

INSPECTION REPORT

Tower View Primary School
Burton-on-Trent

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique Reference Number: 124046

Headteacher: Mrs G E Taylor

Reporting inspector: Dr B Mountford
11898

Dates of inspection: 1st – 4th November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707770

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
Type of control:	County Maintained
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Vancouver Drive Winhill Burton-on-Trent Staffordshire DE15 0EZ
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D R Barker
Date of previous inspection:	25 th –29 th September 1995 (High Bank Infants School).

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Dr B Mountford Registered Inspector	Information technology Geography	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management
Mr J Bayliss Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community The efficiency of the school
Mrs C Powell Team Inspector	Science Art	Provision for children under five
Mrs K Campbell Team Inspector	English Music	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mrs J Clayphan Team Inspector	Mathematics Design and technology	Equal opportunities Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Mr A Bond Team Inspector	Religious education History Physical education	Special education needs The curriculum and assessment

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The Office for Standards in Education
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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Attainment in science at the end of Key Stage 2 is above average and the progress made is good.
- The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are good.
- The progress of and curriculum provision for children under five are good.
- The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good.
- Accommodation is good overall.
- The school's provision for pupils' social and moral development is good.
- Leadership in the school is good. Staff and governors work well together.
- The support, welfare and guidance arrangements for pupils are good.
- The school has a positive ethos and there is a clear sense of what needs to be done to improve further.

Where the school has weaknesses

- Attainment in information technology, at the end of both key stages, is below national expectations and pupils' progress is poor.
- Progress in art and science in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory.
- Girls are underachieving in relation to boys.
- The curriculum is unbalanced with three subjects taking up to 70 per cent of the teaching time.
- The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1. A significant number of lessons are unsatisfactory.
- Monitoring and evaluation of standards and quality, in some subjects, is weak.

The weaknesses are outweighed by what the school does well, but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

At the time of the previous inspection only the infant school was inspected and reported upon. Where comparisons can be made, the school has made satisfactory progress overall since the last inspection. The capacity to improve further is good. Most of the key issues identified at the time of the last inspection have been successfully addressed by the amalgamated school.

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	C	B
Mathematics	D	D
Science	B	B

Key	
<i>Well above average</i>	A
<i>Above average</i>	B
<i>Average</i>	C
<i>Below average</i>	D
<i>Well below average</i>	E

The information shows, for example, that when compared nationally standards are average for English, below average for mathematics, and above average for science. When compared with schools whose pupils come from similar backgrounds, standards in English and science are

above average, but below average in mathematics.

The inspection indicates that at the age of 11 attainment in English, mathematics is average whilst in science attainment is above average. In information technology, attainment is well below national expectations and in religious education attainment is in line with the standards expected.

Children under five make good progress and throughout the school pupils make good progress in geography. They make sound progress in other key stages and subjects. There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on pupils' progress in design and technology in Key Stage 1 or 2.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good
Science		Satisfactory	Good
Information technology		Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence
Religious education		Insufficient evidence	Good
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good

The quality of teaching across the school varies from very good to poor and it is sound overall. In 93 per cent of lessons teaching is satisfactory or better; with 40 per cent being good or better. The quality of teaching for children under five is satisfactory. In Key Stage 1, there is a significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching. In Key Stage 2, where the quality of teaching is good overall, more than half of lessons are good or better with only 5 per cent of lessons less than satisfactory.

There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching in art, design and technology, geography, history and information technology.

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	Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful to others. A few pupils are difficult to manage.
Attendance	Good; above the national average.
Ethos*	Good. Pupils' attitudes are generally positive and their relationships with others are good. There is a commitment to raising standards.
Leadership and management	Good. The governors and staff work well together as a team. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and other senior staff.
Curriculum	Good for children under five and satisfactory elsewhere. Assessment arrangements are sound and support teaching. Insufficient time is allocated to information technology and some non-core subjects.
Pupils with special educational needs	Provision is satisfactory for pupils with special needs and they make sound progress.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision for moral and social development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Generally satisfactory resources and accommodation. The classroom assistants make a significant contribution to the standards achieved, though this is mainly focused in the mornings.
Value for money	Sound. Efficiency is good. Financial planning and control are good. The school adds value in terms of the progress pupils make, and the costs of educating each pupil are broadly average.

* *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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are encouraged to play an active part in school life. • The school is very approachable. • They are kept well informed about what is taught and progress made. • Their children achieve a good standard of work. • Pupils are encouraged to get involved in more than just their daily lessons. • Homework policy. • The positive values and attitudes that the school promotes. • The high standards of good behaviour expected by the school. • Their children like school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant negative views.

Inspectors' judgements generally support parents' views. The school is welcoming and provides a very good quality of support and guidance. It has satisfactory links with parents and keeps them well informed about what is happening at school.

Views of parents are based on the 16.6 per cent of parental questionnaires returned and those of the eleven parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to improve further the standards and the quality of education the staff, governors and parents should:

- ❑ raise attainment and progress of pupils at the end of both key stages in information technology, and progress in art and science, at the end of Key Stage 1 by addressing:
 - the improvement issues raised in the relevant subject paragraphs of this report, (*paragraphs 155-159, 144-151, 166-167*);
 - parents' more active and sustained involvement in supporting literacy and numeracy, (*paragraphs 66*);
- ❑ address the underachievement of girls in relation to that of boys, (*paragraphs 7, 77, 122, 143*);
- ❑ ensure a more appropriate balance in the timetable, between the core subjects of English, mathematics, and science and non-core subjects, to ensure a more worthwhile experience in some of the non-core subjects, (*paragraph 39*);
- ❑ improve the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 by ensuring that;
 - there is a better balance between different parts of lessons, (*paragraph 33*);
 - teachers' expectations of pace and challenge are raised, (*paragraph 33*);
 - teachers' subject knowledge is improved, (*paragraph 33*);
- ❑ improve monitoring and evaluation by all subject co-ordinators through a planned programme of reviewing teachers' planning, scrutiny of pupils' work, visits to classrooms, and monitoring standards achieved by pupils, (*paragraph 79*).

In addition to the key issues above, the following, less important matters, should also be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- increasing the amount of afternoon classroom support available to teachers, (*paragraph 33*);
- the work overload of the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator, (*paragraph 80*);
- more effective use of measures to evaluate school improvement and performance, (*paragraph 76*);
- better outdoor provision for pupils in the reception classes, (*paragraph 88*);
- the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents fully comply with statutory requirements, (*paragraph 76*).

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

Tower View Primary School has 409 pupils on roll; 221 boys and 188 girls. Of these, 22 per cent are on the school's special needs register and 11 have Statements of special educational need. This is above average. Twenty-six per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is also above average. The number of pupils at the school is projected to fall over the next few years.

The school's aims include the provision of a 'caring, secure and stimulating environment, high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour, partnership with parents and equal opportunities for staff and pupils'.

There were 47 children under the age of five at the time of the inspection. Children are admitted to the school at the beginning of the school term after their fourth birthday. The school follows the agreed local education authority policy for admissions. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average.

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	39	25	64

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	25	33	30
	Girls	12	19	13
	Total	37	52	43
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	57 (83)	81 (77)	67 (73)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	29	30	30
	Girls	13	13	16
	Total	42	43	46
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	66 (87)	67 (79)	72 (89)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	35	28	63

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	25	21	31
	Girls	19	15	22
	Total	44	36	53
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	68 (56)	57 (53)	84 (63)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	24	25	28
	Girls	21	19	20
	Total	45	44	48
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	71 (58)	69 (56)	76 (53)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

1

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

2

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

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) Missed through absence for the Latest complete reporting year		%
Authorised Absence	School	5.3
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.3
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:	Number
Fixed period	6
Permanent	1

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :	%
Very good or better	8
Satisfactory or better	93
Less than satisfactory	7

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

Overall, attainment on entry to the nursery is below the standard generally seen for children of this age. Children make good progress and, by the time they are five years old, attainment in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical development, is in line with expected standards.

In the rest of the school, standards are rising slightly overall, however, this is not true for all subjects or key stages. Standards are higher at the end of Key Stage 2 than they are at the end of Key Stage 1 where attainment remains below average overall. Attainment in the National Curriculum tests in mathematics at the age of eleven is also below average this year. However, the inspection evidence indicates that, at the age of eleven, pupils' attainment is average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. In religious education, the standards attained are in line with those indicated by the Local Agreed Syllabus. In information technology, attainment is well below the standards expected and the progress made by most pupils is poor. Sound progress is made in most other subjects and overall. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress throughout the school. Against the national trend, boys are consistently out-performing girls in the National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science. At the age of eleven, girls are behind the boys by the equivalent of six months progress.

The 1999 National Curriculum tests in English indicate that, at the age of seven, the number of pupils attaining expected levels in reading is below average but the number attaining higher levels is an improvement from the 1998 results and is now close to the national average. In writing, the proportion of pupils reaching expected levels, and above, is close to the national average. In comparison with all schools, pupils' performance between 1996 and 1998 was below average in reading, but average in writing, and standards remained static. In comparison with schools of a similar character, standards in both reading and writing were close to the average.

At the age of eleven, attainment in English in the 1999 National Curriculum tests is close to the national average. Standards have improved on 1998 results and the proportion of pupils attaining higher levels is rising. However, at the end of both key stages, but particularly at the end of Key Stage 2, the performance of boys is higher than that of girls. Although this pattern of higher achievement by boys has been evident for some time, the school has yet to consider reasons for the difference.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is in line with national averages. The oral work at the beginning of the literacy hour has had a positive impact on improving speaking and listening skills. Pupils make steady progress throughout both key stages and, by the time they are eleven, their speaking and listening skills are in line with national averages. Reading standards are in line with national averages at the end of both key stages and pupils make steady progress throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils describe a story they have read and talk about characters in a book with great enthusiasm. Many read expressively and enjoy the humour of books. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils discuss books and authors, express opinions and preferences, and develop interest in an increasingly wide range of children's literature and poetry. Most understand how to use reference books to support their work in subjects such as science, history and geography. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make steady progress in reading. They select from a good range of books accurately graded to match ability. They retain their enjoyment of reading and parents continue to provide the good level of support established in Key Stage 1.

Standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with national averages. Generally, pupils spell simple words correctly, write in sentences and know when to use full stops and capital letters correctly. Pupils make steady progress and targeted pupils with special educational needs make particularly good progress during group work, when they receive a high level of good quality support with both their reading and writing. At the end of Key Stage 2, writing is in line with that seen nationally. Pupils of all abilities consolidate their understanding by completing written exercises. They apply their literacy skills to other subjects well. For example, pupils give short, concise answers in their science work; they use bullet points and a range of texts in history and geography. However, there is some variation in the accuracy of pupils' writing and the quality of their presentation.

Overall progress in English is satisfactory and good in areas that have been specifically targeted for improvement. Pupils with special educational needs make particularly good progress when they are given quality support in the literacy hour and, elsewhere, ability groupings have started to have a positive impact on standards.

In 1998 and 1999, the percentage of pupils who attained at or beyond Level 2 in mathematics was well below the national average. At the end of Key Stage 2, the picture in 1998 was similar. A majority of pupils attained at the target set of Level 4, but the percentage who did so was well below the national average and a very small percentage attained the Level 5. In 1999, although the percentage of pupils who attained at Level 4 or higher was still well below the national average, there was a higher percentage who attained Level 5. On the basis of the evidence of lesson observations and other evidence, the picture of attainment in mathematics broadly reflects the 1999 National Curriculum test results. Attainment for the majority of pupils is in line with national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils add and subtract numbers to 100 correctly, tell the time confidently using a quarter past, half past, and o'clock and recognise odd and even numbers. They know the names and properties of two and three dimensional shapes, and measure using centimetres. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are secure in the four rules of number to 1000 mentally and on paper. They know their multiplication tables and many have quick recall of number facts. They calculate accurately using long multiplication and division, and work competently within money, length, area, fractions, decimals and percentages. They record data in a variety of appropriate ways. Progress throughout the school is broadly satisfactory but is uneven across Key Stage 1 and accelerates during Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make generally satisfactory progress, especially towards the end of Key Stage 2.

The National Curriculum teachers' assessment in science at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 was lower than in the previous year, when they were judged to be in line with the national average. The results of the most recent National Curriculum tests for 1999 at Key Stage 2 show that attainment is above the national average and a larger number of pupils attaining the higher Level 5. Attainment over the past three years, based on National Curriculum test results, indicates that pupils' attainment has shown a downward movement at the end of Key Stage 1 but a significant upward movement at the end of Key Stage 2 in the last three years. The attainment of boys is significantly higher than the attainment of girls over the last three years.

Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' attainment in science at the end of Key Stage 1 is below average, with a significant number of pupils attaining below this level. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is above the national average. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress and pupils in Key Stage 2 very good progress. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils' skills in carrying out an investigation are inconsistent and, for some pupils, underdeveloped. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are unable to name parts of a plant or know what animals and plants need to survive. In Key Stage 1, pupils name some properties of familiar materials, but are less confident in knowing how materials can be changed. They know that it is the effect of temperature that changes water to ice and that this process can be reversed. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of physical processes is insecure at the end of Key Stage 1. In discussion, pupils are unable to explain sources of light or explain what is

required to make a bulb light up. In Key Stage 2, some younger pupils can give a simple explanation when testing how light travels, and record their own ideas when creating 'mind maps' concerning the sources of light. Older pupils record their findings in a variety of ways when investigating the effect that burning has on materials, or testing the effect that the environment has on a nail over time. Pupils have knowledge of 'fair testing' but do not understand this fully. In Key Stage 2, older pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials is well developed. They discuss a variety of materials and know how they can be changed, displaying a good level of understanding. The pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. Good progress is made in Key Stage 2.

Pupils' attainment in information technology is well below that expected by the time they reach the end of each key stage and they make poor progress overall. The provision for information technology, and the standards achieved, show a decline since the last inspection. Attainment in the school starts from a very low base, with very few children having any experience with computers. By the age of eleven, most pupils are unable to demonstrate a satisfactory level of capability. They are unable, for example, to store, retrieve, and use databases and spreadsheets or use the keyboard for word-processing. Pupils cannot use word-processing facilities to edit their work to support any re-drafting of their work in literacy.

In religious education the majority of pupils at the end of both key stages are attaining standards in line with the expectations of the Local Agreed Syllabus.

At Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 are beginning to understand the significance of light in religion. They realise that the millennium is a milestone, remembering two thousand years since the birth of Jesus. In Year 5 pupils reveal qualities of empathy when discussing the philosophies of Lord Shaftsbury and Dr Barnado. They understand the need for community spirit so that people can benefit mutually. In Year 6, pupils express their feelings readily about the meanings of lines of verse in hymns. They link them to their own experiences of life and appreciate the relevance.

Pupils are learning from religious education as well as about it. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in both key stages.

In geography, history, music, and physical education, pupils are making satisfactory progress. In design and technology, there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on the progress being made by pupils. The progress made by pupils in art at the end of Key Stage 2 is sound but at the end of Key Stage 1 it is unsatisfactory. Pupils are unsure of pattern when designing, or the use of texture, line and tone in their drawing. They do not know the primary colours and have little understanding of colour mixing, including the use of shades.

Pupils with special educational needs generally make sound progress in both key stages towards the targets set for them. Particularly good progress is made in English lessons by pupils due to well-focussed support given by learning support assistants.

Overall, standards are rising. The school has established realistic and achievable targets for raising attainment further and is on target to meet them.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

Overall, throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to learning, their relationships with each other and the rest of the school community, their behaviour, and their personal development are good. There is an orderly and calm atmosphere within the school that successfully promotes learning. Parents are supportive of the school's strategies for improvement.

Children in the reception classes feel happy and secure, within a caring and purposeful environment. They are interested and make positive relationships with adults. Children work happily beside their friends, sharing and playing games without argument. They learn to co-

operate with their teachers, follow instructions and be aware of the routines of the lessons, especially in physical education.

In both key stages, pupils' have good attitudes to learning and are well motivated. They listen politely and attentively to the teacher and to each other, and are keen to answer questions, putting up their hands to do so. The pupils show consideration for others and for property. They are courteous to each other, to staff, and to school visitors. During lessons, pupils respond appropriately to instructions from teachers. They work well together, and individually, and show an interest in their work. Most are keen to participate in question and answer sessions and do so in a sensible and mature way. They readily take turns and show a willingness to apply themselves to whatever task is presented to them. This is most noticeable at Key Stage 2, when teaching strategies are frequently stimulating and the interest of pupils is maintained.

Pupils respond well to the high standards of behaviour expected. The level of behaviour in classrooms, when moving to the hall for physical education or assembly, and when eating their lunch, is usually good, especially at Key Stage 2. The pupils behave well during breaktimes. They appear trustworthy and are obedient polite and respectful to each other and to adults. However, on occasions, a very small number of pupils display behaviour that falls below the standards set by the school. Such inappropriate behaviour, is disruptive and it has an adverse effect on the attainment and progress of all pupils in the class. No incidents of bullying were observed during the inspection and parents have not raised it as a problem. The school rigorously enforces its behaviour policy to ensure that the interests of the great majority of pupils are protected. There has been a need for six fixed term exclusions, and one permanent exclusion in the past year.

Relationships are good, both among pupils and between pupils and adults. Pupils respect the values and beliefs of others and this is apparent in the way they relate to each other, both in lessons and elsewhere. Pupils of all ages mix well together at playtimes and lunchtimes. When given suitable opportunities, pupils show that they can collaborate well, for example, when involved in group activities or team games. The good quality of relationships has a positive effect on the pupils' learning

Pupils' personal development is sound. They respond very well to opportunities to assume responsibility, which steadily increase as they move through the school. Children under five are starting to carry out routine responsibilities such as clearing away after activities. At both key stages, pupils are diligent in fulfilling their classroom responsibilities. In Year 6, pupils show pride in carrying out their work as monitors or as house captains. Through supporting charities, pupils have an awareness of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves.

Attendance

Attendance is good. It is above the average for similar schools nationally. Pupils enjoy school and do not stay away without good cause.

Punctuality is good, and lessons begin and end on time. There are a few instances of minor lateness in the morning but, when they occur, they do not disrupt lessons.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

The quality of teaching generally varies from very good to poor across the school but it is sound overall with 93 per cent of lessons being satisfactory or better and almost half of lessons being good or very good. The quality of teaching for children under five is sound. However for pupils in classes in Key Stage 1 it is unsatisfactory, with more than one in ten lessons

being less than satisfactory and less than one in five lessons being good or better. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good overall with more than one in two lessons being good or very good. There were insufficient lessons available during the inspection to form a secure judgement on the quality of teaching in art, geography, history, design and technology, or information technology.

1. The teaching for children in the reception classes is satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers and support staff plan together daily and weekly, carefully ensuring the coverage of all areas of learning. Teachers and support staff organise their groups well, based upon the initial assessments of children's abilities. Teachers expect the children to do well and planning is good, building upon what the children already know and can do.

In the good and better lessons throughout the school, teachers have sound subject knowledge, appropriately high expectations to challenge most pupils, and use a range of approaches including whole-class, group and individual teaching. Planning is effective, with schemes of work in many but not all subjects; planning is detailed and effectively links long and medium term planning to lesson plans. Lesson plans used are exemplary, with details of learning outcomes, assessment opportunities, resources and clear indications of lesson structure to motivate different ability groups within the class. Over half of lessons observed were good or very good, for example, in Year 6, when pupils studied poems written about the First World War. These were considered from a variety of emotional and grammatical perspectives and careful attention is paid to roots of words, suffixes, and punctuation. The balance between group and whole-class work is judged well and strong support at the right level is given to both individuals and groups. Searching questions encourage pupils to improve their work. Class teachers generally make good use of the skilled and committed support staff to enhance pupils' learning but, on occasions, their use is inefficient, for example, during the introduction to literacy lessons when, for extended periods, they are not working directly with pupils.

Discipline, management and control of pupils are good. The positive relationship between pupils and their teachers, based on mutual respect and liking, is a consistent feature of most lessons. In many lessons intentions are consistently defined in terms of what pupils are to know, understand or be able to do by the end of the lesson and these are sometimes shared with pupils so that they also understand what the purpose and outcomes of the lessons are. Staff also effectively use assess the learning outcomes of lessons and use these as starting points for the next lesson.

In the less than satisfactory lessons in both key stages, the learning needs of pupils are not adequately met. These lessons lack pace and challenge with some pupils becoming disinterested and, occasionally, disruptive. Lessons judged to be unsatisfactory are sometimes unbalanced with, for example, pupils spending far too long listening to the teacher for effective learning to take place. A few teachers display some subject knowledge weaknesses in information technology and music. There is also a marked difference in the level of classroom support between morning and afternoon lessons. The lower level of support makes teaching less effective in the afternoons, particularly for the few challenging pupils in each class. In recognition of this, the school makes special provision for these pupils, but their progress in these groups needs rigorous monitoring and evaluation.

Pupils with special educational needs receive well-matched teaching through the specific targets set in individual educational plans and grouped tasks prepared by teachers for lessons. Teachers have a good level of awareness of each pupil's capabilities. Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to the teaching of pupils with special educational needs in groups and individual situations. Teachers and support assistants collaborate well in managing pupils in lessons.

The occasional use of teachers to teach their specialist subject, such as physical education, or music, to classes other than their own is a good feature in raising standards. Also the regular setting of pupils by ability in mathematics and English in parts of both key stages, and for children under five, is also having a positive impact on standards and the quality of teaching.

This arrangement enables teachers to focus their attention on fewer pupils and/or a narrower range of pupils' ability. The marking of pupils' work is regular and up-to-date but does not often set out what pupils need to do to improve their work. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop responsibility, initiative and independent learning habits, for example, by working without constant and close supervision. Given the generally good behaviour of pupils, more opportunities for pupils' personal development could be safely provided.

The provision for homework is good, supports teaching and learning and increases in range and depth as pupils move through the school in order to prepare pupils well for the secondary phase of education.

The curriculum and assessment

The curriculum for children under five is good. In reception classes, children follow a curriculum, which is based upon the six areas of learning, appropriate to children of this age. All areas are integrated throughout the afternoon. For language and literacy and mathematics lessons, children work in groups based upon the results of their initial assessments, providing well for their individual needs. Activities in reception classes are well planned around a common theme although not yet linked to the Desirable Learning Outcomes³ or the early levels of the National Curriculum. Assessment of children is good, with thorough daily assessments of children being used to plan future work. Profiles of children's progress are carefully maintained as they move through the reception year. The curriculum for children with special educational needs is appropriate to their needs.

The curriculum provision for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 is sound. It is broadly based and includes all National Curriculum subjects and religious education.

However, there are weaknesses in the balance of the curriculum. The school, quite rightly, has focussed strongly on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, in an attempt to improve the standard of pupils' attainment at the end of each key stage. To enable pupils to achieve national targets in these subjects, the timetable allocation has been heavily weighted in their favour, to such an extent that over two thirds of the time set for teaching the curriculum has been apportioned to them. The remaining seven subjects occupy only one third of the time allocated, creating an unbalanced curriculum. As a consequence, there is not enough time to teach some subjects effectively. Provision for information technology is poor. Insufficient attention is given in terms of time and pupil exposure to computer equipment, for pupils to reach an acceptable standard of attainment. Although the provision of religious education meets statutory requirements of the Local Agreed Syllabus, and pupils reach the expected levels of attainment, time allocation within the school timetable is small. For a recently designated core subject, it has a low status in the school curriculum.

The school provides successfully for the teaching of sex education and drug awareness in the last two years of Key Stage 2. With the exception of information technology, there are suitably detailed policies and schemes of work for all subjects, with programmes of study set out across both key stages.

The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy successfully. The use of English in other subjects is well established and there are many good examples of its use in history, geography, and religious education. The recently introduced National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively embedded into the school curriculum.

All pupils have access to the curriculum. Occasionally, pupils are withdrawn from lessons for music tuition or support in special educational needs, but this does not unduly limit their entitlement to a full curriculum.

³ The nationally agreed goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory schooling at the age of five.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The Code of Practice is in place and the register is updated regularly. Reviews of pupils' needs are undertaken periodically and thoroughly. Appropriate programmes are drawn up to meet each pupil's needs. There are well matched, attainable targets within these plans. Teachers and learning support assistants ensure that pupils are given adequate support to achieve these targets.

Overall, the curriculum is planned effectively, providing continuity and progress of learning but there are some strengths and some weaknesses apparent within the provision. Planning is thorough and detailed. A consistent approach is applied by teachers in individual year groups, and across the key stages, to ensure parallel delivery. Setting by ability takes place effectively for literacy and numeracy in some agreed year groups. Sufficient attention is paid to the development of skills, knowledge and understanding in the teaching of most subjects. However, information technology planning is not supported by a scheme of work to ensure pupils gain skills progressively as they develop through the school.

The topic approach, used to encompass a number of subjects, does not always provide sufficient continuity and progression, particularly in non-core subjects. This is evident in the provision in of history, geography, art and design and technology, which tend to share a curriculum focus. Curriculum planning does not ensure that an equitable amount of time is spent on each subject. There are lengthy gaps when these subjects are not taught and the building of pupils' skills is neglected. A clear example of this is art in Key Stage 1. A lack of progression of skills and insufficient focus on knowledge and understanding does not allow for pupils to make adequate progress. In Key Stage 1, teachers' interpretations of the planning in science is also weak, resulting in low attainment.

The school provides a sound range of extra-curricular activities to enrich the curriculum. Traditional team games are supplemented by clubs for choir, chess, drama and the school band. The Green Club focuses on environmental issues and enhances pupils' interest in the school environment and examines ways of effecting improvement.

The school has sound systems in place for assessing pupils' attainment. A range of standardised tests are used alongside school initiated assessment procedures. The statutory National Curriculum tests are undertaken at the end of both key stages. Recently the non-statutory tests for pupils in Year 4 were introduced. An analysis of test results, undertaken by the staff and by the local education authority assessment unit, has enabled the school to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses in its curriculum provision. Long term whole-school targets are also being set on the basis of this analysis. Baseline information is beginning to be developed in the reception classes, which is enabling teachers to track the progress of individual pupils and match the curriculum to their needs. Pupils' progress in reading is monitored throughout the school, formally through tests and, informally, by teachers.

In the core subjects, samples of pupils' work are retained to plot progress and work is levelled in line with national curriculum targets. At the end of each school year, teachers write an accurate report on each pupil's attainment in English, mathematics and science. The lack of systems for the recording of pupils' progress in information technology, and religious education, is a weakness. Accurate information for plotting pupils' progress is not available. There is a suitable system for recording progress in swimming but in other subjects assessment relies on teachers' informed knowledge of pupils through marking and class interaction.

Assessment systems are improving generally and information gained is being analysed by senior staff and used profitably for school and pupils' improvement. Improved results at Key Stage 2 in science exemplifies this development. Assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs are generally good with well-matched targets for development identified within individual educational plans.

The previous school inspection focussed on Key Stage 1 only, as it occurred prior to the school

amalgamation. It is difficult to draw comparisons but it would appear that curriculum planning has improved during the intervening years. Assessment procedures are more detailed and better analysed, thus having a more direct effect on curriculum planning.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Standards have generally been maintained since the report of the infants school, and now apply to the whole school. They are sound overall and there is good overall provision for moral and social development.

Good attention is given to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development for children under five. There are opportunities for children to reflect on things of the natural world in their work concerning autumn, and moments of wonder are planned for in the use of interesting and unusual resources. Children are encouraged to show respect for others, taking turns to speak and listen to others in groups. They are encouraged to 'tidy up' and take responsibility for their own activities. Lunchtime is a social occasion and shared by staff and children. The children are given a good introduction to their own culture through learning songs and rhymes, and hear traditional stories from their own and other cultures.

Provision for pupils' spiritual development is sound. A comprehensive programme of weekly themes for assembly, common to both the infant and junior parts of the school, interweaves issues such as friendship, thinking of others and the symbolism of darkness and light into a Christian framework with apt references to other major world faiths. A range of visitors and volunteers from within the school take assemblies, and this effectively widens pupils' perspectives. The presence of members of staff adds to the sense of occasion. However there are no regular times for whole-school assemblies in order to promote a feeling of unity between infants and juniors. Assemblies meet statutory requirements, but the atmosphere tends to be mundane, and opportunities are missed for pupils to reflect deeply, and also to raise them to experience moments of wonder. Pupils experience occasional moments of profound emotion for example, in Year 6, during the reading of First World War poems, and of wonder, as in Year 1, when they discover how to vary the strength of light from a bulb.

The school successfully provides for pupils' moral development. The moral principles defined in the school's policy are carefully implemented. Pupils' understanding of these principles is actively fostered through the promotion of positive behaviour, and the successful system of rewards and sanctions. Pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong. Teachers and support staff present good role models for pupils, and treat them with courtesy and respect. Adults expect high standards in return. Pupils are actively encouraged to relate positively to one another, to value the opinions of others, and to work together in harmony. Weekly classroom assemblies successfully reinforce their understanding of moral issues that are relevant to their lives, and issues which affect the wider world.

Provision for pupils' social development is good. Pupils throughout the school are given opportunities to work together. They are encouraged to become independent learners. They are given regular opportunities to take responsibilities in the classroom and school. Pupils in Key Stage 2 vote annually for their house captain, and pupils in the infants vote for the king and queen of the May. Pupils are increasingly aware of the needs of others through regular support of charities. Participation in the life of the community through visits to the local old people's home as well as a range of visits and visitors to the school, contribute effectively to the pupils' social development.

Provision for cultural development is sound with some good features. Pupils are taught to appreciate their own cultural tradition through art, music, literature and sport. A range of visitors, including a dance teacher who visits the school to enrich the curriculum and stimulate pupils' creative skills. Class trips to places of interest such as the British Museum and the National Gallery promote pupils' cultural knowledge effectively. In Years 4 and Year 6, pupils go on a residential visit which helps to consolidate social and cultural development. Cultural

diversity is introduced in geography, through celebrating festivals of other major faiths, visits from members of ethnic minority communities, and hearing music from other continents.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

Provision for support, guidance, and welfare of pupils is good. It is successful in meeting its aim to provide a caring and stimulating environment where pupils can learn and develop the social skills necessary to operate in the school community. There are sensitive procedures for introducing children under five to school life. These are helped considerably by the opportunities presented by the well-organised pre-school playgroup which runs in the school premises. Children under five settle quickly and happily into the routine of learning. All pupils are happy at school and confidently turn to adults when they need help or advice. Parents have very positive views about the support provided by the school that enhances the quality of education provided and makes a positive contribution to pupils' attainment and progress.

All class teachers provide sensitive support to pupils. Classroom assistants and nursery nurses provide good support in all aspects of the curriculum, especially in the nursery, and in the support of those with special educational needs. They make a very positive contribution to the quality of learning provided by the school. All staff are caring, skilled, and committed to the welfare of pupils in their care.

Strategies for monitoring progress and personal development, which include individual records of achievement files, are good. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is monitored well. Good links are established with outside support services to support pupils with special educational needs.

Pupils with special educational needs have appropriately detailed individual educational plans. The local education authority, through its support agencies, gives the school help and advice in developing suitable programmes for pupils at differing stages. There are a small number of pupils with disabilities. They are well integrated into the school community.

The measures that are in place to promote discipline and positive behaviour are good. They are understood and accepted by pupils. Anti-bullying procedures are effectively implemented. All members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching, set a good example which encourages learning.

The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. Its records for attendance are properly maintained and comply with statutory requirements. The weakness found at Key Stage 1 at the time of the previous report has been properly addressed. Since the previous inspection, the school has implemented rigorous procedures for monitoring and recording unauthorised absence. Close liaison with parents has resulted in recent levels of unauthorised absence showing considerable improvement to a level that is now below the national average. Formal liaison with the school's educational welfare officer is satisfactory, but rarely required.

There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' well being and health and safety. Pupils are given clear advice about the importance of personal hygiene, and statutory requirements in respect of health education are fully met. Supervision and support during lunch and breaktimes is good and has a positive effect on behaviour and safety. First-aid arrangements, and those for fire safety, are satisfactory. The school's procedures for dealing with accidents are secure, with effective liaison with parents when necessary. Parents are very supportive of the school's efforts in ensuring their children's well being while at school.

The school's procedures for child protection are good and meet statutory requirements. The designated member of staff is experienced, has a good appreciation of the role and responsibilities and ensures that all staff are aware of the school's policy, and of the need to be attentive and conscientious in their approach to the proper support of the children in their

charge.

The school's routines for pupils' transfer to secondary school are well organised. There is regular liaison between schools' staff, and exchange visits, that ensure that pupils are well prepared for when they transfer to the next stage of their education, which is made smooth and effective.

Partnership with parents and the community

The school's links with parents and the community generally are satisfactory overall. They make a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. Parental response to the pre-inspection parental survey was overwhelmingly positive, with no significant negative views about any aspect of the schools provision for the pupils in its care. However, the school's learning partnership with parents, for example in raising standards of literacy and numeracy, is not well developed.

The early years unit provides half-termly information, concerning the curriculum, which is displayed on the notice board. Relationships with the parents of children under five are good. There are good arrangements for the induction of children into the nursery with visits, meetings, and a helpful booklet provided.

The quality of information provided by the school varies. Much of it is good. The school prospectus is a very well produced document that gives clear advice and guidance to parents about school activities and how they can help. It contains many photographs of school activities. Changeable information is provided in loose-leaf format. However, it fails to meet statutory reporting requirements in respect of the inclusions of pupils' absence rates, the school's admissions policy, and national comparisons of assessment results. Newsletters are informative and appreciated by parents. The governors' annual report to parents is a good summary of the work of the school. It gives parents much valuable information provided in a user-friendly way. It achieves the governors' objective of reviewing the school year, but it has some omissions so that statutory reporting requirements are not fully met. No information is given about the next election of parent-governors; the school's provision for pupils with disabilities; information about the professional development of teachers, or a statement on the progress made in implementing the school's action plan following the previous inspection of the infant school.

Annual reports on pupils' progress are much appreciated by parents who feel that they are individual, informative, and a good guide to progress. Inspection evidence supports the view of parents. The weakness at Key Stage 1, identified at the time of the previous report, that parents needed to be provided with more specific information about their children's progress has been successfully addressed. Annual reports are now the result of much thought and care by teachers. All subjects are properly reported. Parents are provided with good information on pupils' attainment and progress and they are given information on targets for improvement. The reports fully meet statutory requirements.

Parents are warmly welcomed into school and are encouraged to assist in its work by providing classroom support, help with reading and other curriculum support, and with school trips. Those parents who help in school are used effectively and some good examples of the contribution that they make, especially in supporting reading, were seen during the inspection. The involvement of parents, and others who are able to help, is much appreciated by the school and contributes positively to pupils' learning and development.

There are regular opportunities, both formal and informal, for liaison with teachers to discuss attainment, progress, and the curriculum. Parents of children in the nursery and Key Stage 1 are encouraged to go into classrooms in the mornings for informal discussions with teachers if they have concerns or are seeking information. Parents' response to the pre-inspection questionnaire was very positive that the school is approachable when they need to discuss

problems or have questions to do with their children.

The school benefits greatly from the effective fundraising activities of the parent and teacher association. It makes a valuable, and valued, contribution to supporting pupils' learning and development by providing materials and equipment that support the curriculum.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to regular reviews of progress. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate opportunities to express their views on their child's specific needs. The school also encourages parents to liaise closely with teachers and support their children at home with tasks drawn from individual educational plans.

The school's links with a range of local authority support agencies are sound, and the school makes effective use of them when necessary.

The school successfully enriches the curriculum through its links with the local community and with business. The school is successful in its efforts to bring visitors into school and in organising educational and social trips and visits that enrich the curriculum. Links with the local community, such as the involvement with the local church, and the use of the local Trent Washlands, to support the geography curriculum, are good. They make a positive contribution to pupils' intellectual and personal development. The links with business that are in place, one of which offers professional expertise and support to the headteacher, are good. They offer opportunities for pupils to learn about the world of work, and the society in which they live, which contributes to their social development.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good. The staffing structure and the committees of the governing body provide a sound basis for strong leadership and clear educational direction for the work of the school. The governors, headteacher, senior staff and subject managers work well together to direct and manage the life and work of the school. The governors are experienced, increasingly knowledgeable about the school and committed to its improvement. They are an asset to the school. However, insufficient use is made of a range of indicators to monitor school improvement and performance in order to effectively fulfil their role as 'critical friends' of the school. With the exceptions of the provision for information technology, and some minor omissions from the school prospectus and the governor's report to parents, the school complies with statutory requirements.

The headteacher provides a strong influence in the overall direction and day-to-day running of the school. For example, there are effective arrangements to monitor standards of work in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, analysing the National Curriculum test data, year on year to identify trends and weaknesses in curriculum provision. The deputy headteacher who has a complementary range of skills, supports the headteacher very successfully. Staff relationships are good, and there is an effective learning environment. There is also a positive ethos in the school, reflected in a successful commitment to raising standards of attainment through target setting. The targets set for improving standards are realistic, achievable, and take account of the characteristics of the different year groups. There is a sense of urgency in raising standards at the end of each key stage with detailed analyses of National Curriculum test results to identify groups of pupils who need additional support. The school is also successfully tackling both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.

The co-ordinator in the early years unit provides good leadership which has been established over one year. She works hard to ensure that the learning programme is carefully planned,

organises the day-to-day work, and leads curriculum development. She makes sure that the needs of each individual child are met, including those with special educational needs.

The aims of the school are reflected throughout its life and work. The school effectively involves staff and governors in its development planning. The three-year school development plan is good with clear and relevant priorities that are costed and have success criteria attached to them. The school development plan provides an effective framework for continuing school improvement. Arrangements to monitor the progress of the school development plan are good and they involve both staff and governors. These are good features of provision and work well. There are co-ordinators for each subject, who have responsibility for monitoring planning, teaching, and evaluating the standards achieved by pupils. This role is undertaken successfully in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, across both key stages, but in other subjects it is largely unfulfilled. Co-ordinators have too few opportunities to monitor teaching and evaluate the standards of attainment in their own subjects.

The special educational needs co-ordinator manages this area of the curriculum well and gives good leadership. The code of practice is in place and the special needs register is updated regularly. Pupils' individual educational plans are reviewed termly. Proper consultation takes place between teachers, classroom support staff, parents and the special needs co-ordinator, when reviewing plans. Detailed plans set well-focused, achievable targets. However, the special needs co-ordinator has insufficient time during the school day to complete all of the required duties effectively and relies on the good will of staff to meet outside school hours. It imposes an unfair workload on the co-ordinator. The governor for special educational needs is very active in supporting the school. She has an influential role and her support is valued by the school.

The ethos of the school is good. There is a visible commitment to raising standards; relationships are good and there is an effective learning environment overall. Most of the key issues identified at the time of the inspection of former infant school have been successfully addressed by the amalgamated school. Management and leadership continue to be strengths in the school and major elements in the standards achieved and the good capacity of the school for further improvement.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

Staffing in the early years unit is satisfactory with a good number of support staff. All staff have good subject expertise. Accommodation is good for children under five with the exception of the outside area for the reception children. The unit comprises of two adjoining rooms, together with an additional classroom, and a smaller room in which the role play takes place. Children have the regular use of the hall for physical activities. The outside area for children in the nursery is sufficient, but the provision for children in reception to access safe, adventurous play outside, with opportunities for climbing and balancing, are poor. The area provided is unsatisfactory. Resources for the children under five are sound. There is a wide range of activities within each area of learning with the exception of large books, to encourage the early levels of literacy. Large books are available in the Key Stage 1 resource room but there are no large books linked to the structured reading books for children in reception. Funding allocated for the early years is low.

Teaching staff, throughout the school, are suitably qualified to meet the demands of the curriculum and the age group they teach. The school makes every effort to use its expertise well. Teachers who are confident in subjects, such as music, and physical education, teach their own and some other classes to ensure best provision. Support staff are of high quality and are particularly effective during the literacy hour, when well-targeted support makes a positive contribution towards pupils' learning. All support staff have a good understanding of their roles and some are undertaking vocational training to improve their expertise. The additional language support initiative has been used very effectively to target specific pupils in Year 3. However, the current emphasis of support for literacy and numeracy sometimes

results in more behavioural problems occurring in the afternoons when teachers have little or no additional help.

The school has a good induction programme for newly qualified teachers. Formal and informal discussion takes place with a teacher who acts as a mentor. In addition, time is allocated away from the class to work alongside colleagues or plan work. The school endeavours to provide a high level of support. All staff have recent, relevant job descriptions that are updated annually.

Arrangements for professional development and appraisal are sound and closely linked to whole-school needs, and initiatives such as literacy and numeracy. Professional interviews are used to highlight areas for development and these discussions go some way towards ensuring the personal professional needs of individuals are given attention. However, the demands of implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have made training for the co-ordination of other subjects difficult. Many co-ordinators, including the teacher responsible for special needs, have received no formal training and, although they have a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards their roles, not all have yet acquired the skills necessary to develop an overview of their subject in a recently amalgamated school.

Resources to support pupils with special needs are fairly basic. Expenditure on equipment is quite low. Funding for special educational needs pupils is devolved through the school budget. Expenditure on materials to support these pupils is quite low. Learning support staff are used effectively to help pupils individually and in small groups.

Currently, the school has some long term staff absences, yet the documentation available to supply staff is inadequate to ensure a satisfactory level of continuity and progression for pupils in affected classes. Although supply staff receive information about school routines, they do not have a clear enough idea of what pupils have been taught previously or the capabilities of individual pupils.

The school provides spacious, well maintained accommodation. Classrooms vary in size but are allocated appropriately. The two halls are adequately used for physical education and assemblies. A specialist information technology room is in the process of development and each key stage has its own library. The Key Stage 2 library, although not large enough to allow a class of pupils to study in comfort, is accessible. Conversely, the Key Stage 1 library is situated in the infant hall and is used infrequently because it is too small and inaccessible. Outdoor areas are generous and, although grassed areas are well maintained, they are not currently used for field study work. The nursery and reception areas provide good accommodation for children under five. However, although there is a good play area for children in the nursery, the play area designated for reception pupils is very small and inadequate. There is no evidence of vandalism or graffiti and pupils generally take pride in their school. The school premises and grounds are well cared-for by the caretaker and his staff. The buildings committee of the governing body regularly reviews facilities and includes a well-structured programme for redecoration and refurbishment in the school development plan.

Overall, the quality, range, and sufficiency of resources have a positive effect on pupils' learning. Learning resources are at least adequate in all subjects, with the exception of information technology, where provision is unsatisfactory. The school awaits the delivery of new computers to address the deficiency. Resources for geography, history, art, and religious education, are good and for physical education they are very good. However, equipment for some Key Stage 1 science topics is not easily accessible, when it is stored in the Key Stage 2 building. Funding for literacy has been used well to provide a good range of quality reading materials for whole-class, group and individual activities. By contrast, some older reading books look neglected, the Key Stage 1 library is under resourced and several outdated information books still remain on display in the Key Stage 2 library.

The efficiency of the school

The overall efficiency of the school, in terms of its financial planning and control, use of staff and learning resources, and administrative and financial control, is good.

Financial planning is well organised. Budget forecasting makes use of sound techniques that ensure that financial decisions are based on the best information available. Governors receive comprehensive reports from the headteacher, which enable them to have an effective input to budget setting and to properly perform their monitoring of budget variances.

Governors, with the support of the headteacher, are aware of the need to obtain value for money and have good procedures for ensuring that best financial value is obtained when purchases are made. They have responded positively to the weakness reported at the time of the previous inspection of the infant school, and now have some good informal procedures for determining the impact of expenditure decisions on the quality of learning. Liaison with teachers, awareness of statutory assessment results, visits to school, and comments from parents and pupils, are used as effective sources of information. There are few formal monitoring procedures and little reference is made to national comparisons.

In order to meet the school's priorities, at a time of falling roll numbers, recent expenditure has been higher than income with a consequent reduction in planned financial reserves to a very low level. However, successful strategies adopted by the school appear to have reversed the recent downward trend in roll numbers and these, taken together with effective contingency planning undertaken by governors, are contributing to an improved financial performance. Governors, advised by the local authority and the headteacher, have proper regard for the use of reserves, and their spending decisions are prudent and are made in line with the school development plan and the priorities for the school.

The governors' decisions on the use of specific funds, in particular the limited funding available for pupils with special educational needs, are based on sound principles and targeted to have a positive impact on learning and progress.

Teaching staff are deployed satisfactorily overall with some good features such as the use made of senior staff members for classroom monitoring activities. However the use made of the special needs co-ordinator is unsatisfactory. She is conscientious, hard working, and well organised. However, she has not benefited from specialist training, and it is not appropriate that she has to undertake many of her not inconsiderable duties in her own time because she is given insufficient formal release time to properly undertake them within the normal school day. Good use is made of classroom assistants and nursery support staff. The senior nursery nurse is particularly effectively used. Together, support staff provide effective support to teaching staff and make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

The use of the accommodation and learning resources available to the school is satisfactory overall, but under-utilisation of the school's existing information technology resources means that inefficient use is made of them and pupils' progress in information technology is unnecessarily restricted.

The overall efficiency of the school's financial control and administration is good. All appropriate procedures, including computerised records, are in place to ensure reliability and accuracy. The school's most recent audit found no matters of significant concern. The school's administration officer is appropriately experienced for the financial and administrative duties that she performs. She undertakes her responsibilities conscientiously. She is well supported by the school's other clerical staff and, together, they provide good support to the headteacher and the rest of the school community.

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education and, as a result, pupils' progress and attainment is also satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development whilst

at school are good. Taking these factors into account, together with pupils' less than average attainment on entry, and lower than average socio-economic circumstances, as well as the long-term average financial resources available to it, the school is judged to provide sound value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

Children are admitted to the nursery in the term after their fourth birthday and are admitted to the reception class at the beginning of the year in which they are five. There were 59 children in the two reception classes at the time of the inspection with the nursery children being admitted in the following January and April. Most children transfer from a pre-school group which is now on the school site. There is a very good induction programme of visits to school, and talks for parents, which helps the children to enter school securely. A set of home/school booklets have been produced together with a helpful early years booklet for parents. Early assessment of children's competencies indicates that attainment is below that expected for children of this age. Some parents are involved in children's learning through helping in lessons. By the age of five, children make good progress overall. In language and literacy, mathematics, personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development, and physical development, attainment is in line with national expectations and good progress is made.

Personal and social development

Children behave well, working happily with their friends, taking turns and sharing in games such as 'Wake up Dragon', in a numeracy lesson. Most children show independence in selecting an activity and display a good level of responsibility when 'tidying up' at the end of a session. Some children have short spans of concentration and require encouragement to persevere. Children have the opportunity to select from prepared activities, which are appropriately planned for. Children dress and undress in their physical education lessons and when 'dressing up' in the role-play room. In their physical education lessons, children show a good level of confidence and independence.

Awards for academic and behaviour achievements are presented each week, and certificates are presented in the Key Stage 1 assembly.

Language and literacy

Children are encouraged to develop their language both in small and large groups when relating holiday experiences or talking about autumn. Children listen to stories such as 'Henrietta's Winter' and poems such as 'The Five Little Squirrels', and 'The Hedgehog', which are all linked to the theme of autumn. Many children are able to concentrate for only a short length of time. A whole-class rendering of 'The Bear Hunt' was a good example of the development of speaking and listening skills. Staff are involved in children's role play activities in the 'Clinic' which also extend their speaking skills.

Children enjoy books and handle them with care. Most children have opportunities to enjoy books independently and love sharing stories, pretending to be the teacher. Although early in the school year, children recognise a set of familiar words and some confidently read and understand the early levels of their reading books, showing pride and obvious enjoyment. Children predict and re-tell their stories and talk about the characters of 'Castle Street' confidently. Most children can recognise their own name.

Children's writing is well developed. They trace and draw and make marks using a variety of mark makers, for example, in the 'Writing Corner', when making books and cards. Most children recognise their own names but few can write them, although many make a good attempt. Children's knowledge and understanding of phonics is being appropriately developed and practised in order to write letters and words. Children receive good encouragement to 'name' their work.

By the age of five, children attain standards in language and literacy that are in line with those

found nationally and are making good progress, especially in their speaking and listening skills.

There is planned involvement of support and teaching staff in children's learning. They ask questions skilfully and invite children to talk about what they are seeing and doing. Staff takes part in role-play activities, extending the opportunities provided, in order to develop children's linguistic skills. This makes a significant contribution to the progress of children's language development. The area of speaking and listening is well developed and planned for all children.

Mathematics

In the reception classes children learn to recognise, sequence and write numbers to ten. As for literacy, children work in three groups in order to meet their differing needs. Lessons begin with 'mental maths' where mathematics is made fun through games. Children can recognise and record numbers up to ten, counting forwards and backwards. They find missing numbers in a number line and younger children recognise and order numbers to four in order to make a 'number train'. Younger children use 'conkers' to count to five and a 'tally man' records the children involved in the game, 'five little squirrels'. They can sort by colour when sorting leaves collected on an autumn walk and find objects that are long and short, and recognise 'more' or 'less'. Children sing number rhymes and songs to make mathematics fun and enjoy stories such as 'Ten Little Teddy Bears'.

Children make good progress and, by the age of five, attain standards that are in line with those found nationally.

The teaching of mathematical concepts is sound. Children are taught in groups according to their levels of ability. Teachers ask questions, which encourage children to build on their previous experiences. They use assessment well to ensure children are working at the correct level and to enable mobility within the groups.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Children understand the passing of time, when talking about yesterday and last week, as they share their 'news' and events from their holiday. They talk about families and grandparents, when looking at past and present events. Children plan a walk around the school, drawing what they see and being aware of their own environment.

When investigating living things children look at autumn seeds and leaves, using them to sort and look at the differences. Children use this collection of natural objects to identify those that will float or sink in the water tray, asking why this happens. In design and technology, children make chocolate cookies and make hedgehogs using clay and straws. The computer is used to support their lessons in mathematics when using a number program to practice numbers from one to ten, using the directional arrows.

The progress children make is sound as they reach levels found nationally by five.

The teaching in all areas of knowledge and understanding of the world is sound. Lessons are well planned and imaginatively integrated into other areas of learning. Resources are good and children are encouraged to bring things from home to share with others.

Physical development

Children can climb and balance using fixed apparatus with extreme confidence and showing good levels of agility. Children move in different ways around the apparatus, considering each movement, with increasing control and co-ordination. They move with an awareness of space as they travel around the hall, using a range of small and large apparatus safely.

Children use scissors, glue spreaders and clay tools well, with a minority of younger children needing to practise these skills. By the age of five, children make sound progress and are in line with the levels expected for their age.

The teaching of physical development is good. Good attention is paid to clear, safe instructions, giving plenty of opportunities for children to practice and improve their skills.

Creative development

Children in reception use a variety of media in their creative activities. They explore the feel of dough, wet pasta, sand, water and clay. They print autumn leaves using a roller to show the veins and use pastels to draw autumn pictures. Children paint pictures of autumn trees and produce attractive collage pictures using autumn leaves.

Children in reception sing a good repertoire of songs and rhymes. Children use percussion instruments to accompany their songs as they identify high and low sounds. In class groups, children sing and play traditional 'ring' games and songs. They use role play creatively, dramatising a clinic and using the resources provided imaginatively. By the time they are five, children reach the standards expected for their age and make sound progress.

The teaching of creative activities is well planned and support staff work closely with teachers to make a significant contribution to children's learning. A good range of planned and integrated activities is provided.

Resources in the reception classes are satisfactory, providing for all areas of learning. However, the outside area for children in reception is unsatisfactory. There is no provision for children to access a safe secure and adventurous area. The existing fenced area is small and gives children limited opportunities for adventurous play.

Nursery provision

The January and April intake of children attend a nursery class within the early years unit. Accommodation and resources provided are good together with an outside area, which is suitable for these children. Photographs show that good opportunities are provided for these children, with good attention being given to all areas of learning. Assessments are completed and there are good strategies to encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY, AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

English

The 1999 National Curriculum tests indicate that, at the age of seven, the number of pupils attaining expected levels in reading is below average but the number attaining higher levels has improved on 1998 results and is now close to the national average. In writing, the proportion of pupils reaching expected levels, and above, is close to the national average. In comparison with all schools, pupils' performance over the three years until 1998 was below average in reading but average in writing and standards were static. In comparison with schools of a similar character, standards in both reading and writing were close to the average.

At the age of eleven, attainment in the 1999 tests is close to the national average. Standards have improved on 1998 results and the proportion of pupils attaining higher levels is rising. However, at the end of both key stages, but particularly at the end of Key Stage 2, the performance of boys is higher than that of girls. Although this pattern of higher achievement

by boys has been evident for some time, the school has yet to consider reasons for the difference. Improvement in standards is a direct result of the positive impact of the National Literacy Strategy and the changes in the organisation of the teaching of English.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is in line with national averages. The oral work, which takes place at the beginning of the literacy hour, has had a positive impact on improving speaking and listening skills. From an early age, pupils are encouraged to listen carefully whilst others read or answer questions. In one reading session, pupils reading 'Land of the Dinosaurs', together, generate much discussion, listen carefully and read with confidence. Learning support assistants ensure individual pupils with special educational needs are able to contribute fully to all discussion. Pupils make steady progress throughout both key stages and, by the time they are eleven, their speaking and listening is in line with national averages. They benefit greatly from the level of attention teachers give to promoting the use of accurate technical language in their literacy lessons. In addition, older pupils have the opportunity join the drama club and to take part in school productions such as, 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. A group of older pupils discuss their tastes in music with confidence and maturity. They express preferences and give clear reasons for their likes and dislikes.

Reading standards are in line with national averages at the end of both key stages and pupils make steady progress throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils describe a story they have read and talk about characters in a book with great enthusiasm. Many read expressively and enjoy the humour of books. They are developing a wide range of preferences; some like poems, others prefer non-fiction; all like reading. Phonic skills are currently being developed in a structured way within the literacy hour, and there is noticeable improvement in word-building skills, although some pupils still struggle with unfamiliar words. However, pupils of all abilities do not use a wide enough range of strategies to tackle new or unfamiliar words and the current structure of the reading scheme lacks cohesion. Children under five and pupils at both key stages adopt different methods. Consequently, there is no sense of a whole-school approach towards reading. In addition, the Key Stage 1 library is situated in the infants' hall. It is too small for pupils to use for research, and information books are in short supply. Current arrangements make it impossible for pupils to develop adequate library skills. In addition, in Key Stage 2, the organisation of the library catalogue does not link easily with the system in operation, and makes continuity and progression difficult.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils discuss books and authors, express opinions and preferences, and develop interest in an increasingly wide range of children's literature and poetry. Most understand how to use reference books to support their work in subjects such as science, history, and geography. They use the Key Stage 2 library to borrow and change books and most are familiar with the systems in operation. Some information books are outdated and many are underused. Although plans for the development of library skills are in hand, older pupils are currently uncertain when locating books in the library and not all are familiar with the coding system. In addition pupils are not secure enough when using a dictionary or thesaurus. Pupils of all abilities are unable to look up words with any degree of speed.

Pupils in Key Stage 2 make steady progress in reading. They select from a good range of books accurately graded to match ability. They retain their enjoyment of reading and parents continue to provide the good level of support established in Key Stage 1. Reading records are consistent, but they do not always contain any helpful comments about how pupils can best improve their reading; some are merely a list of books and pages read.

Standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with national averages. Brighter pupils develop their ideas in an organised, imaginative way through the use of good quality books. Although their choice of vocabulary is less adventurous, average ability pupils also make good use of a wide range of materials to develop their writing skills adequately. Less able pupils use simple sentence structures well. They, too, develop independent writing alongside more formal written work. In one class, pupils of all abilities succeed in completing

their own writing, either independently or with help, in preparation for discussion at the end of their lesson about 'The Enormous Turnip'. Finished work is subsequently used effectively to highlight areas for development in writing, spelling and punctuation. Generally, pupils spell simple words correctly, write in sentences and know when to use full stops and capital letters correctly. Guided writing activities in the literacy hour focus well on helping individual pupils improve their writing skills. Pupils make steady progress and targeted pupils with special educational needs make particularly good progress during group work, when they receive a high level of good quality support with both their reading and writing.

At the end of Key Stage 2, writing is in line with that seen nationally. There is good evidence that more able pupils sustain their writing through stories such as, 'Journey to the Centre of the Earth'; they make mature word choices and try to vary their sentence structure in order to add interest. Pupils of all abilities consolidate their understanding by completing written exercises. They apply their literacy skills to other subjects well. For example, pupils give short, concise answers in their science work, they use bullet points and a range of texts in history and geography, and regard literacy as important. However, there is some variation in the accuracy of pupils' writing and the quality of their presentation. In literacy hours, much attention is paid to neat handwriting, accurate spelling and correct punctuation, but the same high standards are not always consistently applied to written work in other subjects. In addition, some year groups use books for drafting work and word books for attempting spellings whilst others use neither. Standards do not always match ability. Some pupils in lower ability groups write more accurately than other higher ability pupils. As with reading, there is a lack of consistency in practice between key stages and year groups and there is not enough sense of a coherent approach towards writing from reception to Year 6. Information technology makes little contribution to pupils' learning.

Overall, progress in English is satisfactory and good in areas that have been specifically targeted for improvement. Pupils with special educational needs make particularly good progress when they are given quality support in the literacy hour and, elsewhere, ability groupings have started to have a positive impact on standards. In these groupings, progress is good when the teacher matches work very accurately to the needs of individual pupils. A lower ability group of only twelve pupils in Year 6 is divided into four groups for its guided reading. Texts chosen are very appropriate to the age, interest and needs of the pupils and progress is swift. Very good progress is occasionally made in lessons where the quality of teaching is also very good and pupils have a real enjoyment of their work. For example, in Year 3 pupils link literacy work to a science topic on 'sound and light'. All work is well matched to ability, pupils work in three groups, and each group presents its information in paragraph, note, or sentence form to the class at the end of the lesson. However, in other lessons, work set is not sufficiently challenging for the most able pupils to make best progress. In addition, the poor behaviour of a small minority of pupils affects the learning and slows progress of individual classes or groups. The adverse effect of indiscipline on progress is most noticeable in Year 4.

In lessons, attitudes towards English are good. There is general enjoyment of reading and a love of books. Pupils like to use language such as author, poet and illustrator. The manner in which younger pupils of all abilities work independently in the literacy hour is impressive. Behaviour is generally good and pupils respond well to their teacher's instructions. Pupils are keen to answer questions and are articulate when explaining their work. They look forward to their literacy hour. However, when introductions to lessons are too long, or the pace of a lesson is slow, pupils sometimes lose interest and enthusiasm. Even in lessons affected by the bad behaviour of a small minority, other pupils try hard to complete their work in very difficult circumstances.

Teaching in Key Stage 1 is always satisfactory and occasionally good. All staff use the literacy hour well to raise standards. They make good use of language through their own conversations with pupils, by talking about authors and illustrators. In the best lessons, pupils understand exactly what they have to do in a set amount of time, every part of the

lesson is purposeful and pupils have to report back to the rest of the class at the end of the lesson. However, a sense of urgency and purpose is not always evident in Key Stage 1 lessons. In some less than satisfactory lessons, pupils sometimes sit for up to 40 minutes before moving into groups. Occasionally, teachers do not challenge pupils sufficiently with their questioning and brighter pupils find work too easy.

In Key Stage 2, although a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was observed, the overall quality of teaching was of a higher standard than in Key Stage 1. Over half of lessons observed were good or very good, as seen for example in Year 6 classes with pupils studying poems of the First World War. These were studied from a variety of emotional and grammatical perspectives and careful attention is paid to roots of words, suffixes, and punctuation. The balance between group and whole-class work is judged well and strong support at the right level is given to both individuals and groups. Searching questions encourage pupils to improve their work. In less successful lessons lack of pace, time wasting as pupils move from whole-class to group activities, and insufficiently high expectations, particularly of the most able, are often in evidence. In unsatisfactory lessons, the behaviour of a minority is always the main problem. Homework is used well to support class activities and to help pupils learn their high frequency words.

Much has been done by the school to implement the National Literacy Strategy successfully and to target areas for further development. Funding has been used well to purchase a good range of quality materials for the literacy hour. The overall quality of planning has improved since the last inspection and planning for literacy is of very good quality. Careful attention has been given to areas such as extended writing to ensure adequate balance within the English curriculum. Numerous assessment procedures have been introduced to ensure the attainment and progress of pupils is monitored more accurately. Guided reading and writing records are particularly effective because they assess individual needs and achievements with precision. Portfolios of moderated work samples are maintained to support decisions about attainment and progress. There are many examples of marking being used well to help pupils improve their work, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2, but there are also other examples of unfinished and unmarked work. Teacher assessments also vary in quality. Some are very precise, identifying pupils' current level of knowledge and understanding and making recommendations for further help. Others are imprecise and refer vaguely to assessments such as 'improving spelling'. There is no structure in place to ensure the standard of teacher assessment is consistent and accurate. In addition, insufficient attention has been paid to identifying possible reasons for the lower attainment of girls. In the absence of the two co-ordinators the headteacher, deputy head, and another senior member of staff, have successfully monitored literacy work throughout both key stages. However, there is not yet a sufficiently cohesive structure in place for the systematic development of reading and writing skills from reception to Year 6.

Mathematics

The previous report records that a majority of pupils reached Level 2 in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, and that standards achieved were generally in line with national expectations.

In 1998 and 1999, although a majority of pupils reached the targets set in the National Curriculum at the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils who attained at or beyond Level 2 was well below the national average. At Key Stage 2, the picture in 1998 was similar. A majority of pupils attained the expected Level 4, but the percentage who did so was well below the national average, and a very small percentage attained the higher Level 5. In 1999, although the percentage of pupils who attained at Level 4 or beyond was still well below the national average, there was a higher percentage who attained Level 5.

Pupils' performance in 1998, in the mathematics tests at the end of Key Stage 1 was below the average when compared with similar schools. At Key Stage 2, it was broadly in line for Level 4, but well below the average for similar schools for Level 5. On the basis of the evidence of

lesson observations, the picture of attainment in mathematics broadly reflects the 1999 National Curriculum test results. Attainment for the majority of pupils is in line with national expectations. Setting at the end of each key stage allows pupils of similar attainment levels to have work specifically targeted for their needs, and teachers report that this and the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy are having a positive effect on standards.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils add and subtract numbers to 100 correctly, tell the time confidently using a quarter past, half past and o'clock and recognise odd and even numbers.

They know the names and properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes, and measure using centimetres.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are secure in the four rules of number to 1000 mentally and on paper. They know their multiplication tables and many have quick recall of number facts.

They calculate accurately using long multiplication and division, and work competently within money, length, area, fractions, decimals and percentages. They record data in a variety of appropriate ways. With the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, pupils are becoming more confident in selecting their own methods and explaining their strategies for problem solving.

Progress throughout the school is broadly satisfactory but is uneven across Key Stage 1, and accelerates during Key Stage 2. This is the result of the quality of teaching. Pupils with special educational needs make generally satisfactory progress, especially towards the end of Key Stage 2. Progress is enhanced by the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, in particular the emphasis on mental arithmetic and the discussions of the strategies used by pupils to find answers. In Year 5, pupils are already working at Level 4 in some aspects of number. However at both key stages, the progress of the brightest and least able pupils is not yet satisfactory, because they are not being challenged consistently at appropriate levels, although setting, particularly in Year 6, is having a positive effect.

Throughout the school, the majority of pupils have positive attitudes towards their lessons, and enjoy the daily mental sessions. Pupils listen attentively to the teacher and respond enthusiastically. They are confident to ask questions and work out answers, persevering well to find the correct solution. Most are well motivated and display high levels of concentration.

They work well, both independently and in small groups, and treat resources sensibly. However, in a small minority of lessons, some pupils have difficulty in listening to their teachers and in concentrating on their tasks. This results in time being wasted and progress for all is then limited.

The quality of teaching varies across Key Stage 1 from good to poor, but in the majority of lessons it is satisfactory. Planning is careful and detailed; teachers show secure subject knowledge and manage their pupils well. Where teaching is good, expectations of what pupils will achieve is high, and appropriately targeted with the pace of the lesson moving forward briskly. In satisfactory lessons, despite careful planning, teachers tend to spend too long on explanations which limits the time for pupils to practise tasks and to advance their own thinking and understanding. Teachers' expectations are not always high enough, and there is not much difference in the level of challenge between the two sets in Year 2. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is always at least satisfactory, often good and, on occasions, very good. Teachers expect high levels of behaviour, and the majority of them are successful in instilling enthusiasm in their pupils. There is secure subject knowledge, planning is thorough and the pace of lessons is brisk. Introductory mental oral sessions are developed well and there is often a link between mental work and the main task. Plenary sessions are used effectively to reinforce and even extend thinking. The National Numeracy Strategy has been embraced with enthusiasm and teachers report higher levels of interest from their classes. Teachers use effective questions to encourage pupils to analyse and describe their thought processes for arriving at an answer. Teachers are most supportive in their comments. It is too early to judge the success of the National Numeracy Strategy, but teachers are optimistic that standards are rising. They understand that consideration still needs to be given to

consistent and appropriate challenge for pupils reaching different levels throughout the junior school in order to raise the number of pupils who reach Level 5 and to reduce the number who attain below Level 4. Homework is used effectively to reinforce learning. Assessment is used well in most lessons, with the teachers assessing the success of lessons as well as the achievements of pupils. They respond effectively to the needs of their pupils.

The subject is led by two knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinators. Weekly planning is carefully monitored, and a comprehensive medium term plan is being developed this year to encompass the requirements of the numeracy hour. Marking is thorough and sometimes accompanied by positive comments. There is regular testing at the end of topics, and assessment is well organised. Training has been provided by the co-ordinators, and they have observed lessons throughout the school during the past year in order to ascertain strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Resources are sound and are used effectively.

Science

The National Curriculum teachers' assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 were lower than in the previous year, when they were judged to be in line with the national average. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests, at Key Stage 2, show that attainment is above the national average and above for the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 5. Attainment over time, based on the National curriculum test results, indicates that pupils' attainment has shown a downward movement at the end of Key Stage 1 and a significant upward movement at the end of Key Stage 2. Over the past three years, the attainment of boys is significantly higher than the attainment of girls.

Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' attainment in science at the end of Key Stage 1 is below average, with a significant number of pupils attaining below this level. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is above the national average. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress, and pupils in Key Stage 2 very good progress. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior achievements.

This is not as good as in the results of the last inspection when attainment was found to be sound or better in Key Stage 1. Since the previous inspection of the infant school, the scheme of work has been completed and a process of on-going assessment has been developed. More attention has been given to experimentation and investigation in science.

Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils' skills in carrying out an investigation are inconsistent and, for some pupils, underdeveloped. Some pupils construct a circuit and know how to make a bulb brighter, whilst others are unfamiliar handling when equipment to construct a circuit. In some investigations, there is insufficient science equipment for all pupils to take part. Some pupils at the end of the key stage can talk about their observations when using torches to investigate shadows; but some younger pupils are unable to explain or make suggestions when using equipment to make a bulb light up. Pupils record their findings in a very simple form. This is inconsistent across the key stage.

In Key Stage 2, some younger pupils can give a simple explanation when testing how light travels and record their own ideas when creating 'mind maps' concerning the sources of light. Older pupils record their findings in a variety of ways when investigating the effect that burning has on materials, or testing the effect that the environment has on a nail over time. Pupils have a knowledge of 'fair testing' but do not understand this fully. Pupils do not make use of information technology when recording their findings. This is an improved picture in relation to the national tests, but the school has identified a need to provide more teacher training in order to increase teachers' knowledge and understanding in this area of science.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are unable to name parts of a plant or know what animals and plants need to survive. They know that seeds and bulbs are needed to make more plants

but do not understand the term 'habitat'. In discussion, older pupils understand the term habitat, but do not know many of the characteristics common to plants. For example, during a lesson concerning food chains, pupils in Year 6 gave mature definitions of a predator and its prey, understanding their inter-dependence in the food chain.

In Key Stage 1, pupils name some properties of familiar materials, but are less confident in knowing how materials can be changed. They know that it is the effect of temperature that changes water to ice and that this process can be reversed. In Key Stage 2, older pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials is well developed. They discuss a variety of materials and know how they can be changed, displaying a good level of understanding.

Older pupils in Key Stage 1 have an insecure knowledge and understanding of physical processes is insecure at the end of. In discussion, pupils are unable to explain sources of light or explain what is required to make a bulb light up. Teachers do not provide pupils with sufficient information and aspects are not visited in a way that builds on previous learning. They do not know the difference between loudness and pitch, or what causes objects to move or slow down. In Year 6, pupils confidently explain how day and night are caused and that friction is a force to slow down moving objects.

Pupils in Key Stage 1, make satisfactory progress although their attainment is unsatisfactory as they are starting from a low base. There is a structured scheme but this is insufficient as a means of guidance to teachers who lack confidence. This contributes to the gaps in pupils' knowledge. Science topics do not build carefully on previous learning and aspects of science are not revisited often enough to consolidate previous learning. The time allocated for science is less than the planned amount in Key Stage 1, making it difficult to cover topics at sufficient depth. Good progress is made in Key Stage 2. There is a greater time allocation to the subject than at Key Stage 1, especially in Year 4. This, together with the revisiting and consolidation of aspects of science, to a suitable depth, teacher confidence and expertise, and the quality and accessibility of resources improves progress significantly at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are monitored and used to organise future work. There is not enough classroom support during the afternoon for pupils with special educational needs in order to improve the progress made by these pupils.

The use of scientific vocabulary makes a contribution to literacy particularly at Key Stage 2, but is yet to have an impact on scientific recording. Numeracy is used at Key Stage 2 when working out calorific values of food in looking at 'Good Health'.

The majority of pupils have a good attitude to their science lessons. They enjoy the subject. They have positive relationships with their teachers and show a good level of respect. They are generally motivated, pleased when achieving success, and take account of safety factors in lessons. When pupils find the lesson less stimulating, they lose interest and make little effort to answer teachers' questions, causing valuable time to be spent on pupils' management.

The quality of teaching overall ranges from unsatisfactory to very good, with the majority of teaching being sound or better. The weaker teaching seen is in Key Stage 1, but all the very good teaching at Key Stage 2. In a Year 1 science lesson, where pairs working with batteries were of mixed gender, there was no insistence on fair sharing of the task, boys dominated all the time. In the best lessons, teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject with clear and effective explanations. Teachers use questions to challenge pupils' understanding of scientific concepts. Where teaching is unsatisfactory lessons are taught at an inappropriate level, which does not match the needs of the pupils and without a clear emphasis on what is to be taught. In lessons that are less than satisfactory, teachers lack subject expertise in science resulting in a slow pace in lessons and low expectations of pupils' achievements. There is less emphasis on scientific vocabulary in Key Stage 1 and work is recorded in variety of ways. All teachers have good relationships with their pupils and most manage their pupils well. Assessment of pupils is

good at Key Stage 2 and is used to identify areas of weakness. At Key Stage 1, assessments are not used effectively to build upon pupils' previous learning. There is insufficient monitoring of lessons and books in order to identify areas of weakness. Science is not promoted across both key stages and, as a result, there is no whole-school vision for science. Overall, the quality of management and leadership are good. The co-ordinator is a skilled and knowledgeable teacher, and subject manager, who offers effective support and guidance to staff and pupils. The subject has a high profile in the school.

Information technology

Pupils' attainment is well below that expected by the time they reach the end of each key stage and they make poor progress overall. The provision for information technology and the standards achieved show a decline since the last inspection of Key Stage 1

Attainment in the school starts from a low base, with very few children having any experience with computers. By the age of eleven, most pupils are unable to demonstrate a satisfactory level of capability. They are unable, for example, to store, retrieve, and use databases and spreadsheets or use the keyboard for word-processing. Pupils cannot use word processing facilities to edit their work to support any re-drafting of their work in literacy. Effective links to other subjects are also weak

The poor progress made by pupils is a result of a number of factors. Computers are class-based, sometimes dated and incompatible with the range of high quality software that is currently available. The subject is not timetabled for most classes making the opportunities for effective teaching and learning of skills inadequate. The provision for information technology does not meet statutory requirements. Only the teaching in Year 6 was available for the inspection therefore a secure judgement on the quality of teaching cannot be made. In other classes, pupils take turns using programs linked to topics such as the Victorians. This ad hoc provision does little to help pupils develop the range of skills expected. There is no assessment or evaluation of standards, quality, or the progress pupils are making.

Pupils' response to information technology is muted. Some pupils, with access to a computer at home, are motivated and knowledgeable with one pupil in Year 6 having his own e-mail address, but this is exceptional. Pupils' access to computers at home is not exploited, for example for homework.

The subject is now managed by a recently appointed co-ordinator who has the enthusiasm to develop the subject throughout the school. Staff confidence and competence is growing with five teachers attending courses this year. The school has plans to timetable information technology when the computer suite is equipped with computers later this term. A room has been wired to receive the new computers and the funding is available for the purchase of the machines. In addition, the school intends to use national guidance for teaching. These measures, which are well advanced, together with rigorous monitoring and evaluation, including pupils' assessment, should do much to enhance the current poor provision and raise standards and quality. The subject is a strategic priority for the school and has been identified as such in the school development plan for 1999/2000. This demonstrates the school's awareness of these issues and commitment to address them effectively.

Religious education

During the period of inspection, it was not possible to observe religious education lessons in Key Stage 1. However, sufficient evidence has been gained from discussions with pupils, scrutiny of previously completed work, the school documents and an interview with the subject co-ordinator, to make a secure judgement. The majority of pupils at the end of both key stages are attaining standards in line with the expectations of the Local Agreed Syllabus.

Pupils in Year 2 show concern for animals. They discuss ways in which they care for their pets

and condemn animal cruelty. Visits from the local clergyman enables pupils to identify and talk about features of religious practice. Brighter pupils are aware of the significance of the watered cross scribed on a baby's forehead during the christening service. Pupils recall clearly religious stories from the Old and New Testament. More able pupils are beginning to understand the significance of Joseph's dreams of cows and ears of wheat. They understand that Joseph had faith in God throughout the darkest periods of his life. Pupils in Year 3 are beginning to understand the significance of light in religion. They realise that the millennium is a milestone, remembering two thousand years since the birth of Jesus. In Year 5 pupils reveal qualities of empathy when discussing the philosophies of Lord Shaftsbury and Dr Barnado. They understand the need for community spirit so that people can benefit mutually. In Year 6, pupils express their feelings readily about the meanings of lines of verse in hymns. They link them to their own experiences of life and appreciate the relevance.

Pupils make sound progress in both key stages. They gain knowledge through well-told stories of religious characters which increase in complexity as pupils mature. Through well-constructed discussion sessions, pupils gain the confidence to examine their own beliefs. They develop the qualities of respect for other traditions and religions and begin to use reason when considering the consequences of their actions. Pupils' understanding is developed through a range of experiences, particularly exposure to artefacts and by visiting places of worship. The daily acts of collective worship make a valuable contribution to pupils' progress in religious education. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress. They are well supported by teachers and classroom assistants in lessons.

Pupils respond very positively in religious education lessons in Key Stage 2. They show genuine interest and are keen to be involved in question and answer sessions, giving detailed relevant answers. Pupils are generally well motivated and show good levels of concentration when working on tasks. The behaviour of pupils is particularly good in lessons.

The quality of teaching is generally good in Key Stage 2, consistently so in Year 6. Lesson preparation is thorough with specific learning objectives identified. Teachers' have a lively style of presentation which is relevant and inspires pupils to think deeply. Classes are well managed and lessons move along at a good pace. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they have high expectations of pupils' performance. The curriculum provision is sound. There is a detailed scheme of work and an appropriate policy, which focuses on the Local Agreed Syllabus. Non-Christian religions receive an appropriate coverage within the provision. Sufficient attention is given to 'first hand experiences', which enliven teaching. The time allocation given to the subject is minimal and is often incorporated with general class topics. The subject does not have a sufficiently high status within the curriculum. Assessment procedures are underdeveloped. Appropriate reporting procedures at the end of each school year are in place and weekly teacher evaluation aids short term planning. However, there are no rigorous systems for pupil assessment which plots pupils' progress throughout the school.

The subject co-ordinator gives good leadership and sets a committed example to other teachers. There is a degree of monitoring through the examination of teachers' planning and the informal scrutiny of work. The ethos for learning in school is good. Learning resources are good. There is a bank of useful and interesting resources to support teaching and learning. Visits to places of religious interest and visitors into school also enhance curriculum provision. This particular area has been well developed since the last inspection took place. It is difficult to draw comparisons in other aspects of religious education because only the infant department was inspected previously.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Art

On the basis of the lessons seen, displays and photographs, and talking to pupils at the end of both key stages, it is clear that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress across Key Stage 2. During the previous Infant School inspection progress was judged to be sound but progress has not been maintained at Key Stage 1.

At Key Stage 1, progress is slow and unsatisfactory. Pupils in Year 1 work with paint, pastel and collage to produce still life pictures of fruit as well as their 'favourite clothes', using collage and paint. In Year 2, pupils paint attractive wax resist pictures of 'Joseph and his coat of many colours', and observational drawings of lamps and candles. Pupils also use collage to create pictures of a bonfire. Although in individual lessons pupils may make reasonable progress, over time progress is slowed due to the limited range of media, and skills are not developed progressively from year to year. Pupils have few opportunities to record their ideas and feelings due to the demands of the topic based curriculum. For example, older pupils are unsure of pattern when designing, or the use of texture, line and tone in their drawing. They do not know what primary colours are and have little understanding of colour mixing, including the use of shades. Pupils have little knowledge of famous artists. There are examples of pupils' work in clip frames and prints of famous artists along the corridors in Key Stage 1, but these are displayed at a high level and pupils cannot appreciate them.

Progress improves at Key Stage 2 where there is evidence of development of the necessary skills in art. Pupils have good knowledge of famous artists and paint in their style. Younger pupils paint in the abstract style of Pablo Picasso and produce attractive portraiture in the style of Paul Klee's 'Senecio'. They make observational drawings of shells using pencil and pastel and produce an enlargement using paint. Older pupils experience design when exploring the techniques and style of William Morris, both in drawing and 'press printing' and can explain the use of perspective with examples. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to experience sculpture in Key Stage 2. Links are made with literacy in the border pattern designs embellishing writing about the Aztecs, and illustrating the poem, 'The Bat' in Year 6.

Pupils enjoy art and are proud of their results. They share their resources without fuss and offer opinions about each other's work. They mostly concentrate and are enthusiastic about class projects.

Teachers plan their lessons well. They have good relationships with their pupils and encourage them to do their best. The co-ordinator is new in post and has produced a scheme of work for Key Stage 2. The infant school scheme of work already in place. Art resources for pupils in Key Stage 1, which are stored on trolleys, within each classroom, limits the variety of resources available. The resources for Key Stage 2 are good, well stored and easily accessible. There is a resources booklet for staff use. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop a whole-school policy which incorporates the progression of skills and techniques, and to provide support for teachers who lack the necessary knowledge and understanding. The portfolio of work, also needs to make teachers more aware of the levels at which children are working.

Design and technology

No lessons were observed during the inspection. Evidence has been collected by looking at pupils' work, talking to staff and pupils, and scrutinising school documents.

Design and technology has a low priority in school at present. In Key Stage 1, pupils experiment and find the best way of joining materials when making puppets in Year 1, and in Year 2 they draw and explain their designs for hats before making them. In both years, they become accustomed to evaluating the finished products, but do so orally so that there is no recorded evidence of the entire process to which they can refer.

Key Stage 2, pupils make pneumatic toys, electrically powered roundabouts, and Viking boats,

but there is limited evidence that they have sufficient experience of planning, designing, choosing materials, and evaluating their own and others' work, all of which form part of the subject. There is little evidence that the subject is being adequately covered.

Progress is uneven through the school partly due to the lack of regular time devoted to the subject, and partly because, instead of following the scheme of work, teachers tend to introduce topics that link with their work in other subjects. This means that there is no clear progression of skills through the school at present. Overall there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on pupils' progress. However, pupils report enjoying all aspects of the subject.

The lack of lessons during the inspection makes it impossible to judge the quality of teaching. However, scrutiny of teachers' plans and displays indicates that there is some confusion as to appropriate subject matter, and that it has lower priority on timetables than, for example, art. The co-ordinator is absent on long-term sick leave. There is a generally appropriate scheme of work, but it is too detailed for the available time allocation. There is also a well designed self-assessment sheet for pupils but it is not in general use at present. There is no portfolio or photographic evidence to act as record of the progress made by pupils.

Geography

Pupils' progress in geography is good throughout the school. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are making good progress in understanding the concept of a plan as a view from above and the need for a key. They are beginning to use correct directional language. More able pupils are progressing well in distinguishing between natural and man made features of the environment. They can name the constituent countries of the United Kingdom.

By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils use maps satisfactorily to seek information, locate features on maps by using four-figure coordinates and draw plans of their own, using an appropriate key. Pupils know about some aspects of local geography, that Burton, for example, is a river settlement. They are developing their understanding of the world's major climates and of how weather can change and become violent. Many pupils understand the concept of the water cycle and they understand the changing nature of a river valley from source to mouth. They use their literacy skills to make captions and brief notes, including adjectives, in order to describe what they think a tropical rainforest looks like. Throughout this key stage, most pupils are making sound progress in using correct geographical terms, such as, 'landscape', 'tributary', 'meander', 'monsoon', 'rural', 'urban'. In both key stages, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Many older pupils have a growing sense of conservation and other environmental issues through lessons and the 'Green' club which runs after school.

Pupils' attitudes to work are generally positive and they appreciate the relevance of the subject for understanding where and how they and others live, for example, through their study of a village in India.

Too few lessons were seen during the inspection to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching. However, planning shows that teachers have a sound knowledge of the subject and they encourage the pupils to use correct geographical vocabulary. They maintain an appropriate balance between giving information and providing the pupils with opportunities to investigate for themselves. They make effective links with literacy and mathematics, but not information technology. There is evidence that sound use is made of fieldwork during residential visits but little use is made of the extensive school grounds as a resource for teaching and learning. Due emphasis is given to developing the pupils' mapping skills. Lessons are well planned and resourced, with clear objectives sometimes shared with the pupils. There is some evidence in the planning of teachers setting different levels of work for both less and more able pupils.

Geography is taught through a series of topics which gradually develop skills and extend pupils'

understanding and knowledge as they move through the school. The co-ordinator has developed a clear policy on teaching and learning in the subject. She has drawn up an action plan, which recognises the need to develop a whole school scheme of work. She has begun to monitor teachers' planning, but has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching.

Standards are not effectively monitored and evaluated. The subject is well resourced with posters, photographs, maps, atlases, and globes. There is a good range of geography reference books in the school library and in topic boxes. Effective use is also made of the schools' library service and of fieldwork. The subject is making a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.

History

Only three lessons were observed during the period of inspection due to the place of history within the curriculum cycle. However, sufficient evidence was gained from the scrutiny of pupils' work and the viewing of teachers' planning to make a secure judgement that pupils' progress is generally satisfactory in both key stages.

In Year 2, pupils compare artefacts and draw conclusions between old and new. They gain an understanding about the different types of light used at the time of Guy Fawkes and successfully compare these with modern electric lighting. They acquire facts about people in history and learn about chronology through sequencing events in stories. Pupils in Year 4 increase their historical knowledge through research. They investigate the life of Henry VIII and learn of his qualities as a king as well as his personal interests. Pupils use their skills gained in English capably to find information through the contents page and index. Pupils have a sound sense of chronology and have an awareness of the Tudor period in the spectrum of English history. In Year 5, pupils have a clear understanding of primary and secondary sources. They exhibit good knowledge of Victorian slum conditions in industrial areas and understand why disease was spread so quickly. Colourful descriptions and well matched, interesting materials enhance the progress of pupils' understanding and knowledge.

Pupils have positive attitudes in history lessons, especially in Key Stage 2 where teaching is lively. They enjoy looking at artefacts and listening to stories about the past. Relationships between pupils are generally good and they share materials well. Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons, but they occasionally become too noisy and drift off the task in hand.

No overall judgement on the standard of teaching can be made because of the small sample viewed. In the most successful lessons observed teachers' subject knowledge was good and lesson planning thorough. Class management strategies are well developed and good explanations stimulate pupils. In less successful lessons, introductions are over long and pupils lose interest and become restless. The pace of lessons is sound in most cases and resources are used well to further pupils' knowledge and understanding.

The school has a sound curriculum, based on National Curriculum programmes of study. There is considerable breadth, with good coverage of the elements and main study units. However, the balance and continuity of the delivery is variable across each year group. In Year 3, there is only one major focus on history within the school year, slotted into a six week half termly period. Whereas in Year 4 there are four focused areas of history teaching covering four half termly periods of the school year. The building of pupils' skills and the continuity of understanding are hampered by lengthy periods without a sizeable history input, resulting in variable progress. However, the in-depth studies in historical topics, particularly on explorations, Victorians and Tudors are successful and are responsible for good levels of pupils' knowledge. In Key Stage 1, history is taught more frequently across the school year. However, the links with the topics are tenuous and often have a shallow historical basis.

There are good curriculum links with English. During the period of inspection good, examples of empathy were observed in Year 6 when pupils were studying poets from the period of the

First World War and, in Year 4, through the sequencing of events leading to the capture of Guy Fawkes. There is a local study unit based on Burton which gives pupils a worthwhile insight into their own area. The curriculum is embellished and enhanced by visits to the British and Black Country Museums and visits by a local theatre company. Teachers' assessment procedures are limited and fail to monitor each pupil's progress accurately, although weekly evaluations do inform short term planning.

The co-ordinator is well qualified and undertakes the advisory role successfully. However, the monitoring role is underdeveloped. There are too few opportunities to review pupils' work throughout the school and to monitor the quality of teaching, especially in Key Stage 1. Resources are good and used successfully to promote pupils' learning. There are some good quality informative displays in classrooms generated from history topics. The last school inspection, prior to the amalgamation of the two schools, focused only on Key Stage 1. The school appears to have made adequate progress in the intervening period.

Music

Pupils make satisfactory progress and standards in music are similar to those found in other schools at the end of both key stages.

By the end of Key Stage 1, younger pupils remember words well, sing with great enthusiasm, and successfully tap simple rhythms whilst practising 'Autumn Days'. They know the names of instruments such as triangles and tambourines and they are developing a secure sense of rhythm.

In Year 3, pupils recognise a range of everyday sounds as they listen carefully for noises inside and outside the classroom. They identify loud and soft, high and low sounds with increasing accuracy. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils compose using graphic notation and sing with control a widening repertoire of songs. In assembly, they respond confidently to speed changes as they sing, 'You shall go out with joy'. In Year 6, pupils discuss their tastes and preferences with maturity. They enjoy listening to music from all over the world. Some enjoy Indian and pop music, others prefer Mozart and all explain the reasons for their preferences. They are aware of the mood conveyed through a piece of music.

Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in both key stages. Rhythm work becomes more secure, pupils use a wider variety of instruments with increasing confidence and the quality of pupils' singing improves as they move through the school. The scheme of work and individual lesson plans, devised by the co-ordinator, provide helpful guidance for the non-specialist teacher. They also ensure each element of the music curriculum is adequately covered. However, singing does not form a regular part of class lessons. Year groups join together for singing during hymn practice and pupils do not always make best progress when working in such large numbers. In addition, because what pupils have learned is not monitored, no one is clear about overall standards and skills are not being developed in a sufficiently systematic way throughout the school.

Pupils enjoy their music lessons. They sing tunefully in collective worship and the choir performs 'Crash, Bang, Wallop' with total commitment. Pupils of all ages like using the musical instruments and wait patiently for their turn. They also show appreciation of the music played at the beginning and end of assembly. Many older pupils are developing a genuine love of music.

In the small number of lessons observed, the overall quality of teaching was satisfactory. Some unsatisfactory teaching was observed, when class control and indiscipline caused difficulties. A small amount of good teaching was also observed. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, high standards of discipline, good relationships and brisk movement through a range of interesting activities ensure a successful lesson. However, even in some satisfactory lessons and hymn practices, activities are presented without much excitement or interest.

Pupils are given little opportunity to refine or improve their work and they sing through hymns or songs without a sense of purpose. In addition, because no one monitors the quality of teaching, routines for playing musical instruments correctly are not always firmly established and non-specialist class teachers are uncertain about what standards they should expect.

Music is adequately resourced. There is a satisfactory range of familiar and more unusual instruments. Several pupils in Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to learn string, brass and woodwind instruments and are then encouraged to become members of the school band, in order to develop their talents further through playing in a group. Pupils take part in productions and the choir and band perform regularly outside school at events such as the Brewhouse, the town hall and old people's homes. All staff fully participate in singing, during collective worship, and many give a good level of support to the co-ordinator by attending or taking extra-curricular activities such as the school choir.

Standards have been maintained since the last inspection of Key Stage 1, when teaching was sound and the range of activities was judged to be appropriate. However, there are still no arrangements in place for the subject to be monitored. The co-ordinator currently advises other staff, takes some class lessons and gives effective support but does not monitor teaching. Currently no one has a clear overview of standards achieved in lessons.

Physical education

Pupils make sound progress in physical education in both key stages. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make sound progress in swimming, with the majority of pupils on target to reach nationally expected standards of performance by the time they complete their primary education.

In Key Stage 1 dance and gymnastic lessons, pupils in Year 2 control their movements effectively when jumping and running during introductory warm-up sessions. They interpret different musical sounds imaginatively to represent the explosions of fireworks. Pupils are beginning to plan their own movements, using a variety of actions, but have yet to form a linked cohesive sequence. Pupils' progress is generally sound. They are gaining in confidence on the apparatus by working at different levels. Regular practise of movements is gradually improving and refining their skills in performance. Pupils are increasing their understanding of the needs for safe practice and the sensible use of space. The elements of knowledge, related to effects of exercise on the body, are less well developed. Insufficient attention is given by teachers making pupils aware of this part of physical education.

Pupils in Key Stage 2 make sound progress in games lessons. They are developing appropriate skills when passing the ball with hands and feet. Regular practise is improving skills. Levels of energetic activity are gradually increased through the key stage so that, by Year 6, pupils have developed a fair degree of stamina and maintain physical exercise well. Levels of collaboration are particularly well developed with good examples of paired and group work. Although there are periods of lessons which focus on appraisal of performance they are too teacher directed. Generally, pupils have an underdeveloped understanding of how to improve their own performance through group or paired appraisal. In dance, particularly in Year 6, pupils are imaginative and demonstrate good levels of control and rhythm when performing to 'Mission Impossible'. In Year 5, pupils reveal good team spirit and a sense of fair play in competitive games. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress. They are well supported by learning support assistants.

Pupils have positive attitudes in lessons. They respond particularly well in Key Stage 2 lessons. There are good levels of enjoyment in most lessons. Pupils persevere with tasks. Behaviour is usually good in lessons and pupils interpret instructions sensibly. Pupils are appropriately dressed when participating in physical education activities.

Overall, teaching is sound throughout the school, although there appears to be some lack of subject expertise by teachers in Key Stage 1. In most lessons, lesson planning is thorough and pupils are well managed. Teachers' expectations of pupils' performance are particularly

good at the end of Key Stage 2. They set challenging activities which extend pupils' performance. Time and resources are generally used well but the pace of some Key Stage 1 lessons is a little slow because of too much teacher description and insufficient pupil activity.

The school has a good, well balanced and broad curriculum, especially at Key Stage 2, where all six elements of physical education are covered thoroughly. A sound range of extra curricular activities takes place including competitive games. These are supported by teachers and other outside sporting agencies. There are suitable assessment procedures for monitoring pupils' progress in swimming but other areas are only superficially monitored in general weekly evaluations. The leadership and ethos for learning in physical education is good. The co-ordinator has a positive supportive approach but monitoring and evaluative procedures are underdeveloped. There is a lack of awareness of standards of achievement in other year groups, particularly in Key Stage 1.

The on-site facilities for physical education are good and learning resources are very good. There are two well-equipped halls, a large adjoining field with a marked football pitch and two playgrounds. These are used satisfactorily to deliver physical education lessons. The fixed infant hall equipment is large and heavy and is used less frequently. There are a small number of teachers well-qualified in physical education, but there has been little recent in-service training. The previous inspection related only to the infant school, prior to the amalgamation. Standards of teaching and curriculum provision are largely similar, but there has been an improvement in resources and lesson planning.

Swimming

The inspection of this school included a focused view of swimming which is reported below.

The majority of pupils in Year 6 are in line to achieve nationally agreed levels in swimming. Approximately one third of pupils can already swim 25 metres and well beyond in a credible, fluent manner using the front crawl and back stroke styles. They are confident in the water in floating and resting positions. Pupils understand basic water safety principles. Pupils of average ability swim distances beyond ten metres proficiently but have not yet developed sufficient confidence and stamina to complete longer distances. However, with regular practise over the next two terms, and with the continued good quality teaching it would appear that they are likely to achieve nationally agreed standards. The small number of less able swimmers are making sound progress. Their swimming techniques and confidence are improving. They swim unaided for approximately five metres across the width of the learners' pool.

The school provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to learn to swim. However, provision is declining due to increased costs and the pressure on curriculum time. In the present school year, the number of pupils undertaking swimming lessons has fallen by over 50 per cent. It appears that school swimming standards are likely to decline in the long term if pupils' participation is restricted.

The school follows the local education authority scheme for swimming. Lessons are well prepared and the quality of teaching both by swimming pool instructors and the school staff is of a good standard. Records of achievement are retained by the school and certificates are awarded for different levels of proficiency.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

During the inspection week, a team of six inspectors, within a total of 24 inspector days, inspected 81 lessons or parts of lessons, assemblies, registration sessions and extra curricular activities.

All teachers were seen teaching.

Discussions were held with members of staff, and a group of governors.

A representative sample of pupils' recorded work was scrutinised. This sample covered the whole age and ability range.

Discussions with pupils were held, for example about non-core subjects art, information and communications technology, science and design and technology.

A cross-age and ability sample of 42 pupils was heard reading.

Work on display was inspected.

Pupils' records and reports were examined.

Documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection was analysed and used to inform the inspection.

Registers and other documents were scrutinised.

The behaviour of pupils in class, dining room and playground was monitored.

Before the inspection, 11 parents attended a meeting held by the registered inspector. The 68 questionnaires returned by parents have been analysed and the issues raised by the meeting, and by the questionnaires, were used to inform the inspection.

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	409	15	88	107

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	16.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked each week	231.5

Average class size:	29.2
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Financial data

Financial year:	1999/2000
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	£
Total Income	682,760
Total Expenditure	716,390
Expenditure per pupil	1,752
Balance brought forward from previous year	38,360
Balance carried forward to next year	3

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

409

Number of questionnaires returned:

68

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	35	62	3	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	57	40	1	0	1
The school handles complaints from parents well	24	51	21	3	1
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	25	59	15	1	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	40	47	13	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	32	59	9	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	29	51	18	1	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	32	53	6	7	1
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	38	56	6	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	35	44	19	1	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	56	40	3	1	0