for moving toys and draw their designs with appropriate detail. They use card, a hole punch and split clips effectively in the production of their designs. There is a good balance between the development of design and evaluation skills, and practical skills.
156. Most pupils say they enjoy this subject and are keen to explain how they completed their design and technology tasks. Relationships between the pupils are very good, enabling them to work effectively together in pairs or trios.
157. There is good leadership and management of design and technology. At the time of the last inspection standards in the subject were judged to be good and the strengths of the work have been maintained. The planning of lessons follows the current government guidance, and a very worthwhile experience of the subject is provided for the pupils. The curriculum is enhanced considerably by the many links that the school has made with the local secondary school and other organisations within business and industry. The resources for design and technology are satisfactory; various materials and tools are stored systematically in a central area.
161. **Geography**
158. The previous inspection report indicated that standards were at the expected level in geography and that the teaching was satisfactory. There has been some improvement in provision since then, and through worthwhile experiences, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall.
159. The reception class pupils know something of Seighford, especially the area around the school. They talk eagerly about the buildings they recognise, including the church, school and public house. One pupil talked with thorough conviction of the *inside* of this last building. These pupils can also place a picture of buildings they recognise from a walk around the village on a simple street plan, though they find it harder to say what came *before* or *after* a particular landmark.
160. Year 2 pupils are able to make comparisons and contrasts between houses in Seighford and Stafford and those on remote Scottish islands. They show some ingenuity in this and argue convincingly, for example, that Granny Island (the inhabitant of a Scottish croft) could not have a *Playstation* because the house had no electricity. (There are no obvious transmission lines). They also state that she most likely uses a mobile phone because there are no telephone lines! In general, the pupils have good eye for detail in making such comparisons and their awareness of the features of different places is good.
161. Key Stage 2 pupils learn about an even wider range of places and the impact of humans on their environments. In a Year 4 lesson observed, the pupils compared good quality aerial

photographs with large scale Ordnance Survey maps, from different periods, of the district around the school. They matched the course of local lanes and streams on the picture with the equivalent on the map, and were able to account, in simple terms, for the effects of different scales and dates of the maps.

162. Because the work is interesting and motivating, the pupils respond well and are generally well behaved. Relationships are a strength in geography lessons. The quality of the teaching is good in both key stages because the teachers have good subject knowledge, are firm with discipline, employ a good range of teaching styles and use the available resources well. However, there are times when the pace of learning could be brisker and the tasks could be more challenging, particularly for higher achievers. Everyday assessment could be more effective in identifying rate of progress and how the planned lessons should be modified to take account of the various needs of the pupils.
163. Geography is well managed by an enthusiastic and successful coordinator, though there has been little opportunity for the direct monitoring of the teaching, learning and the curriculum. Accordingly, the coordinator's knowledge of what is done well or requires improvement, whilst good could be enhanced by more opportunities to see teaching and learning taking place. The local environment is used well to support the work, and the Internet and the good programme of educational visits are used successfully to build skills, knowledge and understanding.
167. **History**
164. In 1995, standards in history were satisfactory and the teaching was of sound quality. This situation remained the same until the beginning of the current year when changes were made to the staffing and the curriculum coverage. The quality of the teaching is now good, and this results in the pupils, making good progress in history through the school, including those with special educational needs.
165. The curriculum for history is good. The pupils' knowledge of key facts in history is built well because of the good coverage given to history topics. At the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' progress is accelerated and their attainment exceeds the expected level. The pupils develop good understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of using a range of historical evidence, they research topics themselves and they produce some good pieces of written work, based on their personal studies. Thus, in a Year 6 lesson, groups of pupils learned about how conditions have changed in the last 50 years. Some pupils interviewed a long-time resident of Seighford, a group composed an email to a 1950s emigrant to Australia and others used a CD-ROM encyclopaedia to find out about different forms of transport. Five pupils devised their own research methods to find out which pop music different generations favour, and yet others were searching the Internet to locate specific information.
166. This range of work is not unusual this year and is a marked improvement on the recent past. The available evidence shows that progress was solid, rather than brisk, until this year. Because the emphasis, coverage and commitment to history have improved, the pupils' response is better. Their behaviour is good, and there is a large measure of self-discipline in lessons in Year 6. Relationships are very good and allow the pupils to work collaboratively and independently of the teacher. Finally, the personal development of the pupils is a strength because research and study skills are promoted well, and they become well motivated, enthusiastic learners.
167. In general, the good teaching is matched by the good response of the pupils. The teachers have good subject knowledge, plan lessons with good content, use the resources, including information and communications technology well, control the pupils effectively and use a wide range of teaching methods. However, in some aspects of the teaching, further

improvement is needed. These include increased expectation, brisker pace and the consistent setting of work that challenges all pupils to their maximum. Assessment is also in need of enhancement because it is inconsistently applied, and the information it produces is not used with sufficient precision to assist the next steps in an individual's learning.

168. History is well managed by an enthusiastic and effective coordinator. There has yet to be much monitoring of standards, progress and teaching in the subject, though the coordinator has good knowledge of what is happening.

169. In all, there are many strengths in history, but there are also inconsistencies. The school managers know they have to tackle these in order to boost progress and improve the quality of learning so it is uniform with the best practice in school.

173. **Music**

170. The strengths in the teaching and learning in music have been sustained since the previous inspection. Where a specialist school-based teacher works with the pupils, excellent standards are achieved. The pupils, including those with special needs, make at least good progress in music throughout the school. Boys and girls enjoy their music making in the school. The school also draws widely upon input from a number of peripatetic music teachers who teach strings, woodwind and brass instrument skills to a significant number of pupils from both key stages. This tuition is of good quality. The school has its own accomplished orchestra which rehearses under the leadership of one of the peripatetic teachers, with the support of the school's specialist teacher. The high quality of the work achieved in music is one of the strengths of the school curriculum.

171. There was no opportunity to observe class music lessons in Key Stage 1, but it was possible to observe pupils in this key stage working together with the specialist music teacher in assemblies and with the peripatetic string music teacher. It was clear from these observations that the pupils make good progress in performing with one another. For example, when they are playing violins they show good understanding of dynamics and notation in both years 1 and 2. When working with the specialist teacher, pupils' singing is of high quality, and they make good progress. They are able to alter the volume and pitch of their voices in unaccompanied and use hand signs that indicate their understanding of notation. They skilfully show understanding of dynamics in singing when accompanied on piano in both well-known and less well-known songs. They also join in confidently with Key Stage 2 pupils when singing two-part songs in assembly. A major factor in developing skills is the real joy with which they make their responses. This makes a very positive impact upon their learning.

172. The pupils make good progress as they move through Key Stage 2, building upon their previous experiences in both class lessons and their instrumental work with peripatetic music teachers. When working with the specialist music teacher they make very good progress. Their progress is best where they develop their knowledge and understanding of dynamics, timbre and the structure of music. They work to time targets to produce high quality compositions in small groups, using a wide range of tuned and un-tuned instruments. These compositions are performed for one another and critical analysis is made. In this way, the pupils learn from one another as well as from their teacher. They work with great confidence and use musical notation to transcribe as they compose. When playing string and wind instruments they build upon the listening skills used in other subjects in order to self critically analyse their results and improve their performance

173. The pupils apply themselves very well and persevere in order to improve on their personal best and achieve higher standards. They work well together in pairs and groups and always manage to give one another effective levels of support in making enjoyable music. They are enthusiastic about their music making. They use their instruments carefully. Their pleasure in music making is evident in their high levels of concentration and their good behaviour.
174. The teaching is good overall across both key stages, with good input from peripatetic music teachers. It is outstanding at Key Stage 2 when the specialist teacher is leading the teaching. The best lessons are characterised by very thorough planning which is well supported by very good resourcing and high teacher expectations. The very clear exposition indicates these high expectations and is followed up by open-ended questioning that makes the pupils consider their efforts in order to improve upon them. The lessons are conducted at a very brisk pace and this leads to considerable gains in the pupils' knowledge and understanding, and in the overall quality of their performance.
175. The recently appointed coordinator has very good subject expertise and is committed to ensuring that music goes from strength to strength. Although there is still a need to produce a policy and to review the scheme of work, the coordinator has set clear expectations to colleagues by the example of her teaching in both key stages.
179. **Physical education**
176. Although indoor facilities are very limited, the pupils are provided with opportunities to develop their physical abilities through games, gymnastics and dance. The two playgrounds are used well for lessons. Swimming opportunities are available for pupils from Year 2 onwards. Last time the school was inspected standards were judged to be sound and this is still the case today.
177. Progress in physical education is satisfactory at both key stages.
178. The pupils in Key Stage 1, for example, show progress in their ability to listen and move to music. A recording of Bach music stimulates them to explore various movements inspired by the way a caterpillar moves. The pupils show increasing control and poise and a good awareness of space. Progress in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory generally, but some very good progress was observed due to excellent teaching. In this lesson, the pupils built up a sequence, which included a forward roll, and performed it using gymnastic tables and boxes. They improved their efforts by observing and evaluating the performance of others as they demonstrated in the lesson. The pupils understand the effect of exercise on their bodies and sustain energetic activity over a considerable period of time. All of the pupils understand and operate the safety rules well, which is vital in the confined area in which they have to work.
179. The majority of pupils are enthusiastic and have positive attitudes to their learning in this subject. They have a good sense of self-discipline and generally respond very quickly to the teachers' instructions. All pupils have very good attitudes and show respect for the efforts and feelings of others. They cooperate well with their teachers, with each other in group work and in setting up apparatus. They treat equipment with care.
180. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The best lessons are characterised by effective warm up activities, brisk pace, clear teaching points, and opportunity to practise and improve performance. Adequate time is also provided for evaluation of performance to enhance the pupils' understanding of their own development.
184. **Swimming**

181. The inspection of this school included a focused view of swimming which is reported below. Swimming lessons are not programmed for this term, therefore it was not possible to observe any in progress. Evidence was based on a close scrutiny of the school's records and discussions with the headteacher and pupils. Currently 7 out of 34 pupils have still to reach the expected standard at the end of Key Stage 2 and the school assesses that 1 pupil is unlikely to achieve it. If this is the case, then details will be forwarded to the secondary school to which this pupil transfers. From the evidence evaluated, standards appear to be in line with the expectations for eleven-year-olds.



182. The programme for swimming is appropriately planned to comprise six lessons of 30 minutes length for the pupils in Years 2 and 3. The pupils in years 4,5 and 6 each have five lessons of thirty minutes per session. The school uses an indoor heated pool which is managed by the local authority and is approximately eight miles away. The pool is 25 metres long, and one metre graduating to two metres in depth. The pupils travel by coach and are supervised on the journey and as they change for the lesson, by their teacher and volunteer helpers. These helpers are usually mums of the pupils in the particular class receiving the lesson and therefore quite a number give voluntary support. The lessons are conducted by two swimming instructors employed by the local education authority and two teaching staff from the school. The costs include pool hire, fees for instructors and transport. Subsidised swimming costs come from the school's delegated budget. The amount of income equates to the expenditure. The existing provision gives good value for money, but, due to the distance travelled, there is a negative impact in terms of time on the rest of the curriculum. Assessment of the pupils' achievement is made during the lessons and marked by the award of different coloured badges (Red, Green, Yellow, Bronze, Silver and Gold). A useful record is kept of the dates that individual pupils achieve their badges. The provision appears to be effective, though it is not entirely possible to judge its quality.
183. In general, physical education has been a very low profile subject in recent years. The policy and scheme of work provide good guidance for the teachers but are in need of review to secure appropriate coverage for each year group and the necessary continuity of learning across each of the key stages, given the new curriculum arrangements. The resources for this subject are barely adequate and storage is poor. Access to large apparatus is particularly difficult and inhibits its regular use. The hall is small and teachers have to plan very carefully to ensure that pupils' experiences in gymnastics and dance are not impeded by this. They do this well on the whole, but the unsatisfactory accommodation has a negative impact on the pace at which lessons are conducted and resulting progress. The new coordinator has begun to address some of the needs in this subject and the school will be participating in the 'Top Sport' programme in the New Year.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

- ◆. The inspection was carried out by a team of five inspectors, who, over a period of three days, completed a total of fourteen inspection days in school.
- ◆. A total of eighty lessons was observed, involving nearly forty-three hours.
- ◆. A range of work representing all ages and a range of abilities was examined carefully to check on the attainments and progress being made in all subjects, but especially in English, mathematics and science. Some ten hours were spent in looking at this work, most of which had been kept from the previous year, and was very useful in evaluating pupils' progress over time.
- ◆. A sample of pupils representing all ages and a range of abilities was heard to read.
- ◆. Discussions took place with all staff, the chair of governors and other governors, parents and specialist support service visitors to school to seek their views about the quality of education being provided and the standards being achieved. Many pupils were spoken to during the week to ascertain the depth of their understanding and knowledge about subjects and to see how they view the school.
- ◆. Display was evaluated for its contribution to pupils' learning and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- ◆. All documentation provided by the school was carefully examined, including teachers' planning, assessment data and all records concerning the provision being made for those pupils with special needs.
- ◆. Registration times were observed as were the routines at the start and close of sessions, at breaktime and lunchtime. A number of parents took the opportunity to speak to inspectors at the times when pupils were dropped off or picked up from school.
- ◆. Assemblies were visited and the act of collective worship observed.
- ◆. The action plan from the previous report was used as a starting point and, together with the school's analysis of its performance, was used to check on how well the school has progressed against the targets set.
- ◆. The Registered Inspector held a meeting with eighteen parents before the week of inspection and took into account the views expressed and the comments made by thirty-four per cent of parents who responded to the questionnaire. Ten hours of meetings with staff plus time spent giving subject and teaching debrief was spent.
- ◆. The registered inspector met with the headteacher twice daily to share information about the inspection process and issues arising.

## Data and indicators

### PUPIL DATA

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR - Y6	185	2	17	2

### TEACHERS AND CLASSES

#### Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	8.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.86:1

#### Education support staff (YR - Y6)

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked each week	92

Average class size:	24
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### FINANCIAL DATA

Financial year:	1998/99
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	£
Total income	286290
Total expenditure	284940
Expenditure per pupils	1344.06
Balance brought forward from previous year	1350
Balance carried forward to next year	2650

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

288

Number of questionnaires returned:

97

Responses (percentage of answers in each category): 34% response

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	46	48	1	3	1
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	41	47	4	5	2
The school handles complaints from parents well	8	40	25	7	3
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	28	64	8	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	33	48	13	4	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	35	57	6	2	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	30	43	16	8	1
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	24	56	10	5	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	38	55	6	1	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	40	52	8	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	56	39	4	1	0

### Other issues raised by parents

#### Positive features:

Staff enthusiastic, committed and parents pleased their children have a place at this very popular school.

School said to have one of the best PTA's in the borough.

School innovative and at the cutting edge of school improvements (PFI project, Investors in people, Curriculum awards etc).

#### Negative features:

Job share arrangements

Staff absences causing concern in Key Stage 1.

The time consuming nature of PFI having both costs and benefits which to some extent is reflected in Q3 above, additionally a significant number of parents did not respond to this question, hence the total not being 100 per cent.