

INSPECTION REPORT

St. Patrick's Catholic Primary School
Telford

LEA area: Telford and Wrekin

Unique Reference Number: 123555

Inspection Number: 185835

Headteacher: Mrs. S. Hudson

Reporting inspector: Mr. C. A. Wonfor
17546

Dates of inspection: 1st November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707743

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
Type of control:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	North Road Wellington Telford Shropshire TF1 3ER
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. G. Kendrick
Date of previous inspection:	October 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
C. A. Wonfor, Rgl	Science	Characteristics
	Art	Attainment and progress
	Physical education	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
		Teaching
		Leadership and management
H. Allen, Lay Inspector		School improvement
		Attendance
		Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
		Partnership with parents and the community
Ann Heakin		The efficiency of the school
	Areas of learning for children under five	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
	English	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources;
	English as a second language	
	Design and technology	
Andrew Hicks	Music	
	Mathematics	Curriculum and assessment
	Information technology	
	Geography	
	History	
	Special educational needs	
	Equality of opportunity	

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The quality of leadership is very good especially the management of the curriculum and the support for teaching and learning;
- Pupils' attitudes to their work and their behaviour are excellent, which makes a very positive contribution to the progress they are making;
- The quality of relationships between staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves is outstanding;
- The quality of provision for children under five is very good;
- The quality of the curriculum is very good, it is broad, balanced and very relevant to pupils' needs;
- The quality of assessment procedures are very good which has a positive impact on the good progress pupils' make and the improving standards of attainment;
- Provision for pupils' moral development is outstanding;
- Pupils' capacity for personal development is very good;
- The quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school and often very good;
- The implementation of the school's aims, values and policies are excellent, as is the school's ethos;
- The quality of information the school provides to parents is very good.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Pupils' attainment in science is below national averages and that of English and mathematics;
- II. Pupils' attainment in information technology is below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2;
- III. Opportunities for pupils to continue the good progress they make in physical education at Key Stage 1 is limited at Key Stage 2;
- IV. The quality of financial planning and the monitoring of expenditure are not to the same high standards as other aspects of development planning and monitoring.

The weaknesses outlined above are considerably outweighed by what the school does well. These 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 the school has worked very hard to overcome the serious weaknesses that placed it in special measures. It has made very good progress and is now very well placed to sustain further improvements to meet the challenging but attainable targets it has set itself. The curriculum is now very well planned, teachers' expectations of the work pupils are able to achieve is good as is the pace of work, which enables them to make the good progress they do. The assessment of pupils' work is now very good and clearly focuses on what they already know and includes detailed plans on how they can further improve. The contributions pupils make to lessons are highly valued by teachers, and the shortcomings highlighted in the quality of teaching, particularly at Key Stage 2, have improved significantly. The overall management of the school has improved dramatically, there is a very good school development plan, and very effective procedures to ensure the school runs smoothly and continues to improve. The governing body fully participates in the life and work of the school, and is beginning to carefully monitor its progress. The governing body meet their statutory responsibilities and value for money has notably improved.

· **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
English	B	B
Mathematics	A	A
Science	D	E

Key
<i>well above average</i> A
<i>above average</i>

It is worth noting that although overall standards in science are below the national average there was a great improvement in the number of pupils' attaining levels above the national average when compared to the previous year. In addition, the difference in English between a grade B and a grade A is 0.2 of one average point.

· **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science		Good	Good
Information technology		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

Teaching was satisfactory or better in 100% of lessons; in 81%, teaching was good or better, of which 21% was very good or excellent. Good and very good teaching was observed at both key stages and with children under five, excellent teaching was observed at Key Stage 1.

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	The standard of pupils' behaviour throughout the school is excellent and there have been no exclusions.
Attendance	Pupils' attendance is good and above the national average. Punctuality at the start and during the day is also good.
Ethos*	There is an outstanding ethos throughout the school. Pupils' attitudes to their work are excellent, they are extremely enthusiastic and keen to learn.
Leadership and management	The headteacher is a very effective, influential and supportive leader, who is very well assisted by the deputy headteacher, all staff and an effective governing body.
Curriculum	The curriculum is very good and has been carefully planned to make the most efficient use of the time available for literacy, numeracy and science. In addition, the quality of planning and teaching other subjects in a cross-curricular way is very good and this makes a considerable contribution to the improving levels of pupils' attainment and progress.
Pupils with special educational needs	Are making good progress in line with the well written and clearly defined targets in their individual education plans.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good overall. Opportunities for moral development are outstanding and they are very good for spiritual, social and cultural development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Despite having many new and some temporary staff, the number and experience of teachers and support staff is good. The quality of learning resources are good overall, although some subjects are limited. Although the accommodation is very well used, it is limited and some areas such as, the library, are being used as a temporary classroom which restricts pupils' personal development.
Value for money	Very good.

* *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
<p>V. Parents are very happy with their children's standards of attainment and the progress they make throughout the school;</p> <p>VI. The school has developed reward and sanction procedures that are clearly understood by all;</p> <p>VII. <i>The school is very caring and supportive</i> for example, friendship groups of younger and older pupils mix very well for work and socially;</p> <p>VIII. Very happy with the range and quality of information sent home to parents;</p> <p>IX. Teachers are really interested in their pupils and all staff very approachable;</p> <p>X. Children's behaviour is <i>exemplary</i>.</p>	<p>XI. Some parents are not always sure if d to pupils;</p> <p>XII. A few parents were concerned re being sufficiently stretched, although other</p>

Inspectors' judgements support parents' very positive views of the school. The school is very welcoming and works very closely with them. The quality of marking pupils' homework was judged to be very good with many helpful and supportive comments. The school has already started to address the issue of support for the highest attaining pupils and this is progressing very well.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to build on the strengths of the school and to rectify the weaknesses, the headteacher, governing body and staff should work together to:

Continue to improve pupils' attainment in science, by:

- XIII. implementing the planned monitoring of teaching and learning by the co-ordinator and headteacher;
- XIV. carefully evaluating the scheme of work, especially for Key Stage 2 pupils, to allow them plenty of opportunities to revisit previous work, and;
- XV. once pupils' attainment is at least in line with national averages, plan to bring it in line with English and mathematics.

(Paragraphs: 13, 113)

Improve pupils' standards of attainment in information technology, particularly at Key Stage 2, by:

- XVI. ensuring pupils have full access to all the programmes of study;
- XVII. careful monitoring of teaching and learning to ensure pupils make adequate progress as they move through the school, and;
- XVIII. establishing realistic targets to raise all pupils' levels of attainment, including those higher attainers, by the end of Key Stage 2.

(Paragraphs: 14, 32, 124, 125)

Provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to continue to make good progress in physical education from Key Stage 1 into Key Stage 2, by:

- XIX. appointing a permanent co-ordinator;
 - XX. carefully evaluating how physical education is assessed and evaluated at Key Stage 1;
 - XXI. implementing a similar procedure at Key Stage 2 to track pupils' progress, and;
 - XXII. monitoring the quality of teaching and learning by the co-ordinator and headteacher.
- (Paragraphs: 27, 161, 163, 167)

Improve the quality of financial planning and the monitoring of expenditure to the same high standards as other aspects of development planning and monitoring, by:

XXIII. introducing subject development plans which detail initiatives to raise pupils' attainment and contain appropriate costings for learning resources and inservice training requirements;

XXIV. introducing focused visits for members of the governing body to monitor identified developments in school and then report back to the governing body, and;

XXV. monitoring all expenditure to evaluate its impact on pupils' standards of attainment and value for money.

(Paragraphs: 57, 61, 69-71)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan: 28, 49, 54, 135, 154

- **INTRODUCTION**

- **Characteristics of the school**

1. St Patrick's Catholic School is situated in the North West of Telford, within the recently formed unitary Local Education Authority of Telford and Wrekin. The school is one of four Catholic primary schools in Telford and attracts pupils from a wide area including local villages. The area around the school has seen large scale housing development over recent years, although this has had little effect upon the number of pupils' attending the school.

2. The school is about the same size as other primary schools, currently having 199 pupils on roll, excluding 35 part-time children in the Nursery, compared to the average size nationally of 242. At present there is one pupil whose first language is not English, which is low in comparison nationally. There are currently 110 boys and 89 girls on roll, who are taught in eight classes, from the Nursery through to Year 6. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is 14 per cent which is broadly in line the national average. One pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need, which is below the national average. Those pupils who are on the school's register of special educational needs receive additional support as identified in their individual education plans where appropriate. Although this is often classroom based, some pupils are withdrawn for more intensive support. 15 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average for this type of school. The spread of pupils' attainment on entry to the school is mostly in line with the national average.

3. The headteacher and governing body see the following as the most significant of their many aims:

- To make St. Patrick's a happy place, where all individuals can develop their potential, academically, socially, physically and spiritually, in a caring environment where all are valued;
- To promote the Catholic ethos of the school;
- To provide high quality teaching and learning.

1. The school is striving for high pupil attainment and progress and the following are some of the targets they have set:

- To continue to raise standards by analysing and acting upon the regular monitoring undertaken in classrooms and the results of end of key stage tests and assessments;
- To achieve the challenging targets set not only for attainment at the end of each key stage but for individuals and specific groups as they move through the school;
- To effectively implement the school's development plans for improved provision within information technology.

1.Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	17	14	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	12	15	13
	Girls	14	13	12
	Total	26	28	25
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	84	90	81
	National	82	83	87

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	13	11	11
	Total	26	24	24
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	84	77	84
	National	82	86	87

Attainment at Key Stage 2

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	13	17	30

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	9	9	7
	Girls	16	15	15
	Total	25	25	22
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	83	83	73
	National	70	69	78

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	6	8	7
	Girls	15	16	12
	Total	21	24	19
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	70	80	63
	National	68	69	75

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year		%
Authorised Absence	School	4.46
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.03
	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	21
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

5. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

5. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

5. Attainment and progress

5. *Children under five*

2. Provision for children under five is very good. Four year olds make a very good start in the Nursery and then move into Reception at the beginning of the term in which they are five, where the curriculum also meets their needs very well. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with national averages. By the age of five, most children have achieved the desirable outcomes of their pre-statutory schooling in all areas of learning and many are working confidently towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum. Children are familiar with books and once over their initial shyness can talk about their family, join in class activities, share toys and play co-operatively. A very caring ethos has been established which makes children feel safe and secure.

3. Children's skills in language and literacy are broadly average when they start school and they make good progress. By the time they are five, most have achieved the desirable outcomes of this area of learning. Children's skills are mostly in line with expectations in mathematics when they start school and they make good progress. All children achieve the desirable outcomes of mathematical education by the time they are five, and some are working at Level 1 of the National Curriculum.

4. Children make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live and almost all achieve the desirable outcomes of learning in this area. They make good progress in their creative development and achieve the desirable outcomes of this area of education by the time they are five. Their skills in art and music develop very well and they show an increasing ability to play creatively. Children make good progress in physical development as they improve their hand-eye co-ordination and learn to exercise control over their gross motor skills. By the time they are five, most children have achieved the desirable outcomes of this area.

8. *Key Stages 1 and 2*

5. Although the 1999 results show a slight dip for English at Key Stage 2 and a fall in science, mathematics results have continued to improve. In science, however, the numbers of pupils attaining levels above the national average has greatly improved. The school had predicted this fall at Key Stage 2, and set themselves appropriate targets. These targets were achieved for English and mathematics, but fell just short for science. One significant explanation for the latest results compared with previous years, was the very high percentage of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs in the 1999 cohort. The findings from the inspection indicate that last years results were indeed below the upward trend of attainment the school has worked hard to achieve in recent years. Attainment at Key Stage 2, is therefore better than the 1999 assessments would suggest. The 1999 results for Key Stage 1, show that reading was above the national average, writing was very high and mathematics well above national averages when compared with all schools and similar schools. The findings from the inspection would agree with these assessments. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls at either key stage.

6. At Key Stage 1, the 1999 National Curriculum Assessment Tests in English show that in reading, the percentage of pupils reaching at least Level 2, which is average for their age, is above the national average. In writing, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2, was very high when compared to the national average. When compared to similar schools, pupils' are above those of their peers for reading and their results for writing are very high. These results indicate that the majority of pupils at Key Stage 1 are successfully challenged in reading and

very well challenged in writing. In the 1999 National Curriculum Assessment tests in English at Key

Stage 2, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above, which is average for their age, was above the national average when compared to all schools and similar schools. Overall, the trend in English results for the last three years has shown a good improvement.

7. Inspection judgements show that pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress in English and are benefiting from the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. By the time they are in Year 6, the majority of pupils show good standards of literacy, speaking and reading with confidence, fluency and a good level of understanding for their age. They use their literacy skills particularly well across the whole curriculum, for example when following instructions in science and physical education, reading for information from CD-ROMs, reference books and writing in different formats to support a range of subjects such as art, geography and history. By the end of Key Stage 2, there are many examples of pupils producing high quality creative writing and thoughtful poetry.

8. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is well above national averages at the end of both key stages, and standards have risen markedly since the last inspection. In 1999 the results in the national tests taken at the end of each key stage were well above national average levels, and were also well above results attained by pupils from similar schools. At Key Stage 1, more than half of the pupils reached levels above that expected for seven-year olds, and the average level attained continued to reflect the high standards achieved in previous years, which were well above average levels attained nationally. At Key Stage 2, more than four fifths of pupils reached the expected level of attainment for 11 year olds, more than one third of pupils reached higher levels, and the average level attained rose significantly from 1998, maintaining the upward trend in results over previous years. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in mathematics, both in lessons and over longer periods of time. Pupils with special educational needs make equally good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans, especially when they receive help from support staff in lessons.

9. In science at Key Stage 1, results from teacher assessments in 1999 show that the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above was below the national average. In the 1999 National Curriculum Assessment tests for science at Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above was below national averages when compared to all schools, and well below when compared to similar schools. However, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 5, which is above the national average, has increased dramatically from the previous year. This indicates that higher attaining pupils are now being sufficiently challenged. All pupils including those with special educational needs make good progress.

10. Pupils' attainment in information technology is in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 but below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. The progress of pupils with special educational needs matches that of other pupils at both key stages. Pupils at Key Stage 1, use a wide range of programs to support the general curriculum, and to develop satisfactory operating skills. By the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils are confident, independent users, who load, edit, save and print work without adult intervention. Pupils make good use of CD-ROM reference sources in subjects such as history, and geography, for example finding and printing pictures and text extracts to support their study of life in Victorian times. However, work in other strands of the subject is less well developed, and falls short of the standard expected of 11 year olds. Pupils currently do no work on monitoring or measuring, for example using a computer to collect weather data over a period of time to support work in geography.

11. In art and music pupils' skills are in line with those expected for their age at both key

stages, and they make good progress. In design and technology, geography, history and physical education pupils are attaining standards that are in line with those expected for their ages by the end of both key stages, and making satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to those of their peers. In art, geography and history, these are improvements on the previous inspection. In design and technology, music and physical education the school has maintained similar standards to the previous inspection.

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

12.The school has improved the standards of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development since the last report. Although standards during the last report were positive, they have now improved further and pupils' attitudes to their work, their behaviour and relationships are excellent. Staff are very good role models and pupils show respect for each other, through kindness, honesty, co-operation and very good manners. The school's aims are extremely well met in this respect. The school's very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has a significant effect on pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development.

13.The attitude pupils' show towards their work is exceptional. They are extremely keen and enthusiastic, concentrate very hard and work diligently. They enjoy all aspects of their schoolwork and will often become so engrossed in their work it is difficult for teachers to keep the pace of the lesson going. For example, in a Year 5 art lesson, the introduction by the teacher to the work of *Van Gogh*, was so inspirational pupils continued their conversations about the artist and his work throughout the practical part of the lesson. Pupils of all ages listen intently to their teachers, support staff and other adults and will contribute to lessons with great interest, offering their own experiences and ideas. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and their school and take great amount of pleasure in the success of their work, especially if it relates to one of their own personal targets. Pupils of all ages respond very well to challenges that are set for them and enthusiastically help out around the school often without being asked.

14.The school rules, and any amended class rules, are prominently displayed throughout the school and in classrooms. Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is impeccable from the Nursery to Year 6. They are very courteous, trustworthy, honest and enjoy making contributions to lessons because they know that they will be appreciated for doing so. This is a particular improvement on the previous inspection when teachers did not always appreciate pupils' views. Even though some pupils find it hard to restrain their enthusiasm in lessons, they do wait while others have their say. They are extremely polite to each other and adults and are welcoming and friendly and will, for example, naturally hold doors open for adults. There is very little bullying of any note and pupils have confidence that their teachers will do something about it as soon as it is brought to their attention.

15.Staff manage pupils with behavioural difficulties consistently and very well. The school's *positive teaching policy* is very effective and all staff emphasise the positive features of good conduct. These are frequently shared with the rest of the class and the school during special assemblies, awards and mentions in the *golden book*. During wet playtimes pupils throughout the school occupy themselves quietly and without fuss. There have been no exclusions during the year prior to the inspection.

16.Pupils' relationships with each other and with staff are excellent. They have respect for each other's feelings, values and beliefs and warmly welcome visitors into their school, as they are often very keen to find out more about them. Many pupils hold a variety of responsible posts such as monitors and discharge their duties sensibly and with enjoyment. They give time to one another in class and show empathy for animals and others in both their written work and in the quality of their oral contributions to lessons. There is a very effective school council, which has elected representatives from each class throughout the school, including the

youngest children. The minutes of their meetings clearly show that the pupils' themselves are often concerned about issues that effect the life of the school, such as behaviour during playtimes. The emphasis of the meetings is for the pupils themselves to find an appropriate solution to the problem, which greatly enhances their responsibilities and their idea of citizenship.

17.The personal development of pupils is very good, although opportunities for pupils to extend these skills are currently limited by the lack of computers for research purposes and the library being used as an additional classroom. Nevertheless, children under five quickly learn to make choices and work as independently as possible. They learn respect for different points of view and will often spontaneously applaud each other for their work for example, when demonstrating a gymnastic sequence or answering a difficult question set by their teacher. Many pupils act reliably as messengers and this responsibility gradually increases throughout the school. There are very good opportunities for pupils to empathise with others, for example, in English and history some very imaginative and thoughtful work has been produced. Taking part in Shakespearean productions, pantomimes with parents and staff and playing competitive sports against other schools, are but a few good examples of how pupils increase their self-confidence and improve their self-esteem. The oldest pupils display maturity and confidence as they look forward to the next stage of their education.

21. Attendance

18.Pupils' attendance is good and is above the national average for similar types of school. A significant proportion of recorded absences can be attributed to pupils being withdrawn from school for family holidays. However, the overall level of pupils' attendance does contribute positively to their learning. There are a small number of late arrivals but the school does not allow this to disrupt the start of the first lesson of the day. Registrations are carried out briskly by teachers and pupils respond politely and quickly to their names. Very little time is wasted before the first lesson of the day commences. Afternoon registrations are also carried out efficiently to enable pupils to settle quickly to their work after the lunch break. During the day, punctuality is good and this contributes very well to the smooth running of the school. This is an improvement on the last inspection, which was critical that registers were not stored securely.

22. QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

19.The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and this makes a significant contribution to pupils' levels of attainment and the good progress they make. All lessons observed during the inspection were satisfactory or better, and in 81 percent, teaching was good or better. In 21 percent of lessons overall, teaching was very good or excellent. Very good teaching was observed at both key stages and was particularly strong with children under five. Excellent teaching was observed at Key Stage 1. The school has significantly improved the quality of teaching since the last report, which identified *significant shortcomings* at Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching is now of a much higher standard at both key stages, planning is particularly good overall and is clearly linked to the core areas of the National Curriculum and those programmes of study which the school has carefully chosen to follow and teaches very effectively.

20.The quality of teaching children under five is good overall and often very good. Teachers are very enthusiastic, set high expectations of children's behaviour and their learning outcomes, for example, carefully recording what they have learnt. Pupils are very well managed and classroom organisation is also very good. Teachers and support staff work together closely and plan integrated sessions which promote a very productive atmosphere that aids children's learning.

21. There are many strengths in teaching. Teachers are confident in their ability to teach the full range of subjects, although some find information technology and physical education more demanding. Very good teaching was observed in the Nursery, Reception and in English, science, art and personal, social and health education. The quality of teaching physical education during a Key Stage 1 lesson was excellent. At their best, lessons have extremely clear learning intentions and objectives, which are clearly communicated to pupils at the start of lessons. For example, in a Year 6 science lesson the learning objectives were written on a flip chart and clearly displayed at the front of the classroom for all the pupils to see and incorporate as part of their scientific hypothesis. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils to listen, work hard, and produce good quality work. There are also very high expectations of pupils' behaviour, which increases their ability to concentrate and make good progress. Teachers plan very effectively together in year groups, which increases the effective use of their time, such as incorporating many cross-curricular strands and to ensure pupils make appropriate progress over a number of subjects. All teachers use the well established schemes of work to ensure pupils receive work that is suitably matched to their needs.

22. Relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils are excellent. Teachers are enthusiastic, and knowledgeable of their pupils' needs and capabilities, for example, ensuring those pupils who require additional support are appropriately seated alongside well informed support staff to enable them to fully participate in lessons, particularly English, mathematics and science. Teachers show pupils great respect and clearly enjoy teaching. Pupils respond very well to teachers very positive role models, for example, lessons proceed at a brisk pace, with teachers offering support, praise, encouragement and many use a sense of humour very effectively. Teachers ask searching, relevant questions that are suitably different to match pupils' levels of attainment, and do not require a simple one word answer. Teachers throughout the school use a wide range of subject and teacher made resources to enhance their teaching. These are often imaginatively used to stimulate pupils' learning. For example, in an art lesson the teacher provided pupils with a number of paintings to illustrate a famous artist's troubled life. Pupils are offered many opportunities to give their opinions and ideas, which increases their self-confidence and self-belief.

23. Pupils' work is regularly assessed, often while the teacher is moving around the room, and helpful comments are made to support progress and the production of good work. In practical lessons, such as art and design and technology, teachers offer pupils plenty of opportunities to consider their work and through careful questioning evaluate and modify it. However, in physical education this is not well established and there are many missed opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work and that of their peers in an effort to improve. Homework is regularly set to extend pupils' class work and is of a good standard. A few parents identified through their meeting with the registered inspector, that they were unhappy that homework set by teachers was not always marked or contained helpful comments. The inspection found that the quality of marking homework overall, was good and often very good, with many helpful, supporting and encouraging comments.

24. Even within satisfactory and good lessons overall, there were some relative weaknesses observed where teaching was less effective. For example, teachers' expectations in some lessons such as physical education could be higher, for example, giving pupils the opportunity to lead part of the warm up or cool down. Occasionally, a few teachers lack effective strategies to deal with increasing noise levels, particularly during a practical part of the lessons. Although this is often due to pupils' enthusiasm and not inappropriate behaviour, some teachers are inclined to let the noise level become too high before talking to pupils or simply choose to raise their own voice above the noise level. Although the pace of lessons is usually very good, teachers sometimes spend too long introducing lessons which leaves insufficient time for the plenary sessions at the end of lessons, and the opportunity to reinforce key learning objectives is missed. Although such examples are rare they can make an impact

on pupils' progress.

25. The quality of teaching pupils with special educational needs is also consistently good. During the last inspection the school was criticised for rarely planning work to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. This has greatly improved and pupils who require additional help receive very good support from teachers and support staff who know their needs very well. They constantly monitor pupils' attainment and progress through the well written and clearly defined targets in their individual education plans. Teachers also use additional strategies to develop pupils' confidence and self-esteem, such as giving them specific responsibilities within classes and around the school.

29. **The curriculum and assessment**

26. The curriculum is very good, and the school has successfully rectified the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum, including sex education and the teaching of children under five. It makes very good provision for pupils' intellectual and physical development, and is very relevant to the needs of all pupils. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy, science and religious education, and both the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy have been very successfully implemented. The school has skilfully modified the schemes of work for other subjects, and adopted a cross-curricular teaching approach, so that a very well balanced and sufficiently broad curriculum has been maintained, despite time pressures brought about by the literacy and numeracy initiatives.

27. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. A detailed programme of personal, social and health education addresses issues such as *Me and My Relationships* and *Keeping Myself Safe*. It makes very good provision for drug awareness, health and sex education, which is addressed in accordance with the ethos of the Catholic faith. Teaching is very closely linked to the school's religious education programme in particular, but is also addressed through other subjects such as science and physical education. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, homework and research opportunities across the curriculum develop pupils' capacity to work independently, and prepare them very well for the transition to secondary education.

28. There are detailed policies and schemes of work for all subjects. They are of good quality and make good use of literacy, numeracy, the National Curriculum programmes of study, and also others published by the Local Education Authority and national organisations. They are very well balanced although the scheme of work for information technology, which is good, is not fully implemented, resulting in an imbalance in what is actually taught.

29. The planning system used to develop teaching programmes is very good. Long-term plans set out in general terms what is to be taught each year. From these, teachers develop half-termly plans, drawing on subject schemes of work, and identifying learning objectives to be assessed. These are then developed into detailed weekly plans for literacy and numeracy, which make good provision for the needs of all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnic origin or academic ability. Clear learning objectives in medium and short-term plans, and setting work at different levels of difficulty, ensure that all pupils are well challenged by work which is well matched to their ability. Curriculum planning for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Their individual education plans are very clear. They include realistic targets for English, mathematics, behaviour and other learning difficulties, which are regularly reviewed so that they remain relevant. Although there is no formal school programme of *topics* at Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers frequently plan work around a theme, which combines several subjects together, each with carefully identified learning objectives. For example, *The Egyptians* in Year 3 combines a historical and modern day study of Egypt, geographical mapping skills, Egyptian paintings, the use of CD-ROM reference materials in information technology and English. This is a very good way to ensure that the broad curriculum planned for all subjects is

effectively taught within the time available.

30.The system for curriculum planning ensures very good continuity of learning as pupils get older. Planning for teaching children under five is very good. It addresses very well all areas of learning identified in the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children under five. It is also carefully integrated with early Key Stage 1 work so that pupils make a smooth transition to full time education. At Key Stages 1 and 2, the subject schemes of work, and the effective approach to lesson planning, ensure that learning develops systematically as pupils move up through the school.

31.Subject co-ordinators and the headteacher monitor all subjects half-termly and literacy and numeracy weekly. They check the breadth and balance of what is taught, and they monitor pupils' work to assess how well they make progress against the stated learning objectives in the curriculum plans. The current high standard of curriculum planning shows a significant improvement since the last inspection, where it was identified as a weakness. Effective curriculum monitoring has contributed significantly to the improving levels of pupils' attainment and progress, especially in English and mathematics.

32.A wide range of extra-curricular activities and a programme of school visits provide good support for pupils' cultural education and significantly enhance what is taught in school. For example, a Year 6 visit to Blists Hill Victorian museum improves pupils' understanding of life in Victorian times through active role-play and participation in *events* such as attending a Victorian school. Extra-curricular drama, sport and music are all very popular with pupils of all ages, and the many lunchtime and after school clubs are well supported. There are opportunities for pupils to take part in football and netball matches, although inter-school matches are limited. There is a school choir and recorder group, and many pupils take part in school productions such as a musical version of *Twelfth Night*. Pupils also join with parents and staff to put on an annual pantomime.

33.The school's procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment are very good. In addition to the tests taken at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, the school administers a range of nationally validated tests in spelling, reading, mathematics and science at other times. Results are stored centrally, and copies are given to class teachers at the start of each year. Very effective assessment procedures operate in the Nursery and in Reception, including baseline assessments which provide staff with a very good understanding of what children know, understand and can do during their early time in school. At Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers test pupils' learning against the objectives identified in planning, and assess their attainment using the level descriptions provided in National Curriculum documentation. At the end of each year, teachers update pupils' records to show what levels of attainment they have reached in English, mathematics and science. In other subjects, pupils are assessed against the national expectations for pupils of the same age. The assessment and recording system is clear and manageable, and it enables teachers to assess reliably how much progress individual pupils have made over the year. During the year teachers select items of pupils' work for inclusion in school portfolios. These are of good quality and contain well-annotated work, which is useful to teachers when assessing the quality of pupils' work, and the levels of attainment they have reached.

34.The school makes good use of assessment information. Formal test results are used to help identify pupils with special educational needs when they start school, and at regular intervals thereafter. Results in the national tests taken at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupil performance in specific areas and to make changes to long and medium-term curriculum plans if necessary. For example, analysis of the most recent Key Stage 1 tests revealed shortcomings in pupils' knowledge and use of money. As a result, changes have been made to the mathematics curriculum plans to provide an increased focus on this area of work. The targets for pupils with special educational needs are regularly reviewed, and especially at the formal review conducted at the end of each year. These are then adjusted if necessary, so that teachers can plan further work appropriate to pupils' needs. Teachers make good use of day-to-day assessments. They evaluate weekly

plans, including the results of any assessments made. They use the information to modify teaching plans if necessary, especially if pupils have had particular difficulties and need further reinforcement before moving on.

35. Through its programme of standardised testing, the school collects reliable information for assessing year on year improvements in the core areas of reading, spelling and mathematics. However, it does not use this information in a structured way to evaluate the long-term progress of groups of pupils as they move up through the school, nor to identify changing trends in attainment.

39. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

36. All aspects of the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development have improved since the last inspection and are now very good throughout the school including those children under five. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is very good while provision for their moral development is excellent.

37. Pupils' spiritual development is successfully promoted through acts of collective worship. Assemblies and worship are important events offering quality time for reflection and reinforcing the Catholic principles that are evident in pupils' attitudes and behaviour throughout the school. Teachers make great efforts to ensure that acts of worship, both in assemblies and in the classrooms, are special and so pupils treat prayer and contemplation with reverence. Very good opportunities are planned for pupils to experience delight and wonder during their lessons. For example, pupils were intrigued by the sound effect produced by a tuning fork in a science lesson. Pupils were enthralled by the patterns in *Klimt's* art work, and other pupils having studied the impoverished life of *Vincent Van Gogh* were in awe of the present day value of his painting *Sunflowers*. Pupils are frequently given well planned opportunities to explain their activities to others in the class and also to reflect on their own learning.

38. The provision for pupils' moral development is outstanding. The consistent and unobtrusive application of the behaviour policy provides an excellent framework for pupils' moral development. School rules are displayed throughout classrooms and corridors. All adults provide very good role models. Teachers, by their own example, promote the school aims of helping pupils to acquire a sense of fairness, right and wrong, self discipline, respect for others and to value relationships. These aims are clearly reflected in the life of the school. Pupils treat each other and the resources around them with respect. There is an effective *School Council*, with representatives from all classes in the school and its members meet regularly to discuss problems. Representatives on the council raise issues such as, behaviour around school, table manners and children leaving taps running. The council members keep a record of the items discussed, the decisions made, the action to be taken and the final outcome. The *golden book* also promotes personal development and is on display outside the school hall. It is beautifully presented and once a month the names of pupils who have contributed in a special way to school life are added. Any adult in the school can propose pupils and their names and reason for inclusion are announced at a full school assembly. Pupils are encouraged to set individual targets to include academic and personal aims. Pupils at Key Stage 2, have their targets on display as a constant reminder. They are encouraged to achieve their targets by the supportive displays made by teachers which include *Be all you can be*, *Go for it*, *Search for the Hero inside Yourself* and *You never know what you can do until you try*. Parents' responses to the questionnaire, and those attending the meeting prior to inspection, report they are very pleased with the attitudes and values the school promotes.

39. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. There is a comprehensive personal, social and health education and citizenship policy, which is successfully used as a foundation for pupils' social development. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to the life of the school

and to be aware of each other's needs and to respond to those needs. This is shown in the way pupils of all ages are encouraged to work and play together and especially when older pupils take responsibility for hearing younger pupils read on a regular basis. Pupils have a real awareness of the needs of others outside the school community. Throughout the school year they work towards helping others; the local community at harvest time, the Holy Childhood Mission Project during Advent, Good Shepherd Fund in Lent and the Diocesan Children's Society at Christmas time. As a Cafod Fair Share School, pupils are encouraged to look after each other and also think about children in other countries who are living in less fortunate circumstances. During lesson time pupils debate environmental issues presenting balanced arguments and listening to opposing views. They are given frequent opportunities to comment constructively about each other's work and to consider the merit of those comments. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities including sports, drama, craft, a choir and recorder group run by teaching staff, additional sporting activities run by Telford and Wrekin Sports Development Council and football and netball teams run by parents. Pupils are polite to adults and to each other, they take the opportunity to talk, socialise and play very well together.

40. Provision for cultural development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to develop an awareness of their own cultural heritage through poetry, literature and the study of school life in Victorian times. They know that overhead projectors can be used alongside chalkboards, exercise books have replaced slates and school dinners and uniforms have been introduced. An appreciation of great artists is encouraged through a study of their work and styles such as *Klimt*, *Van Gogh* and *Seurat*. Musical appreciation is fostered through the playing of music before assembly, such as *Holst's Planet Suite*, which acts as an impetus for written work, and through the effective teaching of the music curriculum. A recent dance workshop focused on the Hindu festival of *Divali*, photographs show that pupils were enthralled with intricacies of the dancing and their written work shows a fascination with the rituals of a different culture. Pupils compare houses in Kenya with their own. In art and design and technology lessons, pupils make artefacts such as Kenyan pendants and Celtic broaches. Younger pupils have taken part in a music workshop with two visiting schools, and their writing shows they enjoyed the music and the social occasion. Older pupils have worked with visiting musicians and have performed with pupils from other schools at the Oakengates Theatre. Year 6 pupils take part in a Shakespearean production which is put on for the public each summer, and it is reported that many pupils gain confidence in themselves as a result of this experience which supports their transition to the secondary school.

44. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

41. The support, guidance and consideration of pupils' welfare are very good overall. Since the last inspection the school has successfully developed more accurate methods of assessment to improve the match of tasks to pupils' abilities. As a result, procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are now very good. There are comprehensive assessment procedures in place throughout the school and pupils' attainment for the majority of subjects is detailed. Pupils' academic progress is monitored carefully and supplemented by standardised tests and through the completion of suitable homework tasks. Since the last inspection the school has implemented the code of practice for pupils with special educational needs and the information within reports to parents has been amended. The quality of pupils' individual education programmes is now very good with clearly written and defined targets for improvement. Pupils are also expected to set their own targets as part of the annual report process and this allows them to reflect for themselves on what they have achieved and enjoyed doing at school.

42. Procedures for promoting pupils' personal development are very good, reflecting the ethos and priorities of the school. The standard of information kept by the Early Years classes is very good and reflects the need to continuously monitor children's development at the start of their school life. Good use is made of the *star award* system with the emphasis being on acknowledging any improvement shown by individual pupils. Good use is also made of

assemblies to acknowledge pupils' successes and raise their self-esteem. Some of these assemblies are shared with parents, which demonstrates to pupils that school is part of the wider community.

43.The school is extremely successful in promoting good discipline and pupils' behaviour. This reflects the excellent procedures in place and their consistent application by all staff. School rules are very effective and are displayed in classrooms and corridors. Teachers consistently acknowledge good and improving behaviour. Classroom and lunchtime support staff also play an important part in implementing the school's behaviour policy. The high standard of discipline and good behaviour contributes very positively to pupils' learning. In the classroom pupils are not distracted by others and are able to focus on their own work. Outside the classroom pupils remain very supportive of each other and are able to enjoy learning experiences such as quiet reading or constructive play.

44.Procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' attendance are good. The school recognises the importance of high attendance levels as a means of ensuring as many pupils as possible receive their full curricular entitlement. A home-school-child agreement is signed by parents and acknowledges the importance of regular attendance. The school has attempted to discourage parents from taking their children out of school for family holidays by sending letters home emphasising the importance of regular attendance, despite this some pupils do miss school due to family holidays. Pupils who arrive late for school are appropriately recorded in the register as being late by the school secretary. The educational welfare officer attends the school regularly and follows up any concerns identified by the school relating to pupils' attendance. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this helps to ensure that their attendance is good. However, there is no celebration of pupils' attendance through awarding certificates and prizes to the most successful or improved individual or class.

45.Procedures for child protection and promoting pupils' well being, health and safety are very good. The previous school inspection was critical of the governing body because it had failed to carry out its statutory responsibilities with regard to health and safety. The school has very successfully improved this weakness and there is now an appropriate health and safety policy in place. Regular fire drills and checks of electrical and physical education equipment are undertaken and appropriately recorded. The procedures for dealing with first aid, accident reporting and pupils' medication in school are very good. There is an annual safety audit and all staff are very aware of their responsibility for the health and safety of pupils in their care. The school building is very clean and very well maintained with imaginative displays extensively used to improve the working environment. There is safe practice in classrooms and around the school and appropriate arrangements for educational trips and journeys, including residential experiences. Pupils' excellent behaviour ensures there are few occasions where they might be at risk. All staff reinforce and carefully explain to pupils the importance of rules designed to ensure their safety, for example not allowing ball games at lunchtime play when infants are in the playground. The school is aware of the need to carry out formal risk assessments but as yet no one has been able to attend the necessary training courses. However, the school has drawn upon the expertise of the education authority on matters where it has thought this was appropriate for example, risk assessments have been completed relating to the handling and storage of chemical and cleaning materials.

46.The headteacher is responsible for implementing child protection procedures and does so very well. There is a good policy, supporting guidance for staff within the staff handbook, and all staff have recently benefited from training by the education welfare officer. There is good provision within the personal, social and health education curriculum for pupils to understand how they might protect themselves and be aware of the importance of protecting others. This is re-enforced by appropriate topics such as anti-bullying and drugs awareness, which are covered in school assemblies and by visitors to the school.

50. Partnership with parents and the community

47. The school has a very good partnership with its parents and the local community. The last inspection commented on the good links fostered by the school. It particularly commented on the information parents received in regular newsletters, the support given in school listening to children read and the contribution of the parent support association in raising additional funds to provide extra learning resources. Since the last inspection the school has maintained and built upon these strengths very well. The quality of the fortnightly newsletters is of a very high standard and is very well supplemented with a termly curriculum newsletter that ensures parents are fully informed of the topics their children are covering at school. Parents continue to help in school with reading and also help in the Nursery and on school visits including swimming. The parent support association continues to be very strong and supports the school by raising funds and holding events such as, race nights and a Christmas pantomime. They are also fully supporting the school's planned information technology suite by raising funds for additional equipment.

48. The quality of information provided to parents of pupils is very good. The quality of annual pupil reports is high with good coverage of all curriculum subjects. Reports are specific in identifying strengths as well as areas for improvement. The school places a very high priority on the involvement of parents in all aspects of school life and has developed a home-school-pupil contract since the last inspection. Parents have been kept fully informed of developments such as literacy and numeracy and how these initiatives have been implemented. During the inspection a number of parents talked very positively about the quality and detail of information they receive, about their children's work, and the progress they make. The school has a very effective homework policy that provides information for parents about how they can help and support their children. Parents at their meeting with the registered inspector were also positive about the contribution homework makes to their children's progress.

49. Parents feel they are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school. They consider it is very easy to approach the school with any problems and speak highly of all staff. Many parents visit school to take and collect their children and at these times have the opportunity to discuss issues informally with teachers or if necessary the headteacher. This is particularly so in the case of the Nursery and Reception. The school holds two parents' evenings and one open evening during the school year. At the first meeting of the year, parents review the targets their children have set for themselves as well, and share information about what topics will be covered during the school year. There is an open evening during the spring term where pupils can show their parents the work they have been doing in class.

50. The school's links with the community are good, being in part associated with the many extra-curricular activities pupils participate in. Many of these clubs and activities are run by teachers and are also supported by parents and students from the local secondary school and college. Pupils do have some opportunities to compete against other schools in football and netball matches as well as musical events. However, these are insufficiently developed and pupils from St Patrick's do not yet have the opportunity of mixing with many other pupils of the same age. In line with the caring ethos of the school, pupils frequently support charitable organisations such as the Macmillan Cancer Relief, Comic Relief and Mission Relief. Pupils are also encouraged to think of others at times such as Harvest Festival and Christmas, when gifts are distributed to the community and local children. Pupils' understanding of the wider world is also enhanced by visitors to school who talk about their work and way of life, for example, a traditional Indian dancer. The Parish priest takes part in school masses and some liturgies and assemblies. Other visitors support areas of the curriculum such as music, art, and personal, social and health education. Pupils' education is also enriched by visits to areas of interest such as, museums and parks, although visits to other places of worship are more limited. In Year 6 pupils have the opportunity of a residential visit to an outdoor education

centre. Many other events are held in association with the other Catholic schools in the area, for example, a leavers' service is held at Shrewsbury Cathedral.

51.The school has received some support from local businesses who have raised funds to support the work of the school, such as computer software and hardware. The school can justifiably be proud of its achievements and the improvements it has made since the last inspection. However, these are often not celebrated in the wider community despite the school's high levels of achievement.

55. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

55. Leadership and management

52.The headteacher is a very effective, influential and supportive leader, who is very well assisted by the deputy headteacher, all staff and an effective governing body. There is a very clear and well communicated educational direction for the school, which is being built upon attaining the very highest educational standards within an extremely supportive and caring environment. Senior managers, staff and the governing body are all dedicated to increasing pupils' standards of attainment through very good management of the curriculum, careful assessment of pupils' progress and the monitoring of teaching and learning. This is already beginning to have a very positive impact on raising pupils' attainment and progress.

53.The governing body is very supportive of the headteacher and school. Governors act as *critical friends* and are beginning to take a far more active approach to raising standards, for example by setting challenging but attainable targets. In addition, many governors have been appointed as link governors to curriculum subjects to oversee and help develop these areas, such as, literacy, numeracy and science alongside teaching staff. They have received appropriate training for literacy and numeracy and in the case of the science governor, have visited classrooms to observe lessons, talk to the co-ordinator and make recommendations for the science policy. Other governors visit the school as often as they can to make themselves familiar with the main priorities and initiatives within the school development plan. Currently, there is no formal mechanism for governors to report back to the full governing body on their visits to the school or the monitoring of specific targets in the school development plan. The governing body fully meets its statutory requirements.

54.The school has made significant improvements in the quality of management since the first inspection report that placed them into special measures, and has indeed continued to improve since coming out of special measures two years ago. The appointment of a new headteacher and deputy headteacher, the support of the Local Education Authority and the developing role of the governing body, have all assisted in helping to raise pupils' standards of attainment. The school now manages the curriculum very effectively, including the monitoring of teaching and learning and pupils' standards. There is an extremely good school development plan, and very effective day-to-day procedures, which ensures the school runs smoothly and continues to improve.

55.Management of the curriculum is particularly effective with very detailed and clearly structured support by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and key stage co-ordinators. The role of subject co-ordinators is clearly understood and the quality of curriculum planning and teaching other subjects in a cross-curricular way is very good which makes a considerable contribution to improving the levels of pupils' attainment and progress. The headteacher and senior managers regularly visit classrooms to observe teaching and then provide a verbal and very detailed written feedback to teachers, clearly outlining their strengths and areas for improvements. These are then followed up to ensure the quality of teaching improves and continues to positively influence pupils' attainment and progress.

56. Support for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed. Those who require additional support do so with as few interruptions to their classroom routine as possible, which ensures their needs are being fully met and they do not miss their full curricular entitlement. This high quality support makes a significant contribution to the good progress that pupils with special educational needs make. All reviews are very well organised, detailed reports are written and the views of parents and staff are recorded enabling new targets to be set. Meetings are fully attended by parents and where appropriate outside agencies, such as the educational psychologist.

57. The quality of the school's development plan is very good. It is an extremely detailed working document that clearly outlines agreed targets and the tasks that need to be undertaken in order to achieve its success. It is fully understood by all staff and the governing body, although the quality of strategic financial planning and monitoring is not to the same high standard as other parts of the plan, such as curriculum initiatives. Teachers have produced an interim subject action plan for the headteacher, although more detailed action plans have yet to be written. The governing body is given a draft of the school development plan and influences many aspects. However, in other areas such as evaluating value for money, such as the purchase of new resources and the impact they make on pupils' attainment and progress, are not yet as effective. Nevertheless, there are clear procedures for monitoring and evaluating the success of the school development plan's targets by the school's senior managers. This has certainly influenced the notable improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

58. The school's strategy for literacy and numeracy is very good and this is having a particularly good effect on pupils' improving standards across the curriculum. The promotion of equal opportunities is a strong feature of the school's ethos and working practices are outstanding. The school's implementation of its stated aims, values and policies is also excellent.

62. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

59. During the last inspection it was judged that teacher appraisal system was not up to date and that staff development was not used effectively to support the work of the school. The school has worked hard to fulfill these requirements, while maintaining the previous strengths.

60. There has been a high turnover of teaching staff since the last inspection. New teachers have brought different strengths and the school is now well staffed with a good number of experienced and qualified teachers. They are very well supported in their teaching by the school's support staff. There is a very effective commitment to teamwork and staff relationships are excellent. The commitment, hard work and teamwork demonstrated by all members of staff make a significant contribution to pupils' attainment and progress. The appointment of a new headteacher and deputy headteacher has made a highly significant contribution to the effective management of the school. All staff have up to date job descriptions which are reviewed annually and carefully linked to curriculum priorities.

61. The appraisal system is effective and includes all newly appointed staff within a rolling programme. There is a good induction programme for all new staff and teachers take advantage of the wide range of inservice training opportunities to meet both their personal training targets and the identified needs of the school, as stated in the development plan. All teaching staff have a subject co-ordination role, and those with responsibility for identified subjects, such as literacy and numeracy, are released from classroom duties to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Appropriate inservice courses, such as monitoring, are available to all co-ordinators who are about to start observing colleagues, for example science. This process helps to improve staff confidence, teaching skills and the quality of curricular provision.

62.The quality of the school's accommodation is adequate for the effective delivery of the curriculum. Improvements have been made to the accommodation since the last inspection. Classrooms have been refurbished, the hall and corridors have been decorated, and the main entrance hall has been redesigned. There are now separate offices for the headteacher and secretary, and the staffroom has been upgraded. Carpets have been laid in all the classrooms and corridors, which encourages pupils to walk around the school quietly and take a pride in their surroundings. All these improvements contribute to a pleasant and effective working environment and have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning. At the moment pupils are unable to enjoy the recent refurbishment of the library as it is being used as a temporary classroom. Some of the classrooms are also rather cramped for the number of pupils in the year group.

63.The school has a large, well-maintained hall, which is very well used for assemblies, drama, physical education and music. The hall is also used as a dining room. The kitchen staff ensure that the hall is set out for lunches and cleared up afterwards with very little disruption and that it is spotlessly clean for the start of afternoon lessons. Most recently a larger car park has been created, the playground extended and planting has been undertaken to improve the outside areas. The playground is a pleasant area to be in, with playground markings and benches for pupils to sit on. Children under five have their own designated outdoor play area, this is also very pleasant and self contained. The caretaker and cleaning staff work hard to ensure the school remains a safe and clean environment for pupils and staff to work in, and so contributes to the smooth running of the school. Attractive and informative displays in the corridors and classrooms, celebrate pupil's achievements, stimulate further work and enhance the appearance of the school.

64.The school has been successful in securing financial support to convert an external quadrangle into a computer suite to be opened in the summer term. This should greatly enhance the provision the school can make for the development of pupil's information technology skills. The Reception classroom is also to be improved by the removal of an interior wall and the conversion of part of the car park into a secure play area. The *Millennium Tree Project* is being used and the school environment will benefit from the planting of more trees to develop a woodland area in the grounds.

65.The purchase of learning resources is well linked to the defined priorities on the school development plan, and supplemented by very appropriate teacher made resources. In view of national initiatives, priority is given to English, mathematics and science. While the provision of resources is good in most subjects there are insufficient computers and some foundation subjects lack appropriate resources such as history. Almost all resources are in good condition and accessible to staff and pupils. The school uses a local loan service to provide additional artefacts from different cultures, and microphones and musical instruments are borrowed from the neighbouring secondary school. The school has benefited from its association with *TOP Curriculum and Community Sports Programme*, which has resulted in additional resources being available for physical education. The school is also able to borrow useful resources such as a life size skeleton for science and lighting equipment for school productions. Effective use is made of the local environment to enrich the curriculum particularly for history and geographical studies, although visits for other areas of the curriculum, such as art, are more restricted.

69. **The efficiency of the school**

66.The efficiency of the school is good overall, but it is very good in its deployment and use of teaching and support staff, learning resources and accommodation. The previous inspection was very critical of the governing body. It identified its lack of involvement in establishing the school's aims and purposes, in linking these with the school development plan and in supporting the school to ensure that goals were achieved. The previous inspection also judged that the school development plan was inadequate and was not effective in enabling

the school to deploy its resources efficiently. The governing body is now much more involved in all aspects of the school, particularly with regard to the curriculum. The school's strategic planning is now sufficiently detailed to effectively guide the work of the school. Financial planning is sound but is only short term being based on the current year's school development plan rather than reflecting the school's future aims or planned developments.

67. The school development plan is very well focused and prioritised but is not adequately costed for all areas, for example, some subjects lack sufficient learning resources. The school currently has a large accumulated underspend, that has resulted from changes to staffing and previous funds not always being suitably targeted. However, this surplus has now been appropriately allocated to support the resourcing of the new information technology suite. The school has still to develop the means to fully evaluate its own cost effectiveness by including targets against which the school can be measured, for example, what impact learning resources have on raising pupils' attainment. The headteacher and school secretary assisted by a finance assistant from the local authority, regularly monitor the budget and produce reports that are used to inform governors.

68. Finance designated for spending on training and staff development is well used and targeted to educational priorities, particularly those identified during the last inspection. The school uses its budget effectively to support the needs of its pupils by providing good quality support staff and fully considering the implications of maintaining classes in line with year groupings. The school has recently taken the decision to boost teaching support at Key Stage 1 by the provision of an extra teacher. This initiative is already starting to have a positive impact on pupils' progress.

69. The day to day administration of the school is good. The school office is busy and there are many telephone calls and visitors to the school, which are all handled efficiently. The last audit of administrative procedures by the local authority was carried out immediately prior to the inspection. This identified a number of procedures or controls that were absent, but all of a minor nature. The school has rectified most of the issues raised and the rest will be addressed when the appropriate governing body committees meet.

70. The school has experienced a recent high turnover of teaching staff but has worked hard to ensure new staff are fully aware of the school's ethos, and are appropriately deployed to make a positive contribution to the curriculum. Support staff are also very well deployed and their use is subject to continuous review. A qualified nursery nurse provides excellent support to the two teachers who job share in the Nursery. This provides very effective continuity and the quality of teamwork provides a very good start for the youngest children to the school. Learning resources are very effectively used and teachers will often supplement these with additional resources either from the loan service, brought in from home or made for specific projects. For example, a teacher produced an excellent classroom display of clothing for the class's Victorian topic. The school has few options available in the way it is able to use the accommodation at its disposal and is currently unable to use the library effectively because this room has been designated for use by the split Year 1 class. However, excellent use is made of the large hall that is very efficiently timetabled and used for physical education, music, assemblies and lunches.

71. Taking into account pupils' attainment on entry and the standards they attain, the excellent attitudes pupils' have to their work, the high quality of teaching and support staff and the very good leadership of the headteacher and governing body, the school provides very good value for money.

75. PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

75. AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

72. The educational provision for children under five is very good and is a strong feature of the school. The previous report states that children under five make a good start to their education. This has improved and as a result of the detailed curriculum planning and the constant teacher assessment of children's needs, children now make a very good start to their education. Admission to the Nursery is independent from the school and the placements are part-time. Children enter the Nursery at the beginning of the term in which they are four and transfer to the Reception class at the beginning of the term in which they are five. There is a mixed intake of children and attainment on entry to the nursery is broadly in line with the national average. Children are familiar with books and once over their initial shyness can talk about their family, join in class activities, share toys and play co-operatively. A very caring ethos has been established which makes the children feel safe and secure.

76. **Language and literacy**

73. Strong emphasis is placed on the programme for language and literacy and children of all abilities make good progress. The introduction of the Literacy Strategy has made a positive impact on the progress of children in Reception. Some children in the Nursery are able to recognise their own names; they are encouraged in this by the self-registration system, which involves identifying their own name card. They are also starting to recognise initial letters of words in books and around the classroom. Children listen to stories each day and answer questions about what they have heard. They are able to borrow books to take home. Children know that print conveys meaning. By the age of five, children are using clues from the big book to predict the next word, for example knowing the initial letter is *c* and the rest of the word rhymes with *dock*, they are able to deduce the next word is *clock*. They are able to use pictures as clues to the text and can trace over a model to write their own names and to write the names of items to be put into *Mother Hubbard's* cupboard. Some children are able to form some letters correctly and can match words to pictures.

74. The quality of teaching is good. Staff plan lessons well, providing activities that are carefully matched to children's ability. Achievement is carefully recorded in detailed pupil profiles, which are well used to plan further activities that challenge children and increase their literacy skills. Throughout lessons children are encouraged to develop their speaking and listening skills and new vocabulary is constantly explained and reinforced.

78. **Mathematics and numeracy**

75. Children make good progress in their understanding of number. By the age of five, they can recite numbers up to 20, they can count the sides of triangles and rectangles, can sort shapes into sets of circles and non-circles. They recognise shapes, use and understand the words *square*, *triangle*, *rectangle* and *circle*. They can compare the size and colour of shapes. Younger children can estimate which of two items might be heavier and can test their predictions by using a balance correctly. They are also able to sort food items as to whether they are heavier or lighter than a can of beans. All children are familiar with a range of counting songs, having great fun with *One Man Went to Mow* and *Five Cheeky Monkeys*.

76. The teaching of mathematics is good. Teaching is based on a well planned topic based curriculum that meets the children's needs. Number is given suitable priority and every opportunity is taken by teachers to use every day situations to count, for example, giving out cups for the snacks in the Nursery. Reception children inspired by the story of *Jack and the Beanstalk* can decide the order of instructions for planting seeds. Good use is made of positional vocabulary such as *over*, *under*, *inside*, *outside* and *behind*, in creative work and physical education. Children in Reception make good use of the date chart to establish the days we come to school and the days we do not.

80. **Personal and social development**

77.Children in both the Nursery and Reception make very good progress in their personal and social development. As they progress through the Nursery and into Reception children demonstrate very good relationships with each other and the adults in their classrooms. Children play well together and learn quickly to take turns and to share their toys. By the time they are five they listen attentively to stories and respond to questions about the stories. They follow teacher instructions and develop an understanding of the needs of other children. Children take care of resources, returning items to the correct place after use. Children in the Nursery learn about their responsibilities to take care of toys, not to run and to be kind to others. During the current topic of nursery rhymes, Reception children are helping *Mary's* flowers to grow by collecting petals for kind deeds. Children are aware of different customs in other cultures. Within their topic on Food, they are given the opportunity to use chopsticks to eat their rice snack. All of the children took part in a music workshop based on a version of the story of *Creation* from India.

78.The teaching of personal and social development is very good in both the Nursery and Reception classes. All staff are excellent role models and have high expectations of children's behaviour. Rules are carefully explained making sure that all children understand and all staff are consistent in their approach. The foundation for the school's positive ethos, that is so evident higher up the school, is instilled when children are in the Nursery and Reception classes. The frequent use of praise and encouragement builds self-esteem. Reception children are aware of each other's achievements and enjoy suggesting which children deserve a *special* letter to take home. Teachers place a strong emphasis on the quality and presentation of children's work, producing exciting portfolios and booklets. This in turn makes the children proud of their efforts and they try hard to do their best.

82. **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

79.Children's progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world is very good. Children in Reception are able to understand a simple map and draw a map of *Nursery Rhyme Land*. They are able to discuss their group map with each other and decide on alterations and improvements such as a park and a roundabout. Even when they find the task to be difficult, they concentrate hard to complete their work. Nursery children discover that seeds need water and light to make them grow and that seeds put in the fridge did not thrive. They make observational drawings of items such as, shoes and toy cars. Children who are five find out about old toys, developing an appreciation of their sentimental value and also using clues, such as the worn fabric, to deduce if toys are old. They use a mixed group of toys to make their first time-line and start to develop a sense of chronology. Reception children participated in an *Ice Balloon* experiment, where they observed a balloon containing frozen water and made predictions as to what might happen if for example, they sprinkled salt on it. They then tested their ideas and concluded that salt makes ice melt and that it can be used in icy weather to make the ground safer. Reception children are fascinated and watch carefully when they are shown the skills needed to use the computer. They know which keys to use to make a capital letter and a space. They all laughed when too many letters appeared on the screen and when the printer did not work suggested that a *happy face* might make it better.

80.The teaching of knowledge and understanding is good. Staff use the topic themes and plan a wide range of activities to stimulate children's curiosity. Staff use all possible opportunities to encourage children to investigate, and they continually question and assess children's knowledge and provide appropriate activities to maintain children's interest and extend their learning.

84. **Creative development**

81.Children enjoy their creative and musical activities and make good progress in this area. They explore colour using paint, chalk and crayons regularly. Nursery children were keen to draw a red cabbage and to experiment with their chinks to get the right effects and to tell their teacher, so she could do it too. Children finger paint and experiment with texture using flour, salt and paint. Nursery children have produced their own sunflower pictures stimulated by *Van Gogh*. Children who are five use scissors and glue, helping each other when necessary. They choose appropriate materials for their work for example, hard boiled eggs, a variety of sequins, feathers and oddments to produce their own very good *Faberge Eggs*. Children are proud of their work and are eager to explain themselves for example, how they made their eggs. They enjoy music, can sing a variety of simple songs and rhymes from memory and use a range of percussion instruments with increasing confidence. During a music lesson, in the Nursery, the atmosphere was tense as children passed round a tambourine, trying to let it sleep so no noise was produced, although there was great amusement when it *woke up*. Reception children make music to go with the story of *The Snowman*, which they record on simple graphic scores and perform for the rest of the school. All children under five have joined with older pupils, to welcome two visiting schools for a joint musical workshop.

82.The quality of teaching is very good. Staff provide a variety of resources to stimulate children's imagination and creativity. They also encourage children as they work and celebrate their achievements by putting the work into interesting displays and very well presented folders.

86. **Physical development**

83.Children's progress in physical development is good. Nursery children use small equipment such as quoits, beanbags and floor markers. They are happy to demonstrate that they can throw and jump and aim with developing accuracy. They move around the hall safely and are aware of each other. By the age of five children control their movements and have developed confidence and skill in manoeuvring wheeled toys, such as tricycles. Many demonstrate, with precision, their use of small items such as scissors, paint brushes and construction kits.

84.The quality of teaching of physical education is good. Staff make full use of indoor and outdoor equipment to provide imaginative and interesting activities to extend children's range of movements and skills. Children interact well during physical activities. Teachers assess children's skills very well, maintain a good pace to their teaching and support them to increase their confidence. Staff work closely with children, demonstrating new skills where appropriate, and encouraging them to develop their fine and gross motor skills.

88. **Factors influencing achievement**

85.All staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and high expectations of their capacity for learning. The valuable contribution of the nursery nurse is a strength of the provision for children under five. The staff work very much as a team with joint planning responsibilities. This detailed planning is also a strength, as it provides an interesting and exciting curriculum for the children, allowing them to develop their language skills through the stimulating topic approach. The system in the Nursery class by which children plan their activities and later review their work provides a solid foundation for the skills required as they progress through the school. The developmental overviews are passed on from Nursery to Reception giving relevant information to allow the Reception teacher to make accurate baseline assessments of children's skills and development. Nursery staff work very closely with the Reception teacher to ensure that the transition from the Nursery class to the Reception class is as smooth as possible for the children.

89. ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

89. English

86. Since the last inspection there has been an improvement in pupils' standards of attainment in all aspects of English. This can be attributed to the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and opportunities taken by the school to improve English skills through the teaching of other subjects. The quality of pupils' written work enhances the quality of the foundation subjects.

87. By the end of Key Stage 1, the national test results for 1999 show that attainment in reading is above the national average and writing standards are very high when compared with levels expected nationally for seven year olds. When compared to pupils from similar schools, pupils' performance in reading is above the national average and very high for writing. During the last three years, reading has been consistently above the national average, while standards in writing have been well above the national average and are improving. This is a result of the effective implementation of the Literacy Strategy and the emphasis on the use of story planners and improving the quality of spelling.

88. At Key Stage 2, test results for the last three years show that standards are above the national average, with a sharp increase in 1998. By the end of Key Stage 2, national test results for 1999 show pupils' attainment in English to be above that expected for 11 year olds and above that expected of pupils attending similar schools. This shows a slight drop since the previous year but this variation can be accounted for by the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the 1999 cohort.

89. Pupils throughout the school make good progress overall. Pupils who have special educational needs have access to the full English curriculum, they make good progress and the good support they are given encourages them to work independently. There is no significant difference in the progress of boys and girls at either key stage.

90. Pupils enter the school with average skills in speaking and listening. Pupils make good progress, extending their vocabulary and increasing in confidence. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils confidently read aloud to the rest of the class. The structure of the literacy hour provides good opportunities for shared reading, developing their vocabulary and sharing ideas through the plenary session to which all pupils contribute. The majority of pupils respond well to challenging questions, for example, they talk about the difference adjectives make to a poem and respond well to discussion about *ee* and *ea* words. They are keen to join in discussions and they learn how to develop their ideas in the many opportunities that they are given for oral work. Pupils listen to story tapes very well and then retell their version of the story. They listen well to teachers and to each other and share experiences and willingly take turns to talk and to listen. Pupils listen attentively in assembly and speak to visitors confidently about their work and their school.

91. At Key Stage 2, pupils talk about synonyms with growing confidence and offer their own examples. When planning to write a recipe, for example, they talk with confidence in front of the class about the importance of titles, ingredients and methodology. In design and technology lessons, they readily discuss the potential problems in making a construction and jointly review their work. In music lessons pupils talk about loud and soft sounds, and they suggest appropriate percussion instruments for their compositions. Pupils in Year 6 show a very mature understanding of the dilemma facing the lovers in Shakespeare's *Midsummer Nights Dream*. When contributing to a discussion they use the *hot seat* to question *Helena* and *Hermia* about their feelings. Pupils listening skills develop well for example, they rarely repeat what someone has already said. Their vocabulary increases in line with their ability to express ideas articulately. Many pupils use their skills to good advantage when taking part in

school productions and conversing with visitors.

92. Pupils at both key stages read with increasing fluency and make good progress throughout the school. At Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils become skilled in identifying blends, using rhyming words and phonemes and develop effective strategies to read unfamiliar words. Pupils understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and know how to use the content page to find the correct section of a book. Pupils enjoy reading and regularly take books home to read with their parents or by themselves. Parents, teachers and the pupils themselves complete comments in reading diaries. Lower attaining pupils at Key Stage 1, read hesitantly and have a limited sight vocabulary.

93. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read with understanding and clarity. Many read with excitement and expression. They use the meaning and sense of the text to predict unknown words and self correct. They are keen to read and share their enthusiasm about their favourite books and preferred authors. They use dictionaries correctly and know that a thesaurus can provide them with alternative words to help make their writing more exciting. Pupils' opportunities to use research skills are limited at the moment as the library is being used as an additional classroom. Older Key Stage 2 pupils, act as very effective readers and role models for younger pupils, which encourages younger pupils to read for pleasure and develops the personal qualities of the older pupils

94. At Key Stage 1, younger pupils develop their independent writing, starting by making lists for party food, progressing to addressing envelopes, writing short sentences and recounting their own versions of known stories. They use cut and paste activities to grasp the idea of sequencing a story. Pupils effectively use speech bubbles in their writing, form their letters clearly and use capital letters and full stops to mark the beginning and end of sentences. They pay attention to their spelling and to the high quality of its presentation.

95. At Key Stage 2, pupils plan extended stories including characters, setting and time, as shown in their own lively versions of *The Owl and the Pussycat*. They compare stories to show differences and similarities between characters. Pupils write for different purposes such as, producing advertising leaflets for the *Wizz Kids* games club, and marketing information for pendants made in their design and technology lessons. Pupils have good opportunities to make persuasive arguments about environmental issues, and to write an account of the lively class debate and how it was organised. Pupils improve their work by drafting and they sometimes make use of the word processor to draft and refine their work, although this is limited. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils write in a mature, clear cursive style. The presentation of pupils' work is good overall and often very good. For example, they consistently date, title and underline their work and take a justifiable pride in its completed form.

96. Pupils' attitudes to English are good. Pupils behave very well, are enthusiastic, motivated to learn and enjoy their work. They are keen to offer their own ideas and respond well to teachers' questions. Pupils live up to their teachers' high expectations, especially during the literacy hour, and are responsible when they are working independently. At Key Stage 1, pupils are keen to record their words on the flip chart, and appreciate the efforts of others in the class. At Key Stage 2, pupils work very well individually or together in small groups, readily sharing ideas and supporting each other.

97. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Literacy training has given teachers the confidence to teach all aspects of the subject and helped them to improve their planning. Learning objectives are clearly focused and explained to pupils at the beginning of lessons. Teachers use probing questions effectively to ensure pupils fully understand their work. Literacy work is carefully matched to the ability of pupils and teachers endeavour to make tasks interesting to motivate all pupils. Staff know their pupils very well, relationships are very good and behaviour is managed extremely effectively. This contributes to the good rate of

progress pupils make. When new vocabulary is introduced, staff constantly reinforce these words to ensure pupils' understanding. Expectations of what pupils should do are high and good use is made of the plenary sessions to encourage pupils to talk about their work which they do with enthusiasm and pride.

98. Day to day assessment is very well developed. Teachers give pupils high levels of praise and encouragement and mark their work thoroughly with helpful and supportive comments. Teachers make effective judgements about pupils' progress and use this information to plan their work effectively. The teaching of English makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness through discussion of the feelings of characters and the effects of situations. For example, pupils at Key Stage 1 consider the possible reasons why the *Big Bad Wolf* might behave the way he did, while at Key Stage 2 pupils discuss the feelings of characters from *Midsummer Nights Dream*.

99. The co-ordination of English is good. The co-ordinator has been in post for a year and is enthusiastic about the continued development of the subject throughout the school while maintaining the existing high standards. The link governor recently appointed to oversee the development of literacy, has knowledge and a specific interest in English and is already involved in the monitoring of pupils' work. In addition, the governor hopes to be able to visit classrooms as part of an ongoing monitoring process. Each term the co-ordinator collects samples of pupils' work and monitors the progress they are making, giving useful feedback to teachers and raising general areas for discussion about teaching and learning. The school has sufficient resources, including Big Books and a variety of different texts. The co-ordinator is concentrating on building up the stock of non-fiction books, both from the school budget and through the collection of *crisp* vouchers, which is being very well supported by parents. High quality displays contribute to celebrating achievement and act as a stimulus for further work.

103. **Mathematics**

100. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is well above national averages at the end of both key stages, and standards have risen markedly since the last inspection. In 1999 the results in the national tests taken at the end of each key stage were well above national average levels, and were also well above results attained by pupils from similar backgrounds. At Key Stage 1 more than half of the pupils reached levels above that expected for seven-year olds, and the average level attained continued to reflect the high standards achieved in previous years, which were well above average levels attained nationally. At Key Stage 2, more than four fifths of pupils reached the expected level of attainment for 11 year olds, more than one third of pupils reached higher levels, and the average level attained rose significantly from 1998, maintaining the upward trend in results over previous years.

101. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils add and subtract numbers up to 100, and many add numbers up to 1000. They are developing a good understanding of place value, for example, using *carry* figures when writing down addition sums with larger numbers. In one lesson observed, pupils correctly added mentally 10, 20 or 30 to a range of other numbers. Some pupils explained how they had achieved their results, for example adding 10 and 70 by *1 add 7 is 8, and you put a 0 on*. They use their knowledge of number to describe patterns such as odd and even numbers, and in solving number puzzles. Pupils know multiplication tables for two, five and 10, which they also use for division. They also understand the connection between dividing by two and finding half of a number. Lower attaining pupils are generally less secure in their work, and usually focus on smaller numbers in calculations. Pupils know the names of two and three dimensional shapes such as triangles and cylinders, and they are beginning to describe and sort them into categories, such as, how many flat and curved faces they have, or the number of edges and corners. Pupils use their number skills in shopping activities, including calculating small amounts of change, and during measuring activities. They measure the length of classroom objects such as their exercise books using cubes and

handspans as units and then centimetres. They tell the time to the nearest quarter hour. There is very little difference in the level of work between pupils of different abilities overall, but lower attaining pupils' work is often less tidy than that of their more able peers.

102. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good understanding of the number system including fractions, decimals and percentages. They know all the usual multiplication tables and pupils calculate accurately with numbers up to 1000 and beyond. However, lower attaining pupils find work with larger numbers, especially division, difficult. Pupils combine different aspects of their knowledge very well. For example, they use their knowledge of decimal arithmetic to calculate the perimeter, area or volume of a wide range of shapes, such as triangles, circles and cylinders. They express answers in different forms such as 132 centimetres or 1.32 metres. Nearly all pupils are beginning to explore algebraic equations such as $2(f + 7) = 24$ which they solve mentally. In work on shape nearly all pupils use protractors to measure and draw angles, they correctly use vocabulary such as *acute* and *obtuse* and they calculate missing angles in diagrams. Pupils use their number skills to calculate the mean, mode and median of sets of data and they illustrate data in a variety of ways such as bar graphs and line graphs. In one lesson observed, pupils plotted points on graph paper, including using negative co-ordinates, and in a later lesson described how the co-ordinates changed when shapes are moved around the grid. In investigational work, pupils are beginning to develop their own ways of recording results to show for instance, how cube *skeletons grow* when extra units are added to the sides. They are beginning to describe patterns they find, but few are able to express results algebraically.

103. Pupils make good use of their numeracy skills across the curriculum, especially in experimental science. They measure a wide range of scientific data, and they analyse results using graphs, for example, when testing *spinners* of different sizes. In other subjects pupils weigh ingredients when cooking, they measure other materials in design and technology work, and they use co-ordinates and their knowledge of scale in studying maps in geography.

104. Pupils make good progress in mathematics throughout the school, both in lessons and over longer periods of time. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets for mathematics, especially when they receive help from support staff in lessons. At both key stages, pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding systematically as they get older. For example, pupils learn to count and work with small numbers, up to 100, focusing on mental addition and subtraction at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, they use increasingly larger numbers, and extend their understanding of number through work on multiplication and division, decimals, fractions and percentages. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, pupils developed their understanding of multiplication tables by grouping 18 *stars* in different ways such as $5 + 5 + 5 + 3$, or $(3 \times 5) + 3$. Pupils learn to apply their knowledge of number to weighing and measuring, including the use of decimals and estimating answers where appropriate. At both key stages, the increased emphasis on the development of mental arithmetic, which is a feature of the National Numeracy Strategy, enables pupils to consolidate a wide range of number skills through regular mental arithmetic sessions and through regular testing throughout the year.

105. Pupils have a very good attitude to mathematics, and they work very well. They are keen to join in oral work at the beginning of lessons, and many pupils put their hands up to answer questions. However, occasionally pupils do not settle sufficiently well at the beginning of lessons, they interrupt the discussion and some lose concentration, which affects the overall progress of the class. Pupils organise themselves well, and move smoothly from whole class teaching to group work, helping to give out books and equipment. Nearly all pupils sustain good concentration, they are motivated and they work industriously throughout lessons. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, pupils worked for more than 25 minutes, with little direct teacher support. Pupils behave very well, although occasionally they become a little noisier than is necessary and have to be reminded to keep noise down. However, this never gets out of

hand, and lessons proceed in a calm, but busy atmosphere. Pupils co-operate with each other very well. They discuss work and share equipment sensibly. They are courteous and have very good relationships with each other and all adults who work with them. Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour contribute very well to the productive, purposeful lessons seen and to the good progress they make as a result.

106. Mathematics teaching is good overall at both key stages. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject. They question pupils well in oral work, using vocabulary, which develops pupils understanding. For example, in a Year 1 lesson on counting and ordering number, pupils were asked to identify numbers between one and 20, using vocabulary such as, *odd*, *bigger than*, and *between*. Teachers have a good understanding of the structure of lessons for the National Numeracy Strategy, and follow it closely. Lessons are well planned, and include work set at three, and sometimes more, levels of ability, helping to ensure that all pupils are suitably challenged. Lessons build systematically on work done previously. For example, Year 6 pupils were taught how to use negative co-ordinates when plotting points on graphs, and later in the week developed their understanding by investigating the changes made to co-ordinate values when shapes are moved around on the grid.

107. Teachers manage their classes very well, although in one lesson observed the teacher tolerated rather more noise than was necessary, and had to give several reminders to restore quiet working. Teachers have very good supportive relationships with their pupils. This promotes very good behaviour, which contributes very effectively to the purposeful, busy lessons observed throughout the school. Lessons usually proceed at a brisk pace, but just occasionally explanations are too long, which leads to pupils fidgeting and insufficient time for other parts of the lesson. Teachers' use learning resources well, and they make very good use of support staff, who are well informed and contribute, effectively to the progress of low attaining pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. Teachers constantly assess pupils' work through discussion as they move round the class. They evaluate each week's work, and use the information if necessary to modify future lesson plans to take account of particular difficulties or successes.

108. The National Numeracy Strategy, for which all staff have received appropriate training, has been very smoothly implemented, starting last year with a gradual change in teaching style to include more directed, whole class teaching. It has had a noticeable effect on standards, especially in increasing the numbers of pupils who achieve levels above the national average at the end of both key stages. A very good assessment and recording system combines standardised and school-based tests, and provides teachers with accurate information from which they can assess pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics. The co-ordinator for mathematics and the headteacher regularly monitor lesson plans and the quality of pupils' work, helping to ensure consistent quality of teaching, marking and presentation of pupils' work across the school. Learning resources, including textbooks, are satisfactory, and support all aspects of the subject. Some new purchases have been made to support the National Numeracy Strategy, and further purchases will be made once needs are more fully identified.

112. **Science**

109. The results of teacher assessments for Key Stage 1 pupils in 1999 indicate that attainment was below the national average. At Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment was also below the national average and well below when compared with similar schools. This result is down on the previous year, but is only slightly down of the school's own targets for this cohort of pupils. These results are also different to the findings of the inspection, which concluded that pupils at both key stages are attaining in line with national averages. The difference in these findings can be explained by the very high percentage of pupils in the last Key Stage 2 cohort, 30 percent of whom were on the school's register of special educational needs. In addition, the school has acknowledged that the scheme of work did not allow sufficient time

for pupils to revisit their previous work before taking the standard assessment tests. Although the results at Key Stage 2 have declined from 1998 to 1999, the number of pupils attaining Level five, above the national average, has greatly increased from six to 20 percent.

110. Pupils at Key Stage 1, confidently identify living things, sorting them into groups dependent on their recognisable features, for example vertebrates and invertebrates. They name major external parts of the human body confidently, understand that humans require food and water to live and what would happen to the body without the skeleton to support it. By Year 2, pupils are beginning to predict and reason and higher attaining pupils are starting to understand what constitutes a fair test. Pupils are able to conduct experiments such as, the effect of exercise on heart rate and use many appropriate questions and observations to describe what they find.

111. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils have a clear understanding of how to conduct a fair test and hypothesise. They are able to accurately describe the workings of the human circulatory system, and how more specialised organs work, such as, the heart, inner ear and the eye. A significant minority of pupils demonstrate above average knowledge when describing different types of electrical circuits and the effect of conductors and insulators on electrical currents. Older pupils accurately describe and measure forces and gravity, the effect of air and wind resistance and the impact of different variables when experimenting, for example fresh, salty and soapy water. All pupils use increasingly complex equipment with confidence and care, and ask sensible and probing questions that dictate accuracy.

112. Children enter full time education with average skills in scientific awareness. Pupils' progress is good over both key stages and there is evidence of a few pupils making very good progress throughout the school. Pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 1, where they learn about different materials and their uses and how humans and plants grow. They experiment using different variables and the impact of these on the success of experiments such as, growing seeds. They learn about light sources and reflection and how different surfaces effect the reflected image. Pupils' record their work in very well presented booklets that include pictures and written explanations of their experiments. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress and often better when supported.

113. Pupils continue to make good progress during Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 3 continue to explore human growth by investigating their prediction that the longer the length of the spine the taller the person. Higher attaining pupils also started to consider other influences such as the length of someone's leg. Year 4 pupils further explore different types of electrical circuits and the difference between a *series* and *parallel* circuit. By Year 5 pupils start to ask very specific questions about how sound is made and the importance of vibration to create sound by experimenting with rubber bands and tuning forks. By Year 6, pupils are familiar with mass and how it is weighed. They write their own hypothesis, based on their understanding of gravity including forces such as upthrust. Pupils throughout the school use increasingly more complex systems to record their work, involving different types of graphs and information technology. Pupils with special educational needs make equally good progress.

114. Pupils' attitude to science is very good. They enjoy their lessons, especially as so many of them have a practical and experimental approach. They work extremely well together showing great appreciation of each other's suggestions and opinions. They listen carefully to teachers, support staff and other adults and treat equipment and resources with care and respect. Pupils of all ages take a great pride in the neatness and quality of their work and their behaviour is often exceptional.

115. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Occasionally, the quality of particular lessons at both key stages is very good. Teachers throughout the school have good subject knowledge and this is often very good at Key Stage 2. This enables teachers to effectively plan work at an appropriate level to give pupils a greater challenge to their thinking, for

example discussions on gravity, mass and weight leads pupils to realise why astronauts appear weightless in space and are able to make large steps on the moon. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, helping them to make good progress. Lower attaining pupils are supported very well and the emphasis on challenging the high attaining pupils has been particularly successful. Teachers manage pupils very well, particularly during practical lessons. Although occasionally noise levels are too high, this is mostly due to pupils' enthusiasm and not inappropriate behaviour. Lessons are taught at a brisk pace and resources are used very effectively. The quality of marking pupils' work is very good, with helpful and supportive comments for improvement. Teachers set appropriate homework to extend learning.

116. The school has developed a new and very effective policy and scheme of work that fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study. There is a strong and appropriate emphasis on illustrative and experimental science and all pupils from a young age learn the importance of asking accurate questions, forming an opinion and then testing to see if they are correct. Information technology is beginning to be used more effectively as the quality of equipment in the school improves. Cross-curricular links are extremely good, with a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, but also physical education, design and technology and geography are represented. The assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding is becoming very good. Pupils are now frequently assessed to enable teachers to have a clear understanding of what they know, understand and can do. In addition, the school has carefully analysed the weaknesses in pupils' understanding of scientific vocabulary, as highlighted in the national assessment tests at Key Stage 2, and distributed these findings to all age groups in order to improve this weakness as quickly as possible. There is a very informative and agreed portfolio of pupils' work to aid teachers' assessment. Clear plans are also in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning by the co-ordinator and headteacher, in a further effort to raise standards. The link governor for science has visited the school to support the work of the co-ordinator, and although she is new to the school she is extremely enthusiastic and keen to raise pupils' standards. The school has worked very hard to improve the weaknesses identified in science during the last inspection.

120. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

120. Information technology

117. Pupils' attainment in information technology is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, but below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. There has been some improvement at Key Stage 2 since the previous inspection, but not all strands of the subject are sufficiently developed.

118. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils write short pieces of text such as *The Fluffy Penguin* using a word processor, and they experiment with the shape, spray, colour and brush styles available in a painting program. They enter data such as what pets they have and print bar charts to illustrate their findings. Pupils operate tape recorders independently and experiment with a floor robot, giving it simple instructions to move forwards and to turn corners. They use the mouse confidently, and have operating skills in line with their age and experience.

119. By the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils are confident, independent users, who load, edit, save and print work without adult intervention. They produce a wide range of word processed work to support many areas of the curriculum, and attainment in this strand of the subject is satisfactory. For example, a good piece of writing on *Aboriginal Australians* in Year 5, showed careful attention to detail such as presentation, including suitable font choice and paragraph layout. It had clearly been edited and developed over a period of time and had been checked for spelling errors. Some good examples of combined text and graphics were seen, such as the posters and programmes for the school's production of *Twelfth Night*. Pupils make good use of CD-ROM reference sources in subjects such as history, geography and religious

education, for example finding and printing pictures and text extracts to support their study of life in Victorian times.

120. Work in other strands of the subject is less well developed, and falls short of the standard expected of 11 year olds. Pupils use a spreadsheet program to plot graphs, typically to illustrate the results of science experiments, but do no further work on data handling. Work in modelling and control is limited to simple screen robots, where pupils write short sequences of instructions to draw patterns and shapes on the computer screen. Pupils currently do no work on monitoring or measuring, for example using a computer to collect weather data over a period of time to support work in geography.

121. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. Those pupils with special educational needs also make similar progress to that of their peers at both key stages. Pupils at Key Stage 1, use a wide range of programs to support the general curriculum, and to develop satisfactory operating skills. For example, pupils in Year 1 write brief descriptions of themselves, and they compile a class book of tree paintings, to which they add one or two line descriptions. This is followed in Year 2 by slightly longer pieces with titles such as *Princess Laila*. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop satisfactory word processing skills, illustrated by work of increasing length and complexity, such as Harvest and Autumn poems in Years 3 and 4, and writing *frames* for English and history with older classes. However, pupils make unsatisfactory progress overall as a result of insufficient experience of all strands of the subject. Attainment and progress are compromised by insufficient access to computers at present, although this should improve markedly once the proposed computer suite is set up.

122. Pupils enjoy using computers, and have good attitudes to information technology. Small groups of pupils were observed using computers in a few lessons and at other times. Pupils work very well together. They share work out among the group members, discuss work and help each other, for example, when using a program to develop mathematics problem solving skills. They work confidently and maintain high levels of concentration.

123. Information technology is taught in combination with other subjects, and only two short direct teaching lessons were observed, both at Key Stage 2. This is insufficient to assess the quality of teaching overall, but the teaching observed was satisfactory. Lessons are well organised to allow both information technology and other subjects to take place simultaneously. Teachers observed using computers have good technical skills, for example, confidently demonstrating how to centre text on the page and how to change font styles and sizes. They make effective use of support staff, who work very well with groups of pupils on computers, and with other pupils while the teacher is involved with the computer. Pupils' work shows that teachers make good use of CD-ROM reference materials to support work across the curriculum at Key Stage 2.

124. The co-ordinator for information technology is new to the school, and is well aware of the deficiencies in the subject. There is a good development plan for information technology, which is a major focus of school development in the current year. Hardware resources are inadequate at present. There are insufficient computers to provide the full range of experiences needed, especially at Key Stage 2. However, the school is about to convert part of the building into an information technology suite, which will not only double its existing provision, but will also provide excellent links to other schools and the Internet. The school already has a very wide range of software to support the needs of information technology and other subjects across the curriculum, but much of this has yet to be installed on the school's existing computers. The planned curriculum for information technology is very good, and was written by staff at the Local Education Authority. It addresses all aspects of the subject, and provides very good continuity and development of learning throughout the school. It has been adopted with the expansion programme in mind, but is only partially implemented at present.

128. Art

125. Judgements in art are based upon three lessons observed at Key Stage 2 and a close analysis of pupils' past work and the numerous displays around the school and in pupils' classrooms. Overall, standards are similar to those expected for pupils' ages at both key stages, although some pupils at Key Stage 2 are attaining standards above those expected for their age. Pupils throughout the school make good progress including those with special educational needs. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection, at both key stages, where pupils were judged not to be fulfilling their potential.

126. As pupils progress through the school they develop a good variety of appropriate skills. At Key Stage 1, younger pupils learn about primary colours and experiment very effectively with warm and cold colours. By Year 2, pupils are familiar with artists such as *Lowry*, and have studied the work of *Cezanne* and *Seurat* producing work in the style of *pointillism*. Pupils at Key Stage 1, are introduced to the effect of light and dark and different techniques such as shading and smudging using different drawing medium such as pastels and chalk. Pupils experiment with creating three dimensional work using a variety of materials such as clay, dough and plaster. They have made tiles with an artist in residence and have successfully used other techniques such as stencilling and block printing to produce bright colourful displays of their work.

127. At Key Stage 2, pupils extend their knowledge of using and mixing colours to include secondary and tertiary colours, which are very effectively used to produce their own work in the style of *Van Gogh*, *Monet* and *Rembrandt*. In addition, pupils learn about the life of great artists and many are knowledgeable about the tragic life of *Van Gogh*. Pupils' drawing skills continue to improve throughout Key Stage 2 and many are developing appropriate line, shape and tone, producing work of a good quality. Higher attaining pupils are producing still life drawings and charcoal drawings of *Henry Moore's* sculptures to a very high standard. However, a few pupils are still producing drawings that are immature and are only just beginning to carefully observe and use appropriate techniques. Year 6 pupils use their design and information technology skills to produce a template for cross-stitching using different coloured threads for their initials and a border.

128. The use of art across the curriculum is very good. Illustrations for English work enhance its presentation, the quality of artwork in history and geography is impressive, especially the quality of brightly coloured and well made jewellery. Some pupils in Year 5 have started to use an information technology paint program to draw their own interpretation of an extract from *Van Gogh's* work. Art makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural awareness, through the study of many great European artists, American art and different types of weaving from Ghana, India and South America.

129. Pupils enjoy their art lessons. This is evident through direct observations, a careful analysis of the portfolio of pupils' work and the attractive displays in classrooms and around the school. At both key stages, pupils demonstrate a very positive attitude towards art. Their behaviour in lessons is extremely good, they listen with great interest and are eager to begin the activities introduced by the teacher. They take care to observe examples of paintings, sculptures and particular textiles and show good levels of sustained concentration. Pupils of all ages take considerable care in the presentation of their work.

130. The quality of the teaching at Key Stage 2, is good. Teachers are knowledgeable and lessons are introduced enthusiastically making particularly good references to different artistic styles. For example, in one lesson the teacher provided pupils with six different examples of *Van Gogh's* work as an introduction and illustration of his brilliant but troubled life. Pupils were very enthusiastic to learn about *Van Gogh's* life and gasped in amazement when they were told how much his famous *Sunflowers* painting was sold for. Teachers offer pupils good

support by encouraging and reinforcing the teaching of skills and techniques, such as *pointillism*. Lively displays throughout the school demonstrate the high value teachers place on pupils' work. Sketchbooks are effectively used particularly at Key Stage 2, which is beginning to support teachers' future planning as it is more securely based upon what pupils' know, understand and can do.

131. The art policy and scheme of work is a detailed and supportive document, which enables teachers to plan stimulating lessons within a balanced curriculum. Teachers' planning very carefully utilises pupils' knowledge from other subjects to aid their artwork. For example, the study of light and dark in science precedes the study of light, shade and tone in art. There is a very effective portfolio, containing some excellent examples of pupils' work, although the use of photographs is limited. The co-ordinator does monitor the subject, although this is often informally. Resources overall are satisfactory, but are often supplemented by teacher's using their own books and posters to inspire pupils. Art makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

135. **Design and technology**

132. Only one design and technology lesson was observed during the inspection. Judgements have been made following a careful analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and records, and displays. Discussions were also held with pupils and teachers. Pupils' standards in design and technology are in line with those expected of pupils of this age, at the end of both key stages. This is a similar finding to the last inspection. Pupils experience an appropriate range of materials and media, which help to develop their skills in cutting, shaping and constructing. Pupils of all ages, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

133. Younger pupils at Key Stage 1, identify the items and methods needed for making a milk shake, and record in simple sentences what they did. They also weave with paper and a variety of textured materials. Older pupils at Key Stage 1, design and make a house for one of the *Three Little Pigs*, and also design an electrical circuit for the same house. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils design, plan and work safely. Pupils at Key Stage 2, having studied life in Kenya, design and make Kenyan pendants and improve their literacy skills by designing advertising posters to promote the sale of the pendants. Pupils also design and make sports bibs using squared paper to plan the pattern before making the actual bib. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have a good idea of what constitutes healthy foods, having designed a healthy sandwich. They also use simple electrical circuits to make a lighthouse and design a photograph frame. They produce good designs and give sensible reasons for their choice of materials and construction. Pupils' work shows that they are able to effectively plan and evaluate their work individually and in groups.

134. In the lesson observed pupils showed high levels of interest and behaved very well. They co-operated in class discussions about the different features of money holders. They took the initiative in suggesting reasons why a purse or wallet is made in a particular way and concentrated very well on the task required of them.

135. The quality of teaching in the lesson observed was good. All teachers plan their work well and have sound subject knowledge. In the displays of pupils' work and their portfolios, there is evidence of the teaching of appropriate skills and time being given to the important evaluation process. However, there is little evidence of how pupils' progress is planned. Suitable attention is given to health and safety.

136. The subject co-ordinator is newly appointed and is enthusiastic about raising standards within design and technology. She plans to audit the subject to find out the areas that teachers feel need improvement and will then prioritise these. She intends to focus her attention on clarifying and improving how pupils continue to progress as they move through the school. There is an up to date policy covering the National Curriculum programmes of study. Learning resources are adequate though the subject has understandably not been a high priority in the school development plan.

140. **Geography**

137. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in geography, and work at levels appropriate for their age and ability which is an improvement on the previous inspection. Key Stage 1 pupils understand that maps represent the location of places. They draw simple maps of their immediate environment, showing details such as telephone boxes and road signs, and use these to describe routes to school. Later they add instructions such as *cross the road* and *turn left* to the maps they have drawn. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils discussed the area around their homes and identified features such as a *Disability Centre*, *speed cameras*, *woods*, and *recreation grounds*, which they then drew in a *concertina* book to show the character of the area where they live. Pupils investigate how to improve their environment, such as establishing a school pond so that pupils may relax round it and observe wildlife. Pupils develop their knowledge of other places through a study of *Bhota Island* in Bangladesh. They know for example that it is hot in Bangladesh, and that villagers rely on fishing for their survival.

138. The development and understanding of maps is a key feature of geography teaching throughout the school. At Key Stage 2, pupils learn to draw and interpret maps of increasing complexity and detail. For example, in Year 3 they illustrate sketch maps to show the important features of the local area as part of their study of Wellington. Older pupils use maps of Telford to locate residential and industrial areas, different types of road and other features. They begin to use grid references to describe map location, and to interpret some of the standard symbols used in Ordnance Survey maps of the British Isles. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils locate places round the world using atlases, and describe position using latitude and longitude. Pupils learn how to use aerial photographs to identify significant features in the landscape. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, pupils identified the Medway Bridge, the dock area, the main shopping street and other features on an aerial photograph of Rochester in Kent.

139. Pupils develop a good understanding of life in other countries through studying St Lucia in the West Indies and Kenya. Year 4 pupils describe family and school life in St Lucia and how they differ from Telford. For example, they know that the country relies on banana growing and tourism for its income, and how farming has been affected by the over use of chemical fertilisers. Year 6 pupils study rivers through a combination of field study and school based work. They take part in orienteering activities and they measure river flows as practical exercises on field trips. Pupils know the major stages of river development, and they illustrate in carefully drawn diagrams how features such as ox-bow lakes and waterfalls are formed. They appreciate how river systems are used commercially and for leisure, for example through the building of reservoirs for water supply and the development of recreational boating and fishing. They also understand how river and water systems can be abused, for example through chemical pollution as a result of industrial and farming methods.

140. Only two lessons were observed and in both pupils displayed good attitudes to geography and worked well. In the Year 2 lesson pupils clearly enjoyed their work. They were keen to say what they had found out about their home locality, and they worked hard to complete their *concertina* books in the time available, often with just occasional and brief support from the teacher. In the Year 4 lesson, pupils showed great interest in the aerial

photograph of Rochester, and enthusiastically joined in discussions with the teacher and later with each other.

141. In both lessons the quality of teaching was good. The lessons were conducted at a brisk pace, which helped to maintain pupils' interest. Teachers were enthusiastic and knowledgeable. In the Year 4 lesson, good use of terms such as *settlement* were used and careful examination of the Rochester photograph developed pupils' ability to use aerial photographs as sources of geographical information. Both classes were very well managed. As a result, the lessons were productive and purposeful, pupils behaved very well and they made good progress. Lessons are well planned. Teachers set interesting work, which challenges pupils of all ability levels. Over longer periods of time teaching covers a broad range of activities on each topic which contribute well to pupils' good geographical skills and understanding.

142. The curriculum has been very carefully modified to maintain continuity of learning throughout the school, and to retain a good balance of topics from the National Curriculum programmes of study, when taking account of the reduced time available for geography. Assessment procedures are good, and enable teachers to evaluate how well pupils make progress. The co-ordinator is new, but good support from the headteacher and the high quality of curriculum planning already established have helped her to settle well into the role. Learning resources for geography are satisfactory.

146. **History**

143. It was only possible to observe two history lessons, one in each key stage. However, a good collection of pupils' work was available for analysis and curriculum plans were also examined. On the basis of this evidence, standards are appropriate for the ages of pupils, and they make satisfactory progress including those with special educational needs. This is an improvement on the previous inspection.

144. Pupils at Key Stage 1 are beginning to develop a sense of chronology. They compare life in days gone by to that of the present, for example by examining holiday photographs and talking to elderly relatives. They show how events can be put into a time sequence using family photographs, showing people of increasing age. They have a simple understanding of social change, for example, through changes in fashion and in the work which people used to do. Year 1 pupils visit Shugborough Hall, where they learn about Victorian dress and take part in domestic chores such as doing the laundry. Good links are established between history and other subjects. In work on sound in science, pupils describe differences between sounds commonly heard about the house now, such as televisions and microwave cookers, and sounds from Victorian times, such as a domestic mangle. Year 2 pupils' study knights in fact and fiction. Pupils apply their skills in literacy, for example in writing invitations from a Princess to a ceremony to decorate a knight for bravery. At a factual level they learn how castles developed, and they know for example the basic structure of a Motte and Bailey castle.

145. At Key Stage 2, pupils learn to use a wide range of historical information sources, and they undertake an increasing number of personal research projects. In Year 4 pupils learn about the Romans. They study military and civilian life, and visit the Deva Experience at Chester. They describe how typical Roman villas were constructed using vocabulary such as *hypocaust* and *atrium*. A common thread in much of the work is the contrast between the lives of the rich and poor in different times. For example, in Year 3 pupils examine ancient Egyptian artefacts, and know for example, that decorated sandals and make up pots would belong to wealthy owners. In the study of Tudor times pupils describe differences between the Manor houses occupied by the rich, the cottages where the poor lived, differences in the clothes they wore and in the food they ate.

146. Very good cross-curricular links are used to develop pupils' historical understanding. For

example, in their study of the Tudors, Year 5 pupils know that the dissolution of the monasteries came about as a result of religious differences between King Henry VIII and the Pope. They write expressively about the reactions of a monk and a farmer to the act of dissolution, and how it will affect them. Good links with geography are established through the use of historical maps, and with art through paintings of Roman broaches, and sketches of buildings drawn during visits to places such as Buildwas Abbey. Throughout the key stage, pupils make very good use of information technology, to both research work and to write about it. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils used their skills in note taking to compile extensive notes about Victorian toys and pastimes, prior to rewriting their work in essay form.

147. Some very good Year 6 work on the Victorians was seen, both on display and in a class portfolio. For example, a well developed account of life for children of the poor in 1840 showed a good understanding of the relationship between poverty, working conditions in Victorian mills, mines and factories, disease and crime. In a recent visit to Blists Hill, a working Victorian museum, pupils learnt about Victorian education. They used the visit as the basis for a very effective assembly, where they enacted a short scene to show how a typical school day started, and the punishments given out for misdemeanours such as, being late for school or having dirty hands.

148. Pupils enjoy history. Informal discussion with pupils revealed enthusiasm for the subject, and in both lessons observed pupils had good attitudes to their work. Younger pupils listened well to their teacher's explanation of daily life in Victorian times, and older pupils made considered contributions to discussions about how leisure activities have changed since Victorian times. In both lessons, pupils behaved very well, they concentrated on their work, and made good progress as a result.

149. The quality of teaching in both lessons observed was good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which they use well, for example, drawing out pupils' understanding of how life has changed through changes in technology such as television, and developments in transport. Work is interesting, and lessons are a good mixture of discussion and pupil-centred activity, which engage pupils well and helps to ensure their very good behaviour. Classes are well managed, and lessons proceed at a good pace, ensuring that sufficient work is covered in the time available. In the Year 6 lesson, the teacher provided a very good selection of Victorian toys and books, and a good range of modern references, which enabled pupils to compile extensive notes on Victorian toys and pastimes. Lessons are well planned, and opportunities are frequently taken to link history with other subjects such as art, geography and information technology.

150. The history curriculum is good. It is based on a nationally recognised scheme of work, from which the school has carefully selected a range of units to provide pupils with a broad and balanced scheme of work. The cross-curricular approach to history observed in many classes is very effective and ensures that very effective use is made of the time available. The co-ordinator is new to the school, and has already begun to monitor curriculum plans to assess the quality of teaching. The school has insufficient resources of its own to satisfactorily support all aspects of the curriculum, but very good use is made of local loan services, from which many artefacts and reference books are borrowed. Good use is made of visits to places of historical interest, which gives pupils first hand experience of what life was like in other times.

154. Music

151. It was not possible to observe many lessons during the inspection, however a close analysis was made of pupils' previous work, video and audio tapes were viewed, lesson plans scrutinised and discussions were held with staff and pupils. This showed that pupils are working at levels in line with those expected for their ages, at both key stages. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils' progress, including those with special educational needs, is good.

152. Key Stage 1 pupils choose instruments to accompany the stories of *Three Billy Goats Gruff* and *Humpty Dumpty* and record their music on a simple graphic score. Pupils take part in musical workshops with guest schools and are able to sing, clap to a rhythm and join in the action for songs such as *Chuff a chuff a train*. One workshop was based on the Hindu version of the story of creation and the following week pupils performed their work for the rest of the school and their parents. Throughout the key stage pupils learn songs which they sing with increasing confidence during assemblies. Each year Key Stage 1 pupils perform a Christmas production for the school and their families.

153. As pupils move into Key Stage 2, they continue to develop their skills and so appreciate and perform music at a higher standard. Younger pupils produce more sophisticated graphic scores, perform and record their music, for example *The Sounds of the Rainforest*. They listen to and appreciate such pieces as *Holst's Planet Suite* and use it as a basis for expressing feelings and emotions. Pupils have visited a local primary school for a singing workshop, and their writing shows how much they enjoyed the visit and the new songs despite the hot June day. Pupils have also enjoyed a visit to the Oakengates Theatre to listen to a performance of *Peter and the Wolf*, they later worked with members of the orchestra to develop their own composition based on the story. Older Key Stage 2 pupils, have, along with pupils from five other schools, worked with professional musicians and performed with an orchestra. Year 6 pupils are starting to use standard notation and each year are involved in a large scale musical production, the most recent being *Twelfth Night* when pupils sang tunefully in two parts.

154. In the lessons observed, pupils' behaviour was very good. They listen very well, remain on task and are extremely interested and enthusiastic about their music. They enjoy using percussion instruments to make *weather* noises such as thunder and are thrilled when they sing a round successfully in four parts, spontaneously applauding their own performance. Pupils show obvious delight when they experiment with sound and enjoy performing for the rest of the class. There is an aura of suspense when pupils who are developing rhythmical patterns and following a simple score have to remember when not to play. Pupils playing in the lunchtime recorder group are enthusiastic and listen well to each other and so improve their own performance.

155. The quality of teaching in the two lessons observed was good. Lesson plans are clear with high expectations of performance. Teachers demonstrate new skills with confidence and challenge pupils appropriately to experiment and to take pride in their performances. Teachers create an industrious but happy atmosphere, so that pupils learn new skills and enjoy creating and performing their own compositions. Classroom management, during the lessons, is particularly good and pupils gain a great deal of self-confidence.

156. The music co-ordinator shows a keen interest and enthusiasm for the subject, and is well supported by a link governor. The overall management of the subject is good. The school has adapted the Local Education Authority's scheme of work although this is to be reviewed. The co-ordinator is introducing a yearly planning overview, and intends, through the monitoring process, to support teachers in their planning and in developing their confidence to teach music effectively. The school has adequate resources to deliver the curriculum and is able to

supplement these further with a loan of equipment from the nearby secondary school. Peripatetic music teachers visit the school regularly to give brass, woodwind and strings tuition. Older pupils who play instruments have the opportunity to join the band at the local secondary school, during Years 5 and 6, which is particularly good preparation for their eventual transfer to the school. The music provision enriches the curriculum and through the various activities contributes to pupils' personal and social development.

160. **Physical education**

157. By the end of both key stages, pupils are attaining levels in line with those expected for their age. This is a similar finding to the last report, although many more pupils are now achieving their potential, which is an improvement on the last inspection. Pupils at both key stages, are making satisfactory progress overall, including those with special educational needs. However, some pupils at Key Stage 1 are making particularly good progress, but this is not continued at Key Stage 2. The inspection of this school included a focused view of swimming, which is reported below.

158. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn the importance of a warm up and use the space in the hall well. They throw and catch with increasing levels of accuracy and confidence. They understand the importance of watching a ball closely and the difference in technique when catching a ball in the air to one bouncing on the ground. They are able to control a range of different sized balls with their feet, hands and when using a bat. Many are developing good striking skills when working in small groups and show improving hand eye co-ordination, as they grow older. In gymnastics pupils move on the floor and apparatus confidently using different parts of their bodies to balance and are beginning to link movements together to form routines involving jumps, turns and static balances.

159. Pupils at Key Stage 2, are aware of the importance of a warm up and cool down and its effect upon the body. They continue to develop appropriate co-ordination skills and are able to utilise them in more complex games and gymnastic lessons. In a games lesson for example, Year 5 pupils worked on different skills practices such as moving into space to receive a pass and developing specific foot work such as a *pivot*. Some pupils are developing an awareness of rules and tactics. In gymnastics pupils perform increasingly more complex routines, although the progress made at Key Stage 1 is not always continued throughout Key Stage 2. For example, some pupils in Year 4 are completing complex gymnastic movements such as handstands with quarter turns, headstands and handsprings. These high level skills were not extended into Year 6 where pupils were observed completing more static sequences simply moving from one body part to another. In Year 6, pupils have the opportunity to participate in outdoor and adventurous activities during a residential activities week, where they climb, canoe, abseil and participate in team problem solving activities.

163. **Swimming**

160. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to swim at the local public swimming pool for a ten week period during the summer term. Pupils make good progress initially developing their water confidence while others improve their swimming techniques. By the end of Key Stage 2 nearly 90 percent of pupils are able to swim unaided, competently and safely for at least 25 meters. Many more pupils successfully swim considerably greater distances up to 2,000 metres, attaining national swimming association distance certificates and survival awards. Pupils swim confidently using a variety of strokes on their front and back, such as breaststroke, freestyle, backstroke and the most able butterfly. Some are developing particularly good breathing techniques and diving skills which enables them to join a swimming club in their own time.

161. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are very good overall. They listen carefully to instructions and show very high levels of concentration and perseverance, for example, trying to strike a ball for the first time, catch one handed or complete a forward roll. Their behaviour is very good and often exceptional. Pupils work very well together in pairs, small groups and teams and when given the opportunity will use their initiative very well to develop and extend a gymnastic routine. All pupils help to get out apparatus or carry resources out to the playground in a very responsible manner. Pupils of all ages show great support and empathy for each other, for example, calling out their support for team mates and spontaneously applauding each others success. All pupils change for physical education lessons, work very hard and thoroughly enjoy the experiences.

162. The quality of teaching is good overall, although one exceptional lesson was observed at Key Stage 1. Teachers' subject knowledge is often good but variable. Some teachers at both key stages are knowledgeable and confident, while others lack confidence and miss opportunities to extend pupils' learning. For example, planning appropriate extension activities for the highest attaining pupils, providing opportunities for pupils to lead part of the warm up, or for them to evaluate their work, which is a similar finding to the last report. Most teachers change for physical education lessons and set a good example for pupils. They demonstrate what is required but also use pupils well to demonstrate their own ideas to the rest of the class. At their best, teachers fully involve pupils throughout the lesson. They set high but attainable challenges for them, such as, making a new game complete with rules which they then have to explain to the rest of the class. Teachers set clear learning objectives, use very effective questions to ensure they have fully understood new skills and prepare a very good range of resources for pupils to use quickly, therefore making very efficient use of the time available. Lessons are well planned to involve pupils of all abilities. There are opportunities for regular and ongoing assessments, that focuses on what pupils have learnt and also informs future planning.

163. There is a draft policy and scheme of work in place to support teachers' planning, although the co-ordination of the subject is not secure due to recent staff changes. The policy does however, cover a good range of activities from the programmes of study, including swimming. At present there is no formal procedure for monitoring teachers' planning or evaluating pupils' learning and assessment procedures are inconsistent. For example, there is no secure procedure to ensure the good progress made by some pupils at Key Stage 1 is continued into Key Stage 2. The school is well supported by outside bodies and parents who support a number of extra-curricular clubs, although the number of inter-school matches is more limited. Resources are good, when the additional loaned equipment is taken into account and these are well used as are the school's outdoor facilities for games lessons.

167. PART C: INSPECTION DATA

167. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

164. The inspection was undertaken by a team of four inspectors, including the lay inspector. During the week, 52 lessons or parts of lessons were evaluated. Additional time was spent scrutinising pupils' work, documents, photographs, audio and video tapes and portfolios of pupils' past and present work, as well as interviewing staff. Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior managers, other teachers, support staff, school secretary, members of the governing body and other adults in the school. Parents were also interviewed, as were a number of pupils. Documentation was analysed prior to and during the inspection, including samples of teachers' records, a Statement of Special Educational Need, pupils' reviews of their special educational needs as well as pupils' work. The views of a meeting attended by 38 parents and 104 responses to a parents' questionnaire were considered. Inspectors observed pupils' arrival and departure, break times assemblies, lunchtime and after-school activities. Pupils in all year groups were heard reading. Samples of pupils' mathematical skills, written work and information technology skills were monitored.

165. 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	199	1	28	34
Nursery	17	0	0	0

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.2

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked each week	95

Qualified teachers (Nursery class)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17

Education support staff (Nursery class)

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked each week	32

Average class size:	25
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Financial data

Financial year:	1998/1999
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	£
Total Income	312 076
Total Expenditure	312 297
Expenditure per pupil	1 459
Balance brought forward from previous year	21 765
Balance carried forward to next year	21 543

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

266

Number of questionnaires returned:

104

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	47	50	2	1	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	55	42	0	3	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	21	50	15	4	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	43	52	4	2	1
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	52	42	2	4	1
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	55	44	1	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	48	46	4	4	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	42	50	6	3	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	63	37	2	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	63	35	3	1	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	77	25	0	0	0