

INSPECTION REPORT

The Rackham C of E Primary School

Witchford, Ely

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique Reference Number: 110807

Headteacher: Mr. S. T. Wales

Reporting inspector: Mr. Colin Henderson
A23742

Dates of inspection: December 6th – 9th 1999

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Junior & Infant
Type of control :	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils :	4 - 11
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Main Street, Witchford, Ely, Cambridgeshire. CB6 2HQ
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Appropriate authority :	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors :	Mr. S. Nix.
Date of previous inspection :	December 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr. Colin Henderson, Registered Inspector.	Science. Religious education. Physical education.	Attainment and progress. Teaching. Leadership and management. Provision for pupils from Traveller backgrounds.
Mr. David Miller, Lay Inspector.		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development. Attendance. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare. Partnership with parents and the community.
Mr. Paul Evans, Team Inspector.	Mathematics. Art. Special educational needs.	The curriculum and assessment.
Mrs. Brenda Knowles, Team Inspector.	English. Music. Under fives.	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The efficiency of the school.
Mr. David Pink, Team Inspector.	Information and communication technology. Design and technology. History. Geography. Equal opportunities.	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources.

The inspection contractor was:

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Standards of attainment are well above average, particularly in English and mathematics lessons.
- Relationships are excellent throughout the school. It has an excellent, caring and supportive ethos.
- Pupils have very good attitudes and behave very well.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school.
- The curriculum is very good. It is broad and balanced and planned very well to meet pupils' needs.
- High quality procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are used very effectively to ensure that work is matched well to pupils' differing abilities.
- The leadership and management of the school is very good and gives a clear, positive direction in raising standards.
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good.

This is a good school with many very good aspects. It has no weaknesses. The school uses high quality development planning as the focus for school improvement. Further developments on minor points for a more consistent approach to independent and investigative learning and to the use of homework should be considered as the basis for the governors' action plan. This will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school responded very positively to the last inspection and has made good progress on the issues identified for development. It has made particularly good progress on improving the quality of development planning and addressing the health and safety issues. The procedures for curriculum monitoring have been extended further, although those for monitoring the quality of teaching have yet to be fully developed. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies successfully and these are contributing positively to raising standards. Improvements since the last inspection, particularly in the quality of curriculum planning and the use of assessment procedures, the consistently high quality teaching, and the increasing use of assessment data to target school improvement mean that the school is very well placed to make further improvements.

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	A	A
Mathematics	B	B
Science	D	D

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

These results show that standards in English were well above average nationally and compared with the average of similar schools; those which have a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. Standards in mathematics were above the national average and the average of similar schools. Attainment in science in 1999 was below average compared with schools nationally and with similar schools, although test results from the previous three years had been close to the national average. The number of pupils attaining higher than the nationally expected Level 4 in 1999 was well above average in English and mathematics and in line with the average in science. At Key Stage 1 the 1999 National test results show that standards in reading and mathematics were above average nationally and compared with similar schools. Attainment in writing was broadly average compared nationally and compared with similar schools. The number of pupils achieving higher than the nationally expected Level 2 was above average in reading and below average in writing. Inspection evidence shows that attainment is well above average at the end of Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics and above average in science. It is above average in reading and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with the national average for writing. Standards are improving. Consistently good quality teaching, the successful implementation of the strategies for literacy and numeracy and very good, detailed curriculum planning are promoting higher standards, particularly in English and mathematics. Standards in religious education are in line with those expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages. Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is in line with national expectations throughout the school. The school's development planning shows that it is preparing to improve opportunities for pupils to develop and use their ICT skills. Very good curriculum planning, supported by consistently good teaching, enables children under five to attain standards which are likely to meet national expectations by the age of five. Many children are likely to exceed expectations, particularly in literacy.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science		Good	Good
Information and communication technology		Insufficient opportunities to observe teaching to give an overall judgement on its quality.	
Religious education		Good	Good
Other subjects / areas of learning	Good	Good in history and physical education. Insufficient observations to give an overall judgement in art, geography, design and technology and music.	

Teaching is sound or better in all lessons. It was good in 48 per cent of lessons with a further 27 per cent being very good or excellent. There was very good teaching at under fives and at both key stages. The consistently high quality is a significant factor on improving standards, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good in lessons and around the school.
Attendance	Just above the national average. There is a prompt and efficient start to the day.
Ethos*	Excellent. Pupils have a very positive approach to their work and are keen to succeed. Excellent relationships promote a supportive and caring approach.
Leadership and management	The school is very well managed. Strong and effective leadership by the Headteacher, supported very well by an active and supportive governing body and an influential senior management team, is focused clearly on raising standards.
Curriculum	Very good for under fives and at both key stages. High quality planning and very effective use of assessment procedures ensure that learning activities are matched closely to pupils' needs.
Pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision throughout the school. Well focused targets in pupils' individual education plans are used effectively to ensure work meets their needs
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good moral and social provision contribute very well to the school ethos. Good provision for spiritual and cultural development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good overall; good staffing levels and very good arrangements for their professional development. Generally sound range of resources to meet pupils' needs. Accommodation meets curriculum needs and is attractive and very well maintained.
Value for money	The school provides good value for money.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are encouraged to help with their children's learning and play an active part in the life of the school. • Standards of behaviour are good and children get on well together. • There is a positive, caring atmosphere and children enjoy school. • Their children achieve good standards of work. • Staff are approachable, willing to listen and handle any problems effectively. • The school offers a very good range of extra-curricular activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some inconsistency between classes on the use of homework.

Parental responses from the 74 questionnaires returned (36 per cent) and from the 15 parents who attended the meeting were very supportive. There were very few concerns. Inspectors' judgements confirm the parents' positive views of the school. There was some evidence during the inspection of some inconsistency in the use of homework.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

There are no key issues for the school to address but, in the context of many strengths, the following minor points for improvement should be considered as the basis of an action plan;

- Develop and implement a school strategy for a more consistent approach to investigative and independent learning.
- Use homework more consistently to support and extend work in school.

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Rackham Church of England Primary School is situated in the village of Witchford, two miles west of the city of Ely. The village has grown considerably in size in recent years, particularly in the last five years, and the school roll has doubled in that time. Children come from a range of different social and economic backgrounds with many families working in the agricultural sector with comparably low wages. A number of pupils, about 10 %, come from an established Traveller site which is within the school's catchment area and quite a large number of pupils, by parental choice, come from outside of the school's designated area. The school currently has 271 pupils on roll (129 boys and 142 girls). This is broadly average for a school of this type and is larger than at the time of the last inspection. 9.2 % of pupils are entitled to free school meals which is broadly average. There are five pupils with English as an additional language which is just below average. There are 55 pupils (20.2 %) on the special educational needs register, none with statements of need, which is below the national average.
2. The school does not have a nursery, although many of the children have had some pre-school experience. Children's attainment on entry is quite broad, although it is broadly average overall. In its prospectus, the school sets out its main purpose as to provide a high quality primary education within a Christian community. This gives a clear direction to the work of the school. The school received a positive report from its last inspection. The key issues identified included developing planning and assessment procedures; reviewing health and safety procedures; extend the curriculum monitoring procedures and review the school development plan.

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	25	23	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	20	22	25
	Girls	19	21	21
	Total	39	43	46
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	81 (87)	90(100)	96 (100)
	National	79 (80)	83 (81)	86 (84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	22	25	25
	Girls	21	21	23
	Total	43	46	48
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	90 (100)	96 (100)	100 (97)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	27
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

¹ Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

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	27	25	52

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	22	22	21
	Girls	19	16	18
	Total	41	38	39
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	79(65)	73(71)	75(76)
	National	70(65)	69(69)	78(69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	19	22	21
	Girls	17	16	18
	Total	36	38	39
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	69(62)	73(62)	75(68)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(71)

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions)
Missed through absence for the
Latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	5.1
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.1
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

1. Children show quite a broad range of attainment on entry to the school. Although many have above expected levels in literacy, standards overall are broadly in line with those expected nationally for children aged four. This is confirmed by the teachers' baseline assessment information. Children under five settle quickly and make good progress in all areas of learning. By the time they are five, nearly all children are likely to meet the Desirable Learning Outcomes³ in all areas of learning. Many are likely to exceed these outcomes. They settle happily into school routines and relate very well to adults and to each other. Children play well together. They listen attentively and are keen to respond to questions. They benefit from the many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. Early reading skills are promoted effectively and children clearly enjoy listening to stories. Book bags are used well to involve parents in encouraging reading skills. Pupils' recognition and knowledge of letters and their sounds are developed well and they are beginning to attempt to write independently; they write their own names.
2. Children under five make good progress in numeracy. They know numbers up to ten, with some higher attainers counting beyond twenty. Most children know and use the correct mathematical vocabulary when describing such common two-dimensional shapes as 'triangle' and 'circle'. They understand 'pushing' and 'pulling' when talking about different forces and use construction toys well to make models. Their skills in information and communication technology are promoted well through regular opportunities to use the computer. Opportunities to use the hall for physical education are used effectively to enhance physical development. Children have outside play activities, although the lack of a suitable, secure play area does restrict the range and frequency of using opportunities to extend physical skills. Creative skills are developed well through such activities as finger painting, three-dimensional modelling and different musical activities.
3. The results of the 1999 Key Stage 1 tests show that attainment in reading is above average compared nationally and with similar schools. The number of pupils achieving higher than the expected Level 2 was above average, although the number achieving Level 2 was below average nationally and compared with similar schools. Standards in writing were average compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. A higher than average number of pupils reached Level 2 and above, although the number achieving Level 3 was below average. Results of the national tests since 1996 show that standards in reading have been improving steadily each year and have remained consistently above the national average. The results of the writing tests have varied from year to year from average to above average. Inspection evidence confirms that standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average and those in writing are in line with the national average. Standards in speaking and listening are well above average at the age of seven.

³ Desirable Learning Outcomes – goals for learning for children under five by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five. They mainly refer to literacy, numeracy and social education.

4. The results of the 1999 Key Stage 2 national tests in English show that attainment was well above the national average compared nationally and with similar schools. The number of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 was above average and the number achieving the higher Level 5 was well above average. Results since 1996 show that the standards are improving. They were below the national average in 1996 and 1997, close to the average in 1998 and well above average in 1999. There was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are well above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils make good progress overall throughout the school in developing their literacy skills. Good progress is made in reading. Progress is very good in speaking and listening and writing at both key stages. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy. This, together with consistently high quality teaching and increasing opportunities to use literacy skills in other subjects, for example, history and religious education, is promoting improvement.
5. Speaking and listening skills are developed very well at both key stages. Teachers consistently use a very good range of opportunities to encourage pupils to extend these skills, for example, in 'show and tell' lessons in Key Stage 1 and group discussions in the Literacy Hour in Key Stage 2. Reading is promoted well within the school. At Key Stage 1, pupils use an increasing range of phonic skills to successfully tackle unfamiliar words and show generally good understanding of what they have read. Pupils' interest in, and awareness of a broad range of fiction and non-fiction books are extended effectively in Key Stage 2. Writing is developed very well, particularly at Key Stage 2. Pupils use a very good range of vocabulary, imaginative ideas, increasingly accurate punctuation and spelling and good quality handwriting to produce work of a high standard.
6. The results of the 1999 national tests in mathematics show that standards are above the national average at the end of both key stages. The number of pupils achieving Level 2 in the Key Stage 1 tests was well above average. The number achieving higher levels was above average. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has remained at a very high level for both boys and girls over the last four years. Standards are improving at Key Stage 2. They were average in 1996 and have improved each year. They were above the national average in 1998 and have been maintained in 1999. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
7. Inspection evidence confirms that attainment in mathematics is above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. It is well above average at the end of Key Stage 2 with a significantly high number of pupils achieving higher than average levels. Standards are improving throughout the school. Very good quality planning and the use of very effective assessment procedures ensure that activities are matched well to pupils' ability. Pupils make good progress in mathematics at both key stages. At Key Stage 1 add and subtract with increasing confidence and accuracy. They use mental strategies effectively to tackle a range of work which is challenging to all abilities. This is built on well at Key Stage 2 as pupils use multiplication and division accurately with two and three digit numbers. They begin to use decimals with increasing accuracy and extend their knowledge of shapes and handling data from the work covered initially in Key Stage 1. The school has successfully introduced the Numeracy Strategy, supported by consistently good teaching, and this is raising standards even further.
8. The results of the 1999 teacher assessments in science at the end of Key Stage 1 show that the number of pupils achieving the national average of Level 2 was very high and an improvement on the 1998 results. The number achieving Level 3 in 1999 was lower than average and lower than the previous year. The results of the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show

that attainment was below the national average and below the average of similar schools. The number of pupils achieving Level 4 was below average. The number achieving Level 5 was broadly average. Although the 1999 test results were lower than expected, the results since 1996 show standards overall in science are improving. They improved each year through to 1998 when they were just above average. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are continuing to rise and pupils make good progress at both key stages. They are well above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' skills in investigative science are developed very effectively. At Key Stage 1, pupils confidently predict the possible outcomes of their investigations. They carry out the test, observing carefully and recording their results well. Higher attaining pupils try to explain the reasons for their results. These are generally extended well at Key Stage 2 as pupils show an increasing understanding of the factors involved in fair testing and of scientific explanations.

9. Attainment in information and communication technology is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils make good progress overall in developing their knowledge and skills. They develop their keyboard and mouse skills well at Key Stage 1 and begin to use them effectively in a range of different ways, for example, word processing in literacy and researching for information in history. Pupils' skills in controlling the movements of a programmable robot or in moving the cursor on screen are reinforced then extended in Key Stage 2. Data handling skills are also promoted well through their use in mathematics. Pupils enter data on to a computer program then use it effectively to produce graphs and interrogate the range of data.
10. Standards in religious education are in line with those expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages. They are above expectations in aspects of the pupils' knowledge of Christianity. Pupils make good progress at both key stages in their understanding of Christian beliefs and practices. They make sound progress overall in their knowledge and understanding of the beliefs, rituals and practices of other religions. At Key Stage 1, pupils know that the Bible contains stories about the life of Jesus. They know some biblical stories and recall accurately the events of Christmas. Key Stage 2 pupils reflect upon the meaning of some of these events and of the festival of light. Pupils begin to show an increasing understanding of some of the contrasts between Christianity and other religions, for example, Islam.
11. Pupils make good progress overall throughout the school. They make particularly good progress in literacy and numeracy and use their skills and knowledge to promote good progress in other subjects such as history. Pupils make good progress in art and physical education. Progress is sound overall in geography and design and technology. An overall judgement on progress in music was not possible as there were few opportunities to observe music lessons. Higher attaining pupils are generally challenged well to promote their progress. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and tasks are closely matched to their learning targets. They make good progress and achieve standards which are not significantly lower than those expected of their age. Pupils from traveller backgrounds are taught well, both within class and when withdrawn for additional support especially in literacy. Test results at the end of Key Stage 2 show that their standards are improving and they achieve levels which are just below those expected of pupils at the age of eleven. The very high quality teachers' curriculum planning and the very effective use of detailed assessment information ensure that learning activities are matched well to pupils' needs. This is supported by consistently good quality teaching and these factors positively promote good progress.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

12. The positive attitudes of the pupils to learning, their very good behaviour and the excellent relationships are strengths of the school. They have been maintained at the high level reported in the last inspection.
13. Across the school, pupils listen with interest to their teachers and work hard at the tasks they are set. They concentrate very well on their work and respond positively to targets and challenges given by the teachers. They demonstrate skills as independent learners, maintaining high levels of concentration. This very positive attitude was particularly seen in lessons in Year 6 where pupils showed they were highly motivated by very good teaching. When they work in groups pupils co-operate well and focus on the task in hand, sharing ideas and learning from each other. They showed support for each other when, for example, in a Year 3 English lesson pupils help others who found spelling difficult.
14. Throughout the school pupils' behaviour continues to be very good and there have been no exclusions. They are polite to adults and are secure in their relationships with all the staff. Pupils behave very well during lessons, responding positively to the school's high expectations of behaviour. They move calmly around the building and play very well together during break times. Pupils do not regard bullying as a problem. They show very good respect for property, taking care of resources and equipment. This supports the overwhelming view of the parents that the school achieves high standards of behaviour.
15. Pupils' personal development is good overall. In class they speak confidently to each other and to their teachers. They show respect for the feelings of others and consider each other's values and beliefs with tolerance and interest. In some classes, pupils take part in self-assessment of their personal and academic development. This enables them to identify their own strengths and weaknesses and set themselves appropriate development targets. Pupils make a good contribution towards the life of the school by taking part in the wide variety of extra-curricular activities which they see as a very positive feature in their school life. A generally good range of opportunities for taking responsibility is offered in all classes. Teachers ensure that pupils are responsible for carrying out duties and completing tasks independently which contribute effectively to classroom organisation and to the smooth running of the school. For example, for taking registers to the office, changing reading books, collecting work and helping to keep classrooms tidy and well organised. Many whole school responsibilities are largely allocated to Year 6 pupils. Although there are some opportunities for pupils to take initiative and responsibility for developing aspects of their work, for example in reading, and for contributing to the whole school community, these are not consistently used to promote pupils' personal development.

Attendance

16. Attendance is slightly higher than the national average. The level of unauthorised absence is good, being significantly below the national average. Parents are well informed of the requirement related to pupils' attendance at the school and they respond to this well. Pupils usually arrive in good time in the morning and lessons begin promptly.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

17. Teaching has improved on the quality reported in the last inspection. It is good throughout the school, with frequent examples of very good practice at under fives and at both key stages. Teaching was good in 48 per cent of lessons and very good or excellent in a further 27 per cent. Teaching was of a particularly high quality consistently in Years 2 and 6 with over nine out of every ten lessons being good or better. It was very good or excellent in more than one out of every three lessons in Year 6. Teaching in English and mathematics is good and is positively promoting the development and use of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. High quality teaching for pupils with special educational needs and for those from traveller backgrounds enables them to make good progress. Good teaching was observed in all classes and this consistently high quality is a significant factor in improving standards.
18. The teaching of the different areas of learning to children under five is good. It is very good in one out of every four lessons. Teachers' planning is very good and is based well on the Desirable Learning Outcomes. In the Reception class for the older children, the majority of whom are already five years old, planning is effectively linked to the National Curriculum. This enables children to make good progress overall, particularly the higher attainers. Teachers develop children's early literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge very effectively. Good teamwork between teaching and support staff, and a very well organised range of practical activities, encourage children to participate actively in their learning. Teachers have high expectations of children's work and behaviour and give them increasing responsibility for their actions, for example when getting out and clearing away equipment. Children respond well to a caring, supportive environment, settle quickly into the routines of school and progress well.
19. Throughout the school teachers plan lessons to a consistently high standard and prepare in detail to meet the differing needs of pupils. They use assessment information very well to organise a broad range of activities to challenge pupils of different abilities within each class. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, the teacher had organised a good range of activities to develop pupils' skills in graph work, with appropriate modification in the level of different tasks to meet the different needs. Teachers have high expectations, particularly of higher attaining pupils, to which they respond positively. They produce work of a standard which is well above average. Teachers manage their classes very effectively. Excellent relationships enable teachers to know their individual pupils well and provide good support and guidance. Teachers encourage pupils to maintain a high standard of behaviour and focus their attention on their work. Most teachers use marking and day-to-day assessment effectively to guide their lesson planning and inform future lesson objectives.
20. Where teaching is of a very good or excellent quality, teachers maintain a brisk pace to lessons. They use time very well to ensure that pupils remain focused on their tasks and try hard to complete the tasks within the target time. In a Key Stage 1 science lesson, the teacher uses specific time targets for each activity and frequently reminds pupils of how much time they have left in order that they complete their investigation into different types of forces. Teachers use the plenary session at the end of the lesson very effectively to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding and to enable them to share their learning. Where teachers have high expectations of pupils, and set challenging activities to extend their knowledge or apply their skills, this results in high standards being achieved. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, the teacher uses demanding and difficult vocabulary such as "personification" when requiring pupils to 'draw parallels in their own lives' with those described in the poem being

studied. Pupils' written work reflects an appreciation of the language used in their discussions and of their understanding of the imagery used in the poem.

21. In the 25 per cent of lessons where teaching is not of high quality but is still sound overall, teachers do not consistently use opportunities to try to encourage pupils to improve the quality of their work. For example, in Key Stage 2 dance lessons, teachers use pupil' demonstrations well to encourage ideas but do not use the opportunity to evaluate the quality of performance and indicate ways in which it can be improved. Teachers use questions very well to encourage pupils to contribute their ideas, although do not consistently use follow-up questions to extend their knowledge and understanding. In a Key Stage 2 science lesson, the teacher questions pupils well to develop their ideas on noise levels but does not use the opportunity to challenge them to explain why noise levels are different. Some teachers use homework well to link in with aspects of class work, particularly in literacy, although this is not consistently evident in all classes.
22. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The very well focused targets set in individual education plans are translated, by teachers, into weekly targets for each pupil. This practice combined with class teachers' very good planning matches work closely to pupils' levels of ability. All staff apply the school's behaviour policy consistently well. These strategies promote very good teaching of pupils with special educational needs, including those with behavioural difficulties. A specialist teacher from the local authority's Learning Support Service also teaches pupils with special educational needs in the school, although she was absent during the inspection.
23. The teaching of pupils from traveller backgrounds is good. The support teacher from the local authority's traveller support service works closely with class teachers. She plans work for these pupils which is matched well to their abilities and links in effectively to support them in class wherever needed. She makes very good use of appropriate resources which are both interesting and relevant to pupils' needs and backgrounds. The teacher's involvement in the additional literacy support activities makes a good contribution to promoting the literacy skills of pupils from traveller backgrounds and other pupils whose literacy skills are in need of further development. She has good knowledge of the Literacy Strategy and uses it well to improve pupils' language skills. For example, she focuses effectively on sound blends and digraphs to extend pupils' strategies for working out unfamiliar words.

The curriculum and assessment

1. The school provides a broad balanced curriculum. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught at both key stages. There are good school policies for health, sex and drugs education. There is a strong moral link in the sex education programme. Health, sex and drugs awareness education is taught, as parts of the science programme, discreetly and as appropriate to the age and ability of pupils.
2. In English the very good policy and scheme of work provide a suitable balance of activities and this has been enriched by the good implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Reading is consistently taught throughout both key stages. Writing covers a range of forms and is well used in the wider curriculum. Pupils are taught to speak clearly and to listen attentively. Handwriting and spelling skills are consistently developed. There is good use of computers in language development. In mathematics there is a very good scheme of work which promotes good quality work in both key stages. The good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy at all levels across the school, is already contributing to the further raising of

standards. The scheme of work in science is modified using the latest national guidance. The science curriculum is broad and balanced and covers all aspects of the subject.

3. Good schemes of work are in place for all the required subjects of the National Curriculum. Religious education has a very good detailed scheme of work in place, which fully meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, which is approved by the Archdiocese of Ely. Lessons in physical education, art and music, as well as subjects taught within the school's two-year topic cycle provide a suitably broad curriculum.
4. Both the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy have been successfully introduced. The Numeracy Strategy has been very well supported through the professional development of all staff. The mathematics co-ordinator has monitored the teaching of the strategy in Key Stage 1 and this will be extended to Key Stage 2 classes during the year. This is a good example of the thoroughness with which the school approaches the planning and teaching of the curriculum.
5. There is a very good range of extra curricular activities, which includes chess, environment and art and craft clubs. The school offers sports clubs in hockey, netball, soccer, cricket, basketball, swimming and athletics according to the appropriate season. The level of extra curricular music provision is good with groups of pupils attending recorder, choir and keyboard clubs. Residential visits have been made by pupils in Years 3, 4 and 6. All these activities have the effect of broadening the curriculum offered by the school and of raising the standards of pupils who take part.
6. The curriculum is appropriately modified for pupils with special educational needs. The use of well-defined targets in individual education plans to develop weekly targets for each pupil is very good. Together with the very good support that is provided by classroom assistants the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
7. The planning of the curriculum is very good. Teachers in parallel classes plan co-operatively. Class teachers within each unit match their planning to the school's schemes of work. Across the whole school curriculum planning is monitored to ensure progression and continuity.
8. The school's curriculum strongly promotes pupils' intellectual and physical development. By the time they leave the school pupils of all abilities are well prepared for their transfer to secondary school.
9. The school has very good procedures for assessing pupils' work. There are effective arrangements for administering national tests at the end of both key stages and statutory requirements are met. Learning objectives are linked to national curriculum attainment targets and are used to provide achievable targets. Class teacher's track pupils' progress through assessment sheets, which are based on end of year tests. This assessment information is used in planning meetings to reflect what has been achieved, to make predictions of targets and to match these to lesson planning. Assessment and the use of assessment information to guide planning are both very good and are a strength of the school.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

1. The provision to support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development for children under five is very good. Many opportunities are planned for through play activities to promote children's progress in personal and social development. Planned 'show and tell' activities, with children questioning each other, enable them to interact socially. Nursery rhymes and

stories are used well to introduce them to cultural traditions and to reinforce moral implications of behaviour.

2. Since the last inspection, the provision for spiritual and cultural development has remained good and the provision for moral and social development is very good. The school provides a welcoming, supportive learning environment and a community spirit is strong in keeping the aims of the school – “to provide a high quality primary education within a Christian context”.
3. In both key stages the provision for pupils’ spiritual development is good. It is based strongly in the Christian faith and parents expressed their choice for this school because of the values promoting understanding of the principles of Christian belief. The sense of spirituality is promoted effectively through assemblies taken by the Headteacher, the Parish Priest or members of staff. Through literacy, science, music and art, pupils are building on awareness and understanding of the spiritual and aesthetic values of life. A sense of awe was expressed in the written work following a Year 3 visit to the mosque in North London when for the first time they witnessed Muslims at prayer in a magnificent building. Other examples of this awareness were the joyful singing of hymns in assembly, listening to the King’s College Choir singing ‘Away in a Manger’ and the wonder and satisfaction of a four-year-old cutting a box into the shape of a sheep for a nativity scene. The Headteacher and staff have created an excellent, caring and supportive ethos for the school and all the pupils benefit from the school’s community spirit.
4. The pupils’ moral development is integral to their Christian beliefs and there is very good provision. Pupils are developing a very good sense of right and wrong. The school ensures that all pupils and adults involved in the school life feel respected and valued. Good behaviour is implicit in all aspects of the school day and all staff have high expectations of all the pupils. Many stories in assembly contain clear moral messages. For example the story of St Nicholas told how the first Santa Claus delivered presents to the needy children.
5. Pupils’ social development is very good. They relate well to each other and to adults. They work co-operatively in lessons. Teachers and support staff provide very good role models. Pupils and staff act with courtesy to each other and relationships are excellent in all classes. There are opportunities for children to relate to the wider community, for example, a Millennium wood was planted in the village with the help of the Parents, Teachers and Friends Association. There are many opportunities for competitive sports and the school is particularly strong in playing chess in tournaments. Residential trips enable pupils in Years 3, 4 and 6 to take part in a field study or activity-based venture away from home, enhancing the range of pupils’ social and learning experiences. Governors, teachers and parents promote a strong sense of community in school by arranging social as well as fund-raising events. There is a wide range of extra curricular activities such as keyboard, drama, art, sport and chess. Many of these bring success for the school. These activities make a significant contribution to the pupils’ social development.
6. The provision for cultural development is good. There are opportunities to explore our cultural heritage through art, history, poetry and music. Pupils listen to music in assembly and learn about the composers, for example, the work of Benjamin Britten on the theme of St Nicholas. Ely Cathedral and Cromwell’s house, which are situated in the local area, are a focus of study and the school uses visits effectively to promote cultural aspects, for example by visiting a museum in London. The cultural traditions of pupils from traveller backgrounds, who contribute to the school community, are quietly enjoyed. For example, a poster demonstrates the making of wreaths at this time of the year and the ‘model caravan’ is used by Key Stage 1 children. The richness of the multi-cultural aspects of Britain is being explored, for example,

by the study of Hinduism, Buddhism and Judaism. There are books in the library on other faiths. Islam was brought to life for the children by the visit to the Mosque. This real life contact with other cultures brings richness yet to be fully explored in other ways.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

1. The provision made for the support, guidance and welfare of the pupils is good and has been maintained at the high level reported in the last inspection. This significantly supports their progress through the school. There are good procedures to monitor the progress of the children which effectively identify their individual strengths and weaknesses. The school uses this information well in planning to provide support and challenge as appropriate. Their personal development is monitored by their class teachers, supported well by the very good relationships which exist between the staff and the pupils. Pupils are praised in class for their individual achievements and this gives them the confidence and reassurance to concentrate on their learning.
2. The recording and reporting of attendance meets statutory requirements. The school's information booklet sets out clearly and effectively the obligations that parents have to ensure that their children attend school regularly.
3. There are very good measures in place to promote discipline and behaviour. The use of rewards and sanctions to promote good behaviour is largely left to individual class teachers. Staff are however consistent in their expectations of good behaviour with little need to use rewards or sanctions. Bullying is not a problem in the school and none was observed during the inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this was emphasised by the parents in the questionnaire.
4. The health, safety and well-being of the pupils are effectively promoted. The school complies with local child protection procedures. The Headteacher and another member of staff have undertaken recent training and all staff are familiar with the school's child protection procedures. The school has a detailed health and safety policy and these issues are discussed regularly at meetings of the governing body. There is good recording of health and safety checks and inspections. The supervision of pupils in the playgrounds at break times is good and three members of staff have a recognised first-aid qualification. Any accidents are reported and recorded with details of any action taken. Good care is taken when pupils become ill in school. The school successfully provides a safe and secure environment for the pupils and the staff and has improved this aspect significantly since the last inspection.

Partnership with parents and the community

5. The partnership between the school and the parents and the community is good. Information for the parents is generally good with informative newsletters and formal meetings for the parents held every term. Meetings to inform parents about the school's strategies for literacy and numeracy were well attended. A termly curriculum newsletter is sent out from each year group to inform parents what topics are being taught. The school prospectus, written in plain English and well-organised, gives clear, useful information about the school and the curriculum. The annual reports are sound overall. In English, mathematics and science, parents are given clear details of progress throughout the year with little educational jargon. In the other subjects they are brief and give little information on what pupils have actually achieved. There is no clearly identified areas for improvement and the consistent setting of targets for development. The reports are generally child-specific which was valued by some of the parents at the pre-inspection parents' meeting.

6. Parents are welcome into the school. There is an 'open door' policy so that they can discuss concerns with the teachers at almost any time and the great majority of them agree that it is easy to approach the school with concerns or suggestions. The home/school partnership is strongly stressed in the school prospectus. The parents were fully consulted over the Home/School Agreement and their views were taken into account in producing the final document. The Parent Teachers Friends Association is very successful in raising funds which are used to enhance learning in the school. The new information and communication technology room and the proposed new library are supported very well financially by the Association.
7. Links with the community are good. The school plays a full role in the life of Witchford and the other villages in its catchment area and contributes to events in Ely. Two parish councils have made recent donations to the school. The constructive links with the pre-school group and the secondary school in Witchford contribute to the good induction arrangements for new pupils and provide good support for Year 6 children in their preparation for secondary education. The school welcomes students for work experience and student teachers from a nearby training college. The governors make the school building available for community use, for example by enabling the swimming pool to be used safely during the summer holidays.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

8. The school is very well managed and has maintained the high quality reported in the last inspection. The school has made good progress since the last inspection, particularly in the development and use of planning and assessment procedures. The school is making more comprehensive use of its development planning, both in the short and longer term, to target and plan for possible changes and health and safety issues have been fully addressed. Curriculum monitoring procedures have been extended further, involving senior managers, governors and literacy and numeracy co-ordinators. Opportunities for other co-ordinators to evaluate the impact of teaching in their subjects, and to spread good practice, are not fully developed. The school has increased the opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work and indicate ways in which they can improve the quality of their work. Although pupils have some opportunities to use initiative in extending their learning, for example in science, these are not yet sufficiently frequent to make a significant contribution to promoting independent learning. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies successfully and these are contributing significantly to raising standards. The improvements made since the last inspection, together with high quality teaching and the effective literacy and numeracy strategies, have established a secure framework upon which the school can make very good progress.
9. Strong and effective leadership is provided by the Headteacher, which is clearly focused on raising standards, and provides clear and positive direction to the work of the school. He has created an effective team approach, with very good support being given, particularly by the governing body and senior management. The influential Deputy Headteacher has contributed significantly to school improvement, especially in aspects of curriculum development. The Headteacher has a very good overview of the school and has established very effective procedures for monitoring standards of learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy. He has also developed procedures to evaluate the quality of teaching, closely involving other members of the senior management team. These have been particularly effective in literacy and numeracy. Other subject co-ordinators monitor teaching plans and samples of pupils' work,

although procedures are not yet being consistently used to involve them in evaluating the impact of teaching and to share good practice. The school is using an increasing range of assessment data very effectively to identify areas for improvement and to set year on year school targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy. The efficient transfer of assessment data and pupil records between teachers enables pupils to be closely tracked as they move from class to class and their progress carefully monitored.

10. The school sets out its aims clearly in the prospectus with its main purpose being to provide a high quality primary education within a Christian context. This is clearly reflected in all aspects of school life. The school has an excellent ethos and its caring, supportive approach is a significant influence on pupils seeking to achieve high standards. Parents are very appreciative of the positive, caring atmosphere and the excellent relationships within the school. The very effective team approach developed within the school, with good contributions from all staff and governors, creates a positive learning environment in which pupils are encouraged to succeed.
11. Development planning has improved since the last inspection. The school now has a detailed development plan for the current school year, covering all aspects of school management, combined with a medium and longer term plan to provide a more strategic view. The detailed annual plan identifies the particular objective for each issue, indicates the key personnel involved in its development and links it closely to anticipated costs and timescale. The improvements made in the development plan provide a well-structured focus for school management and enables governors to ensure that available finances are targeted effectively to support priority issues. Issues are closely monitored with the governors' finance committee being kept informed of the impact of their spending decisions.
12. The Governing Body is very supportive and increasingly involved in managing the school. They have developed a pattern of school visits which enables governors to link closely with a subject co-ordinator and agree a focus for their visit. These visits, together with detailed information from the Headteacher and other senior staff, for example the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators, enable governors to keep well informed about what is happening in school. Some governors have received training from the local authority to help them with their visits and gain a greater understanding of what the school is trying to achieve. Members of the governing body work closely with the Headteacher in using assessment data to set school targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy and to monitor how successful the school has been in achieving them. The very effective partnership between governors and staff within the school, particularly the senior management, makes a positive contribution to school improvement and ensures that all statutory requirements are met.
13. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed very well. The new co-ordinator has undertaken appropriate training. She has introduced target forms for each stage and new weekly target grids have been introduced and monitored. The co-ordinator has raised staff awareness of special educational needs and although she has had some non-contact time more is planned from next term. There is a very clear register of special educational needs which shows dates when pupils were put on each stage and clearly shows movement up and down the register. The special educational needs policy fully meets all aspects of the nationally agreed Code of Practice. There is a good special educational needs governor who is fully aware of the provision offered by the school. The provision for pupils from traveller backgrounds is managed well. The teacher from the local authority's support service is in school for two days each week. She has a good understanding of the needs of these pupils and works very effectively with the class teachers to ensure that they are given effective support in class where needed. She withdraws groups of pupils for specific, additional literacy support which enhances their language development. Assessment data is kept on all pupils and this

shows that these pupils make good progress and achieve standards which are not significantly different from other pupils in the school.

14. The leadership of the school provides good provision for the equality of access for all pupils and this plays an important part in promoting the positive ethos of the school. The policy is monitored both formally and informally by the Headteacher and the success of this strategy is evident in the good teaching for pupils from traveller backgrounds. The organisation of the curriculum reflects the concern for equal access for differing groups of pupils. Although there are slightly changing patterns of attainment between boys and girls across Key Stages 1 and 2 these are closely monitored. Effective additional literacy support is provided for some pupils to improve their skills and ensure that they are used well to participate fully in the broad range of activities.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

1. The overall provision for staffing, accommodation and resources is good. The number, qualifications, and experience of teaching staff are well matched to the demands of the curriculum, including the under-fives. There are effective curriculum co-ordinators, some having specific experience in their subjects. There are appropriate job descriptions, which clearly outline the nature and range of responsibilities and ensure accountability. There is a very strong feeling of teamwork within the school. Numeracy and literacy co-ordinators are seen as subject leaders and have responsibility for raising achievement in subjects, as well as organising resources and supporting staff. There is a well-qualified special needs co-ordinator, and an experienced teacher supporting the education of pupils from traveller backgrounds. There is good and effective use of non-teaching staff as classroom support, in the administrative area and as mid-day supervisors which make a significant contribution to the school community.
2. The in-service training arrangements for all staff are very good. New and newly qualified staff are effectively introduced and supported when joining the school. There is an appraisal system which is effectively linked to the professional development of teaching staff. The governors have recently agreed to extend this to non-teaching staff. The governors also make good use of available training to keep abreast of developments.
3. The accommodation is sound overall, with some good features to promote pupils' learning. There are aspects which are not yet sufficiently developed to promote a consistently high quality of opportunity in all subjects. There are sufficient teaching spaces to meet the needs of the current number of pupils. The provision for outdoor and indoor physical education is good overall, with a good sized playing field, hard-court areas and an outdoor swimming pool for use in the summer term. The accommodation for children under five is of a generally good size, although there is no secure outdoor play area. This limits the range of opportunities to promote children's physical, social and creative development. Development planning shows that the school plans to improve library provision and establish an information and communication technology suite in a small room in the older part of the building. The school buildings and grounds are very well maintained and there is a high standard of cleaning. The effective use of good displays of pupils' work in classrooms and other areas in the school creates an attractive environment. The sloping nature of the site limits wheelchair access.
4. Resources for learning are sound overall. There is an adequate number and range of books to support pupils in their learning. Although the school library is small, good use is made of the local library service and there is an adequate supply of fiction and non-fiction books in classrooms. The library, although situated and catalogued for easy access by pupils, is

underdeveloped due to lack of space. However, the school ensures that this does not have too great an impact on the teaching. The lack of library space, raised at the previous inspection, limits the opportunities for pupils to extend their independent learning. The provision of information technology equipment is appropriate and is planned for improvement. Very good use is made of visits to places of educational interest both in Ely and London. All Key Stage 1 pupils visit a local field studies centre, Year 3 and 4 pupils have a visit to a residential centre in Sheringham and Year 6 make a field trip to the Peak District.

The efficiency of the school

1. Since the last inspection the school has effectively built on the sound financial management and control by improved procedures for evaluating its cost effectiveness. It is led by an active and influential Governing Body, with the finance committee working closely with the senior management team and particularly with the Headteacher. They effectively focus their decision-making on future developments and costing. It continues to give high priority to the contribution made by staff by maintaining high staffing levels including support staff.
2. The budget allocation is well organised and supports the targets of the school through its very good quality school development plan. Its implementation is monitored closely. The Headteacher has a clear vision of targets that need to be achieved and planning is aimed at these. The governors' finance committee takes a close and active role in advising and monitoring the school's expenditure. The Headteacher collects and analyses data from assessment tests and also tracks trends relating to pupils' progress. This is used to assess the impact on any developments and ensure that finances are used to support the priority areas of the school.
3. The Headteacher and governors are aware of the need to manage changing circumstances effectively to minimise the possible disruptive effect on the school's development. The school roll has doubled over the last five years and will continue to grow for the next three years. Appropriate developments have been planned to meet these changing circumstances. The school's ability to deal quickly with an urgent need has been demonstrated by their management of this large influx of children into the village. Management decisions taken enabled a new class to be set up, resulting in a small deficit and current financial restraints. This is considered a realistic judgement, which will be resolved in the next three years.
4. The Governing Body maintains a good overview of the special educational needs funding and the spending of the fund. The use of time and resources for teaching pupils with special educational needs is very good.
5. The range of accommodation, from the Victorian building, to the new classrooms built in the last five years, to the remaining prefabricated classrooms, provides adequate space for teaching. Teaching staff and learning resources are used very efficiently.
6. Financial administration is very efficient, using the minimum of management time. Information is readily available to the Headteacher and governors. Finances are kept in very good order. All the minor issues in the last school audit have been successfully dealt with. The very efficient administrative staff give very good support to ensure the smooth running of the school. The financial support of the Parent Teachers and Friends Association is very significant and, for example, provided the computers, which will form the basis of the information and communication technology unit which is currently being developed.
7. Taking into account the trend of good progress made by pupils, very good leadership and

management, good attainment across core subjects and the rather low pupil expenditure costs, the school is providing good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

8. At the last inspection, standard of achievement at pre-Key Stage 1 was reported to be good in all areas of experience. Teaching and learning had many outstanding features. The school has maintained this high quality provision. Provision for the under-fives is good and includes a Reception class for 25 children who, at the time of inspection, attend all but two afternoon sessions. There is another Reception class with nine older under-five children. This class is combined with children who are already five and they attend school full time.
9. Almost all the children in Reception have attended the pre-school playgroup situated on the same site as the school. A full and effective link with the playgroup ensures the children have a confident and happy start to school life. The school provides them with a secure and caring environment with daily routines firmly established. Relationships with adults are excellent and the children feel able to ask for help when they need it. Levels of assistance provided by the school are good with the younger Reception class having a full-time nursery assistant. The broad and balanced curriculum is based on the recommended areas of learning for this age. In the older Reception class, planning gradually links with the Programmes of Study for Key Stage 1. Both classes fully promote the children's intellectual, physical and social development. Within the first seven weeks of entry to school, a detailed assessment is made of the children's skills. This baseline assessment information shows that attainment on entry varies greatly. The teacher's judgement indicates that, although many children have higher than expected levels, standards overall are broadly in line with nationally expected levels for children at the age of four. The majority of children settle well, make good progress and by the time they are five nearly all are likely to meet or, in many cases, to exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes' in all areas of learning.
10. The Reception classroom used by the younger under-fives is bright and gives ample room for activity including sand and water. There is no access to a secure area for outdoor activities and there are stairs which present difficulty of access for parents and children. The older Reception classroom is rather cramped and also does not have its own suitable outdoor play area. This limits some opportunities for children's physical and creative development.

Personal and Social Development

1. Children under five make good progress in the personal and social development and, by the time they are five. It is likely that they will all meet the nationally expected level. Children are happy in both Reception classes and settle quickly into the various school routines. They play well together, both as part of a group and independently, and take turns to ask for help when they need it. The traveller's caravan is a popular classroom feature for role-play. They respond positively to new activities and enjoy their work. The school's emphasis on becoming independent learners is noticeable from the Reception class. They are eager to explore new learning, show confidence and make effective relationships with adults and other children.
2. Children are attentive, polite and friendly. Many sustain their interest in activities for some considerable time. They are well behaved and clearly understand right from wrong. Teachers and other adults are good role models. There are some opportunities for free play in both Reception classes, although the limitations of space means this is not a frequently planned activity for the older under fives. Most children show independence in dressing and personal hygiene.

Language and Literacy

3. Children make good progress in their language and literacy skills and are likely to attain the standards expected of them by the age of five. In both Reception classes the teaching of language and literacy receives high priority and children are provided with many opportunities to increase their range of speaking and listening skills. For instance, in a 'show and tell' session children were trained to ask each other questions about the object being shown, increasing fluency when expressing their own thoughts. Nursery rhymes are often sung. Children are taught to handle books and they listen avidly to stories. Their knowledge of letters is increasing well. Letter 'p' was being taught and all objects beginning with 'p' were being put in the pot. Children recognise their own name and some recognise familiar words in simple text. In writing, children know that marks or shapes on paper carry meaning and make attempts at writing independently. Their "letters" to Father Christmas provided interesting language interaction and 'writing'. They write their own names. Book bags are taken home each day to promote the development of early reading skills.

Mathematics

4. Children make good progress in mathematics and all are likely to meet the expected levels by the age of five. Many children will exceed these levels. Children in both classes are provided with a good range of practical activities for the development of their mathematical skills. A good foundation for building mathematical knowledge is gained through play activities and apparatus involving sorting and matching objects by colour, size and shape.
5. Children in Reception classes begin to use mathematical language well, for example in describing two-dimensional shapes such as 'circle' and 'triangle'. They gain experience of basic mathematical concepts such as weight and size. For example they use comparatives such as 'longer than'/shorter than', when making their Christmas stars out of straws or building towers from blocks. They use the computer well to make repeating number and shape patterns and they stick shiny paper shapes on the Wise Mens' cloaks using repeating shape patterns. Children use a 'feely-bag' very effectively to identify shapes by feel and then put a pattern of shapes in order. Most children know their numbers one to ten. Some higher attainers count up to twenty and back to one. Most are beginning to understand what the numbers represent. A box of frogs was used very well for counting and working out simple additions and subtraction.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

6. Children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. In the scientific area of learning, the older under fives were investigating the different forces of pushing and pulling. Children begin to develop an idea about the passage of time by creating a wall display of photos of themselves as babies and comparing how they looked now. They also talk about what they could do now that they could not do as babies. Through imaginative play with farm and doll's houses, they recreate events in their own lives. They use appropriate geographical terms accurately such as 'behind' or 'next to' the mat. Children enjoy making models with construction toys and learn simple skills of joining different materials while modelling using junk materials. In information and communication technology, the children confidently use the computer to support their learning. They use the mouse to move items accurately on the screen, for example icing the cake and choosing the correct colours. All staff work very effectively alongside the children, talk to them and listen to what they have to say. Planning in this area focuses on concepts carefully chosen to link with the content of Key Stage 1 curriculum.

Physical Development

7. Overall the children achieve well in their physical development. They benefit from having timetabled sessions to use the space and apparatus in the hall. They have three periods of break outside. In the hall they learn to move freely and respect the space of others. For example, when involved in a pushing and pulling activity in the hall, they had to invent ways of travelling by pushing or pulling without using their feet. Children make good progress in their movement and co-ordination skills using balancing routines and careful landings from benches. Their fine motor skills are developing through the use of scissors, paintbrushes and pencils. They play with jigsaws and tabletop games well to develop hand – eye co-ordination.

Creative Development

8. Progress is good in all aspects of creative development and children are well prepared to start on the National Curriculum activities. There is a good range of creative activities, which form part of the day's formal and informal structure. Children's work contributes well to the display in Reception, from finger painting to 'exploding fireworks' made from shiny paper. Many other activities include some aspect of creativity e.g. for the three-dimensional Nativity Scene, the older Reception class children were modelling sheep out of cardboard boxes, then sticking on tissue paper. Some children show good drawing skills for their age. For example they were illustrating the presents they were hoping Father Christmas would bring them. This produced a detailed drawing of a bicycle. Provision for free use of expressive art is available, mostly using paint. Music skills are developed well through a range of different playing and singing activities, for example singing traditional songs together. Children distinguish different levels of volume and high and low sounds.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE,

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

English

1. Standards have improved since the last inspection and pupils continue to make good progress overall. Results in the 1999 National Curriculum tests showed that standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 were above average nationally and compared with similar schools. Compared with schools nationally and with similar schools, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected Level 2 was below average. It was above average for the percentage achieving the higher Level 3. Standards in writing were broadly line with the national average and with the average of similar schools. The number of pupils was above the national average for Level 2 and below average for Level 3. In comparison with similar schools, they were above the average for writing at Level 2 and below the average at Level 3.
2. The national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show that standards attained by eleven year olds were well above the national average and for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. They were also well above at Level 5 in national averages and in comparison to similar schools. These results show an upward trend compared with results in 1998 at Key Stage 2. Evidence from the inspection reflects these outcomes and indicates that the school has the capacity to sustain them.

3. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is well above average. The majority of pupils speak confidently in a wide range of contexts and take an active part in discussions. For example in a Year 2 'show and tell' lesson, children were asked to "get all the information out". This included vocabulary such as 'mirage' and 'camouflage'. Pupils make very good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills and the majority of lessons identify opportunities for using these skills across the curriculum. The Nativity presentation provided the opportunity for children to speak their lines into a microphone. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is well above the national average. Pupils are articulate and confident. They understand how to interact appropriately with teachers and with each other. They engage well in speaking and listening activities. For example when Year 6 pupils were taking part in a 'Juke Box Jury' activity, they give clear reasons for their votes when expressing, with confidence, their likes and dislikes of 1950's music. Drama is used well to further promote pupils' skills, including school performances, for example "Oliver" and Drama Club activities. Opportunities for detailed discussion and for explaining ideas during the Literacy hour has a positive impact on the progress of both high and low attaining pupils.
4. Attainment in reading by the end of both Key Stages is above the national average. By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils read a range of text with fluency and accuracy. They use phonics well to read unfamiliar words and show an increasing understanding of the meaning of what they have read. Pupils talk about the plot and characters and read with enjoyment and expression. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils read from a good variety of books and use a broad range of strategies to help them. They use books independently of the reading scheme, including a sound range of class fiction and non-fiction books.
5. Pupils' progress in reading is good at both key stages. It is regularly monitored through teacher assessments and targets set for groups and individuals. Detailed reading records are maintained and used well to record pupils' achievement and to identify any weaknesses. Pupils make good progress by consolidating and increasing their knowledge of reading for meaning. For example a Year 5 lesson on instructional reading gave pupils a clear understanding of how to set out information. Three contrasting articles were used very well to identify news items with bullet points and illustrating the use of imperative verbs. There is a good range and provision of books for Literacy Hour, both Big Books and for group reading, including fiction and non-fiction. This encourages pupils' interest and promotes their reading skills. There are also specially designed books for pupils from traveller backgrounds. However the library is small and is used in a limited way at present. The supply of books is supplemented by the county provision each term. Development planning indicates that a new library is to be established to include a study skills centre for the school. This is planned to be used in conjunction with the information and communication technology development, to make an area for research, taking notes and summarising information.
6. Attainment in writing by the end of Key Stage 1 is average and by Key Stage 2 it is well above average. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils write in a sequence of sentences using capital letters and full stops with increasing accuracy. They use word banks and dictionaries successfully to develop their range of vocabulary. Pupils write independently for a variety of purposes, for example recording a trip to London, poetry writing and imaginative stories. They begin to recognise and apply their knowledge of speech marks accurately, and recognise questions and dialogue in their writing. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils write extensively, producing a variety of narrative and non-narrative text. Standards of handwriting and presentation are of high quality. Drafting and redrafting is well used and marking of work and appropriate teacher guidance enable pupils to finish and present high quality written work. Pupils aged eleven use personification, similes and metaphors in reading poetry and creating their own poems. This good standard of writing was seen across other subjects, for example in

science. Pupils spell with increasing accuracy and, by Year 6, they use complex words correctly and with confidence. The systematic study of grammar and the different texts within the Literacy Hour enable pupils to develop critical skills. This is reflected in their enjoyment of reading and growing confidence in tackling new forms of writing. Progress in lessons and over time is very good and is reflected in lengthier pieces of writing and the use of more sophisticated vocabulary.

7. Pupils' response in English is good overall. It is very good in some lessons, and, on occasions, excellent. The majority are keen and well focused, demonstrating a high level of maturity. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have an increasing capacity for independent learning, and respond very well when given the opportunity to apply their literacy skills. For example, Year 6 pupils concentrate very well to read for information and develop their note-taking and summarising skills.
8. The quality of teaching is good overall, frequently very good, and, on occasions, excellent. Teachers have secure knowledge of English and are implementing the Literacy Hour successfully. Lessons are very well planned, having a clear structure and learning objectives. Most lessons start with the focus on whole class reading or a particular focus arising from a previous lesson. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and a good understanding of the National Literacy Framework. They have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and teach with lively exposition, particularly at Key Stage 2. Teachers manage pupils effectively and organise them into ability groups or into partner activities, sometimes with the higher attainers working with lower attaining pupils. Teachers provide good individual support for pupils with special educational needs. They organise their work very effectively to ensure that higher attainers have positive intervention to challenge them further. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, higher attainers are challenged very well to draw parallels from their own lives when studying the imagery in a poem. Teachers across the school promote literacy skills effectively by using opportunities to apply them in a good range of other subjects, for example in religious education, history and science.
9. The subject is promoted very well within the school by a knowledgeable and influential co-ordinator. Issues raised from analysing results and monitoring teaching are being systematically addressed by target setting. Samples of different assessed types of writing are used very well to inform teachers' assessments. The co-ordinator has worked hard to further the pupils' response to literature. Book weeks are organised to encourage reading and the children's writing about the Millennium has been published. This positive focus on promoting literacy across the school has contributed significantly to improving standards.

Mathematics

10. In the last inspection report pupils in both key stages were attaining standards in mathematics in line with national expectations and many were achieving higher levels. Pupils were achieving levels, which were appropriate to their abilities. Standards were judged to be better in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1.
11. There has been sound improvement since the last inspection. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils achieve standards which are above the national average and at the end of Key Stage 2 standards are well above average, particularly at the higher Level 5.

12. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 tests and assessments in mathematics the number of pupils attaining Level 2, the expected level for seven year olds, and above was above the national average. The number of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was also above average. The school's results at the end of Key Stage 1 since 1996 show a trend of maintaining standards. Although there was a slight fall in results at the end of 1998 the school results recovered in 1999 and the trend of standards being maintained is continuing.
13. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 tests and assessments the number of pupils attaining Level 4, the expected level for eleven year olds, and above was above the national average. The number of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was well above average. The school results, at the end of Key Stage 2, since 1996 show a trend of steady improvement. Standards in 1996 were below average but they are now well above at the higher level of attainment and the general trend of improvement is continuing.
14. At the end of Key Stage 1 average pupils can add and subtract tens and units within 100 and have developed mental strategies for adding numbers up to 99. They multiply and divide using single numbers. Pupils identify and name a good range of two and three-dimensional shapes, identify the seasons accurately, learn to tell the time, count money to totals up to £1 and use standard measures of length and weight. In investigations they use Carroll diagrams when sorting objects according to their properties and measure the time actions take to complete. Pictograms are drawn from the data pupils' collect, for example when investigating traffic information. Work is modified for pupils of lower ability and extra challenge is set for high attaining pupils.
15. At the end of Key Stage 2 average pupils understand place value to hundreds of thousands, they add and subtract to two places of decimals, multiply hundreds, tens and units by two digit numbers and divide by 10, 100 and by single digits. They learn to calculate the mode, mean and median of a good range of data and develop a very good range of mental strategies in calculation. Pupils use centimetres, metres and kilometres when measuring distances, calculate the area and perimeter of a good range of shapes using formulae and calculate percentages of discounts in money. They have a satisfactory number of experiences of data collection using tally and frequency charts. These statistics are used to produce graphs which pupils are taught to interrogate for further information. Graphs and pictograms are also produced using computers. Mathematical skills are used in other areas of the curriculum such as science, history and geography and in a good range of investigations and challenges within the mathematics curriculum.
16. The very good planning by teachers ensures good progression and continuity across both key stages. The use of very good assessment information to match work closely to what pupils already know and can do enables good progress in both key stages. The national numeracy strategy has been well introduced. The subject co-ordinator has monitored the delivery of numeracy in all classes in Key Stage 1 and this will be extended to Key Stage 2 later in the year. This good introduction of the strategy is already beginning to raise standards even further.
17. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Mathematical work is matched closely to pupils' knowledge and understanding and very good classroom assistants provide very good levels of guidance. Class teachers show high levels of teaching skills, which enable these pupils to make good progress.

18. Pupils in both key stages respond well to their experiences in mathematics. They work at levels appropriate to their abilities and from the earliest age they begin to develop skills as independent learners. When working co-operatively they respond well to each other's solutions and opinions. The excellent relationships between pupils support their learning and all staff provide very good role models. Behaviour is almost always very good.
19. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good. In one lesson observed the quality of teaching was very good, good in two lessons and sound in one lesson. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is very good. In the eight lessons observed the quality of teaching in one lesson was excellent, very good in four lessons and good in three lessons. When teaching was excellent or very good lesson objectives were not only clear but were shared with pupils and the use of time targets maintained a high level of pace. In these lessons class teachers used very well focused questioning to assess and reinforce pupils' learning at the end of the lesson. In all lessons there was consistent building of specific mathematical vocabulary. Expectations of pupils from the very youngest upwards are very high.
20. The very good subject co-ordinator has contributed highly to the good introduction of the national numeracy strategy by providing staff training and by beginning to monitor the quality of teaching. He undertook an audit of mathematical resources to ensure the match of texts and equipment to the needs of the numeracy strategy.

Science

21. Attainment in science has improved since the last inspection when pupils were achieving nationally expected standards. Pupils are given more opportunities to carry out scientific investigations. Higher attaining pupils, and older pupils towards the end of Key Stage 2, are still not sufficiently challenged to initiate and develop their own ideas to solve scientific problems.
22. The 1999 teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 show that the number of pupils achieving the national average of Level 2 was very high compared with all schools and with similar schools. The number achieving Level 3 was below average nationally and compared with similar schools. These results show an improvement on the previous year in the number of pupils achieving Level 2, although less pupils achieved higher levels than in 1998. The results of the 1999 National tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show that standards overall were below average compared nationally and with similar schools. The number of pupils achieving the average Level 4 was below the national average and the average of similar schools. The number of pupils achieving Level 5 was in line with the national average and the average of similar schools. The school was disappointed with the 1999 results as the previous three years had shown a gradual improvement each year with standards close to the national average. There was no difference between the achievements of boys and girls. Inspection evidence shows that attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is well above the national average. It is above average by the end of Key Stage 2. The number of pupils achieving higher than the average level is above average at the end of both key stages. Standards in science are improving. Consistently good quality teaching throughout the school, supported by a detailed and well-structured scheme of work and frequent investigational activities, promotes higher standards.
23. Pupils make good progress throughout both key stages. Those with special educational needs and those from traveller backgrounds are supported very well and make good progress, particularly in developing their investigational skills. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of carrying out scientific investigations. Year 1 and 2 pupils predict which forces will be needed to carry out particular activities, for example,

to take the lid off a tin or the top off a bottle. They discover if they have made correct predictions by carrying out the activity and the recording their results. They know that different forces can be used such as pushing, pulling and twisting. Higher attaining pupils know that it is the force of gravity which allows a marble to sink in water. Year 2 pupils know that electricity comes from different sources, such as batteries and from an electrical socket, and are very aware of some of the possible dangers when using it. Higher attaining pupils complete a simple diagram of an electrical circuit to show how a bulb will light up.

24. Year 3 pupils know that light comes from different sources and travels through different materials. They know that shadows are formed when light cannot pass through some materials. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of how humans hear is developed well in Years 3 and 4. This is used effectively to investigate how sounds change, for example, to explain how the noise from hitting a bottle of water changes as the amount of water it contains is reduced or increased. Higher attaining pupils explain accurately that the noise comes from vibrations in the column of air. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 know that levels of noise can be very high and that noise pollution affects people's everyday lives. Year 5 pupils know the life cycle of a plant and what it needs to grow. Higher attaining pupils know and accurately describe the process of photosynthesis. Year 6 pupils have an above average knowledge and understanding of scientific investigations. They describe the factors involved in making a fair test when investigating which materials are the most effective in filtering solutions. They make predictions about which material they think is likely to be the most successful, with higher attainers giving clear reasons why they had made their particular choice. They make good use of their observation skills and record their results carefully. Some provide a detailed explanation of these results. For example, they list such factors as the thickness of the material and the size and frequency of small holes in the fabric, which make some materials filter solutions more effectively.
25. Pupils' response to their work is good and frequently very good. They listen very attentively to instructions and explanations and respond very well to questions. They clearly enjoy carrying out practical science investigations and are enthusiastic in their approach, concentrating hard to get their results. Pupils co-operate well in partner or group activities, sharing resources effectively and taking turns in getting results. This was clearly seen in a Year 1 / 2 investigation in to forces and in a Year 6 lesson on solutions.
26. The quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school with frequent examples of very good practice at both key stages. This is a significant factor in maintaining high standards at Key Stage 1 and promoting improving standards at Key Stage 2. Teachers plan in detail to provide a good range of activities which is matched well to pupils' needs. They organise their lessons very effectively, using equipment and resources very well to provide interesting investigations. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 lesson, the teacher challenged pupils to develop their knowledge of forces using four different activities. Teachers have use questions very well to extend knowledge and understanding, for example when Year 6 pupils were required to give a more detailed explanation to describe why certain materials were better than others in filtering solutions. Teachers generally have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour to which they readily respond. Teachers use demonstrations effectively to promote pupils' interest and ideas, although opportunities for higher attaining pupils, and older pupils in Key Stage 2, to initiate and develop their own ideas to solve scientific problems are not well established. Teachers use pupils' literacy skills very well to support attainment in science, for example, Year 1 and 2 pupils use the poem "Twistable, Turnable Man" to focus on the range of words which are then used to describe different forces.

Information and communication technology

1. The attainment of pupils is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The planned curriculum provides a broad coverage of all elements of information and communication technology.
2. Pupils make good progress overall. They build upon their good experiences in the early years and by the end of Key Stage 1 they create imaginative pictures, controlling the mouse very well. Pupils record and plot data accurately, and give instructions to control the movement of a programmable robot. They also develop their word processing skills effectively by creating simple sentences. Pupils save and print their work, with help where needed, and keep a record of their own progress.
3. At Key Stage 2 progress is also good. In Year 6 pupils enter and amend text in a word processor. They change fonts and typefaces. They use CD-ROMs well to find information for their history projects. They make judgements about the quality of the data and question its usefulness in relation to what they need it for. In Year 3, pupils change words together with colours and fonts and insert a picture into a text. They re-order pictures to play a correct, well-known tune. In Year 4 they assemble data, produce this on a bar chart, and then analyse the data. They use a computer program to model and control situations. In Year 5, they use a CD-ROM to gain information about planets in the solar system and investigate life in Ancient Greece through a simulation program. Pupils record their progress in a personal log.
4. Pupils have very good attitudes towards their work. They enjoy computer work and are confident in its use. They develop skills of independent learning and pupils interact in their paired tasks to make them genuinely collaborative. The confidence of pupils in information and communication technology is such that when unable to access the required screens, they initially attempt alternative solutions before calling upon the teacher to help.
5. No direct teaching of information and communication technology was observed during the inspection, although pupils were seen using computers to enhance their studies in English, maths, and history. Evidence was gained from teachers planning, a scrutiny of pupils' work, and observing a limited number of pupils at work. Pupils are taught to use new programs at regular intervals and then given opportunities to practise their skills frequently during the term. As teachers plan the use of information and communication technology in relation to other lessons, this reinforces pupils' knowledge, ideas and skills. Pupils are encouraged to recognise that information and communication technology is available to extend their learning. This was evident in numeracy where pictograms were used and in literacy with simple spelling constructions. The comprehensive long and medium term plans ensure good coverage of information and communication technology skills at both Key Stages. Good assessment records are kept in both key stages and these ensure that teachers are well briefed on the progress pupils are making. However, there is some inconsistency in the monitoring of these records by all teachers.
6. The co-ordinator has an effective strategic overview of the role that information and communication technology plays in the school. Good support is given to teachers in the enhancement of their skills. Effective in-service training for staff is provided by the co-ordinator and external agencies and is preparing staff very well for extending pupils' skills and knowledge. The plans for the development of the subject, which includes the completion of the information and communication technology suite and connection to the Internet, are appropriate and manageable.

Religious education

1. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Attainment overall is in line with standards expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages. It is above expectations in aspects of pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from traveller backgrounds, make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and sound progress overall in their understanding of different rituals, beliefs and practices of other religions such as Islam and Judaism. Aspects of collective worship are used effectively to promote standards and to support the caring, Christian ethos of the school.
2. At Key Stage 1, pupils know that the Bible is a special book and contains stories about the life of Jesus. Many pupils have good biblical knowledge of Christmas. Year 1 pupils talk about the main events of the birth of Jesus. A few higher attaining Year 2 pupils reflect carefully on the meaning of the Christmas story. They distinguish between the people and events in the Bible story and secular, more recent features such as Christmas trees and Father Christmas. At Key Stage 2, this knowledge is generally extended well, for example, Year 5 pupils know that it is a Christian festival of light. Some higher attaining pupils reflect very effectively on the meaning of the festival and describe Jesus as "the light of the world". They talk about the Christingle service and that the fruit on the Christingle would be "the bread of life".
3. Key Stage 2 pupils show an increasing understanding of the contrasts between Christianity and other religions. Year 3 pupils have a sound knowledge of Eid and Ramadhan. Many know the reasons why Muslims keep the Ramadhan practice, although they are not fully clear over the differences between some Christian and Muslim festivals, for example Easter and Eid. Many Year 6 pupils know that Muslims pray to their God Allah and know some aspects of their prayer ritual, for example the use of a prayer mat. Their understanding of the reasons for these rituals is less secure. Year 6 pupils know of the important contributions made by such influential religious leaders such as Guru Nanak. Many know of the reasons and events which led to these leaders having strong religious beliefs. Some higher attaining pupils talk about how Guru Nanak "met his God when he went missing by the river" and this led to him returning with a new faith and a path for the rest of his life.
4. Pupils' response to their work is good and frequently very good. They have a positive attitude to their work. Pupils listen carefully and are keen to answer questions and join in discussions. They behave well and focus on their work with sustained concentration where needed, for example, when Year 6 are given a specific time to read and summarise a paragraph on the life of Gladys Aylward. Pupils co-operate well together in discussion. They show respect for the views and opinions of others and for the different beliefs and practices of other religions.
5. The quality of teaching is good overall at both key stages. Teachers use good subject knowledge, for example of the significance of the main events of the Christmas story, to promote pupils' understanding. They use questions well to extend pupils' knowledge, for example, when Year 5 pupils are asked to consider the meaning of the Christingle symbols. Where teachers challenge pupils to research information and develop their own ideas on religious beliefs and traditions, the pupils respond enthusiastically and present high quality work. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils concentrate very well to find the information they need and present a neat and accurate written description of the lives of Guru Nanak and Mother Teresa. They work hard to complete the task in a specific time and take pride in the manner in which they present their work. Standards of work are not so high when opportunities are

not always taken to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. In a Key Stage 2 lesson on Islam, the teacher does not take the opportunity to develop pupils' understanding of why Muslims have different religious and family rituals to Christians. Teachers manage their classes very well which enables pupils to concentrate effectively on their work and contribute positively to class or group discussions, for example, when discussing Christingle symbols. Teachers do not always use opportunities to encourage pupils to reflect upon the meaning of different beliefs and practices, for example when lighting the Christingle candle.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Art

1. During the inspection it was not possible to observe any art lessons therefore no reliable judgement on the quality of teaching can be made.
2. Evidence was gathered through looking at work on display, available documentation, portfolios or pupils' work and from talking to teachers and pupils. Extending its use in the wider curriculum as well as teaching specific skills to pupils of all ages has safeguarded the curriculum in art. Progress in both key stages is good.
3. Pupils in both key stages undertake work in all areas of the art curriculum. In Year 1 pupils have designed and painted magic eggs and the imaginary creatures which hatch from them. These early painting skills are consistently built upon and in Year 5 pupils' use a good range of textures in an exercise in colour mixing. They shape and paint good quality landscapes when illustrating a Greek Legend. Printing skills are well developed across the school using a range of media. In Year 6 pupils make printing plates from polystyrene tiles. Their designs are based on their study of leaves and the results are good quality three colour prints of leaves. Good drawing skills are consistently developed and in Year 3 pupils draw very good pencil and felt tip pen pictures of Roman soldiers. Good observational drawings are seen in Years 5 and 6. Older pupils produce good drawings based on the 'cubist' works of Picasso and Miro. Three-dimensional collage and artwork are also well developed using a good range of materials including clay and textiles. Large three-dimensional figures have been made to represent the Nativity scene. This makes a colourful and warming seasonal welcome to the school.

Design and technology

1. The progress of pupils in design and technology is sound at both key stages. At Key Stage 1 pupils develop their measuring and cutting skills effectively by making card hinges. Their skills, knowledge and understanding of food technology are promoted by designing and making a salad, a jelly and milk shakes. At Key Stage 2, pupils construct model bridges and balancing toys with accuracy and precision. They extend their food technology knowledge by planning and making dough baskets. Pupils make models in Year 3 using electric circuits and in Year 4 using levers and axles. In Year 5 they build upon their previous knowledge and skills to design and make an electric poster.
2. Pupil's respond very well to the range of activities planned by their teachers and are willing to discuss and evaluate their work positively. They suggest ways in which their models can be improved. Their work is generally well presented and precise.
3. Although only two lessons were observed during the inspection, both at Key Stage 2, teaching

was never less than sound and on occasions good. Design and technology is taught in Year 6 as part of a larger project involving history. Pupils collect information about changes in fashion and design of objects since 1945. They use this information well, together with their knowledge of wheels and levers, to present their findings in a mechanical book. Whilst the topic approach is generally appropriate, teaching is more effective when lesson objectives are clearly related to the skills that pupils are expected to learn. Where objectives are clear, pupils design their objects appropriately, considering the needs of the audience. They also make and evaluate their designs with some skill. In other lessons the time needed for pupils to collect information sometimes restricts the opportunities to apply their design and making skills. Long and medium term planning is good and supports a structured progression of pupils' learning across both key stages. The scheme of work, which includes guidelines on safe working practices, is good and effectively supports teaching.

Geography

1. Progress of pupils in both key stages is sound overall. At Key Stage 1 pupils use letter and number co-ordinates accurately to locate places on a map. They know the names and locate the countries of the British Isles on an atlas map and make a study of the main geographical aspects of the local area. Year 1 pupils study the effect of the weather and make a study of some aspects of the contrasting village location of Ambleside. This is built on well in Key Stage 2 when pupils contrast their own locality with Ravensthorpe in the Peak District. They understand that there are competing interests in the development of a locality and use maps and information to explore an unfamiliar and contrasting area. In Year 3 pupils study a settlement in St Lucia, describing its economy and how the communities are coping with change effectively. Pupils also measure and record weather patterns. In Year 4 pupils study settlement and land use and compare the localities of Sheringham and Ambleside. In Year 5 pupils know the main parts and features of a river and how it changes as it flows from source to estuary.
2. No lessons were observed during the inspection. However, from the scrutiny of pupils' work and talking to staff and pupils, it is evident that pupils enjoy geography. They work well and take pride in the presentation of their work. At Key Stage 2 field trip diaries are kept and these reflect a personal as well as geographical approach to their visit. Good long term and medium term planning supports learning, which is based on developing mapwork skills and contrasting developments of differing localities. Good use is made of fieldwork to promote mapping and other geographical skills and knowledge. In Key Stage 1 pupils visit a local field studies centre and Year 6 pupils undertake a residential visit to the Peak District.

History

1. The school has maintained the standards reported in the last inspection and have provided some more opportunities for pupils to develop their own ideas, for example in the Year 6 topic on Britain since 1930. Pupils make good progress overall in developing their knowledge and understanding and in using their research skills to find out more about people's lives in the past.
2. By the age of seven, pupils recognise many features of the Victorian period with some reference to its dates. They understand that the rich and poor lived different lives during that time and use their knowledge well to investigate artefacts from that period. Year 1 pupils recognise that Victoria was a queen of England and begin to write and answer questions accurately based on a picture of her. By the age of eleven, pupils understand some of the changes, which have taken place in Britain since 1930. They know that inventions were

responsible for changes in that period and accurately plot the development of some of those changes on a time line. Pupils gather information well from various sources, for example, artefacts, CD-ROMs and textbooks, and communicate their ideas clearly in neat, detailed written work with suitable illustrations. In Years 3 and 4 pupils present detailed and neat work on various aspects of life in Roman times and people's lives in Tudor times. In Year 5 pupils study the Ancient Greeks and also the English Civil War, making particularly good use of local sources through the information on Oliver Cromwell.

3. The attitudes of pupils are very good and they enjoy their studies. They are polite and well behaved and respond well to the various activities organised by their teachers. Their written work is well constructed and presented neatly.
4. Five lessons were observed during the inspection, two at Key Stage 2 and three at Key Stage 1. The quality of teaching was consistently good throughout the school. Teachers plan lessons with clear learning objectives and use pupil's work effectively to exemplify good practice. Teachers use good subject knowledge, for example about the life of Queen Victoria, to promote pupils' interest. Pupils are carefully supported through their own investigations and given appropriate guidance to locate suitable sources for their information. For example, Year 6 pupils are provided with a range of different source to research information about technological inventions since 1945. Teachers use the very good collection of historical artefacts, for example of Victorian articles, to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of how people's lives were different to their own.

Music

5. There has been sound progress in the development of music since the last report. The music policy has been enriched by the school's involvement in a local authority's music initiative. This identifies clearly the skills to be developed and the use of musical knowledge and understanding in each year group. The school music policy is due for review in the Spring term
6. At the time of the inspection, most teaching of music was focused on the Key Stage 1 and under-five Nativity. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. Children under five and Key Stage 1 pupils sang enthusiastically from memory, accompanied by tuned percussion instruments for the rehearsal of their Nativity tableau. Pupils understand the importance of clarity of words and control of breathing in loud/soft and fast/slow. They performed with confidence to an invited audience. Pupils are enthusiastic about music. They enjoy performing and show appreciation for each other's musical talents.
7. Only three lessons were observed in Key Stage 2. One was to practise for their production of the 'Miracle Worker' taking place the following week. The music co-ordinator used taped music and words effectively and tunes were being memorised for performance. Work was well planned and teachers have appropriate expectations of pupils. In the best lessons tasks are well matched to the needs of the pupils and there is a rigorous pace to the lessons. Time is used well and there is an appropriate balance between instruction and activity. A range of strategies is used to capture and sustain the pupils' interest. For example in association with the cross-cultural theme of Britain since the 1930s, one class was evaluating 1950s 'pop' music in a 'Juke Box Jury' session. They explained their likes and dislikes of pieces of music and gave views on the differences between styles.
8. Although there is a satisfactory range of CDs and radio music programmes, used mainly at

Key Stage 2, the range of music resources overall does not promote a broad range of musical activities. Extra curricular music activities, including two keyboard clubs and three recorder groups, are used to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding. The keyboards are used to very good effect taking part in performances in the Church carols and at the Key Stage 2 production.

Physical education

1. Standards have been maintained at the high level reported in the last inspection. Pupils continue to make good progress throughout the school. At Key Stage 1, the youngest pupils use different pushing and pulling movements effectively to travel on the floor and on apparatus. They show increasing control as they move forwards then backwards, using their arms well to control the speed of their movements. Pupils show a good awareness of the need for space both for their own movements and those of others. Year 2 pupils extend this awareness very effectively by running quickly around the hall, successfully avoiding different obstacles. They have above average throwing and catching skills, working well in pairs to use these skills consistently. Many Year 2 pupils have good sending skills, using a racquet very well to accurately hit a tennis ball to their partner. They show an increasing ability to judge the weight of the hit to enable their partner to successfully catch the ball.
2. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop dance skills well. Year 3 pupils use a sound range of expressive movements, with appropriate changes in height and speed, when developing a sequence of individual robotic movements. They co-operate quite effectively together to produce a short group sequence, although the quality of movement does not always reflect a successful linking together of the overall individual efforts. Year 6 pupils use a good range of movements to interpret emotion in their dance sequences. Many use their eyes and facial expression very effectively to portray a sense of fear in their movements in interpreting successfully the specific instructions in a taped broadcast. Pupils work well together in pairs to produce some good quality, synchronised movement sequences, showing increasing balance and control. Pupils' games skills are developed well through a good range of games activities. Year 3 and 4 pupils practise their control skills in hockey, football and netball before using them in competitive team activities. These skills are enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
3. Pupils have a very positive response to physical activities. They clearly enjoy participating in the different activities and even maintain their enthusiasm when difficult weather conditions make outdoor activities quite challenging! Pupils listen attentively and co-operate very well together, for example in dance sequences and team games.
4. Teaching is of good quality at both key stages and is a significant factor in promoting effective skills development. Many teachers have good subject knowledge, for example of how to develop and extend games skills, and use it well to promote high standards. Teachers plan their lessons very well. They manage their classes effectively and encourage pupils to participate enthusiastically and work well together. Teachers use pupil demonstrations with good effect to illustrate the range of movement or dance ideas, for example when Year 6 pupils develop a partner sequence. Although some teachers use opportunities to evaluate the quality of pupils' performance, this is not done consistently to try to achieve consistently higher standards. Teachers generally maintain a good pace to lessons with frequent changes of activity to sustain pupils' enthusiasm and efforts. Teachers use assessment opportunities well to record pupils' achievement and inform their future lesson plans. For example, in a Year 2 lesson on games skills, the very effective use of a specialist teacher allows the class teacher to note carefully

pupils' strengths and weaknesses. This information is then used to inform the class teachers' follow-up lessons.

5. Good quality teaching, the effective and efficient use of good resources and facilities including a games field and a swimming pool, and a very good programme of extra-curricular activities promote high standards.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

1. The team consisted of 5 inspectors, including a lay inspector, who spent a total of 20 inspector days in school. The inspection team :
 - Spent over 52 hours observing 68 lessons and reviewing children's work.
 - Attended a sample of registration sessions.
 - Attended assemblies.
 - Had lunch with the pupils.
 - Observed pupils' arrival at and departure from school.
 - Observed all teachers at least once and most several times.
 - Had discussions with the Headteacher, teaching and non-teaching staff, the Chairman of Governors, other governors and support staff working in school.
 - Reviewed all the available written work of a representative sample of three pupils from each class and heard these and other pupils reading.
 - Held informal discussions with many pupils.
 - Analysed a large amount of documentation provided by the school both before and during the inspection including; -
school prospectus; school policies; the Governors' Annual Report to Parents; minutes of governors' meetings; financial statements; the school development plan; subject policies and planning; pupils' records and reports, including those for pupils with special educational needs; the previous inspection report and action plan.
 - Held a meeting attended by 15 parents and considered 74 responses from parents to a questionnaire asking about their views of the school

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	271	0	55	25

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.6

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked each week	98.0

Average class size:	25.8
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Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
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	£
Total Income	391735
Total Expenditure	395747
Expenditure per pupil	1341
Balance brought forward from previous year	-4012
Balance carried forward to next year	-4012

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

203

Number of questionnaires returned:

74

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	44.6	54.1	1.3	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	59.5	36.5	1.3	1.4	1.3
The school handles complaints from parents well	41.9	36.5	18.9	2.7	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	27.0	56.8	10.8	5.4	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	35.1	47.3	13.5	4.1	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	40.5	58.1	1.4	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	48.6	43.2	6.8	1.4	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	35.1	51.4	5.4	8.1	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	48.6	47.3	2.7	1.4	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	52.7	41.9	5.4	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	47.3	44.6	0	5.4	2.7

Other issues raised by parents

A small number of parents both at the meeting and in their written responses to the questionnaires expressed some concern over the inconsistent use of homework.