

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Mercenfeld Primary School**  
Leicester

LEA area : Leicestershire

Unique Reference Number : 119937

Head teacher : J Kitchen

Reporting inspector : A J Puckey 4302

Dates of inspection : 8-12 November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707550

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Primary
Type of control :	County
Age range of pupils :	4-10
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Oakfield Avenue Markfield Leicester LE67 9WG
Telephone number :	01 530 243151
Appropriate authority :	The governing body
Name of chair of governors :	A May
Date of previous inspection :	January 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
A J Puckey, RgI	Design and technology Information technology Physical education	Attainment and progress Leadership and management The efficiency of the school
A Anderson, Lay Inspector		Attendance Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Partnership with parents and the community
V Axford	Science History Religious education	Teaching The curriculum and assessment
R Morrell	Mathematics Geography Art Equal opportunities	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
J Penchion	English Music Special educational needs Areas of learning for children under five	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

The inspection contractor was:

Nottinghamshire County Council

Advisory and Inspection Services  
Eastbourne Centre  
Station Road  
Sutton-in-Ashfield  
Nottinghamshire  
NG17 5FF

01623 466700

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- The overall quality of teaching is good.
- All classroom support staff make a very effective contribution to pupils' learning.
- Provision for English, mathematics, science and religious education is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make very good progress.
- There is an ethos of care, tolerance for all and mutual respect, and provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes to work are very good, they enjoy coming to school and relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils are very good.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Checking pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching is not systematic and regular enough.
- II. Subject managers are insufficiently involved in checking on the development of their subjects.
- III. The school lacks the capability to bring its computers together for large group teaching.

Three other issues need attention.

The information for parents of children in Key Stage 1 is insufficient.

The time allocation for Key Stage 2 is below national guidelines.

Teachers' marking does not sufficiently show pupils how to improve their work.

**Mercenfeld is a good and improving school and the weaknesses are heavily outweighed by what the school does well. Nevertheless they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or carers of children at the school.**

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

Mercenfeld has improved significantly since the last inspection in 1996. The school now has policies and schemes of work for all subjects and teachers use assessment and recording more effectively to improve continuity and to set targets. There are now good strategies for monitoring pupils' progress. Cloakroom and toilet facilities for the mobile classroom are now satisfactory. However, strategies for monitoring the quality of teaching are still insufficient. The improvements are due to effective leadership by the head teacher and subject managers. The school is well placed to go on getting better.

### Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
			<i>well above average</i> A
			<i>above average</i> B
			<i>average</i> C
			<i>below average</i> D
			<i>well below average</i> E
			<i>very poor</i> E*

Reading	B	C
Writing	A	B
Mathematics	B	C

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Pupils' attainment in information technology and religious education meets national expectations for seven years olds.

The attainment of most pupils when they leave the school at the end of Year 5 is in line with the national expectations for pupils of that age.

Similar schools are those schools nationally with the same proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals as Mercenfeld.

### Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 – 10 years
English	Good	Satisfactory	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science	N/A	Good	Good
Information technology	N/A	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education	N/A	Good	Good
Other subjects	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Overall the quality of teaching is good and is a strength of the school. Teaching is at least satisfactory in 99% of lessons. It is good or better in 64% of lessons and in 12% of lessons it is very good.

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



## Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good throughout the school: this maintains the standards recorded in the last inspection.
Attendance	Very good: well above the national average.
Ethos*	Very good: the climate for learning, attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards are all very positive.
Leadership and management	Good: the head teacher provides firm leadership and is well supported by the governing body.  Subject managers are enthusiastic and increasingly effective.
Curriculum	Good: the curriculum covers all national requirements with a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities and residential fieldwork.  The programme of homework is substantial and well organised. The use of assessment by teachers to improve planning is good. The school has successfully introduced the literacy hour and has made a good early start with the numeracy hour. Strong emphasis and time is given to teaching English and numeracy and to raising standards in the core subjects.
Pupils with special educational needs	Very good: support in class is very effective, individual education plans are of good quality, pupils' work is appropriate for their needs and they make very good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good: the school makes good provision for promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good: staffing is sufficient, well managed and deployed. The school is well resourced and it makes the best use of available accommodation.
Value for money	Good: because leadership is supportive, the quality of teaching is good, behaviour is very good, relationships are very good, resources are well used and pupils make generally good progress.

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

## The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
IV. Pupils like going to the school. V. Pupils achieve good standards of work. VI. The school's values and attitudes to pupils. VII. Parents are encouraged to play an active part. VIII. It is easy to approach the school with a problem. IX. Parents are well informed of their children's progress. X. Parents are satisfied with homework. XI. The school achieves high standards of behaviour.	XII. A small number of parents of Key Stage 1 is taught. XIII. Some feel that complaints are not handled  XIV. A few feel that children are not encouraged to

Inspectors support the positive views expressed by parents. Inspection evidence indicates that there is a satisfactory programme of extra-curricular activities, good procedures for handling complaints, but that information for parents with children in Key Stage 1 needs to be improved.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

**In order to raise attainment and improve progress, the head teacher, staff and governors should:**

**Further improve the monitoring and evaluation of teaching by:**

- implementing a regular and systematic programme which identifies strengths and weaknesses and sets targets for individual improvements for all staff (paragraphs 35, 54, 55, 87, 101, 121 and 142).

**Further develop the role of subject managers by:**

- including them in all aspects of monitoring and evaluation, especially of teaching and standards of attainment (paragraphs 35, 43, 54, 87, 94, 101, 107, 117, 121, 125, 130 and 142);
- agreeing whole-school strategies for carrying out their responsibilities (paragraph 54);
- providing the resources for them to be effective (paragraph 54);
- providing training in the skills of monitoring and evaluation, especially observing teaching (paragraphs 54 and 94).

**Further improve provision for information technology by:**

- devising and implementing a planned programme to provide additional computers and the capability to cluster them to enable effective large-group teaching (paragraphs 16, 102, 106 and 107);
- providing the additional software necessary to cover fully the Key Stage 2 programme of study (paragraph 102);
- providing staff training as necessary (paragraph 102).

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

- parents of children in Key Stage 1 should be provided with the same kind of detailed information available for parents with children in Key Stage 2 (paragraphs 33 and 49);
- the total time allocation for Key Stage 2 should be brought into line with national guidelines (paragraph 32);
- teachers' marking should show pupils how to improve their work (paragraphs 31 and 92).

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the school**

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1 Built in 1972, the school is of open plan design and serves a catchment area comprising Markfield, Field Head and Copt Oak, all close to Leicester. Increasing numbers resulted in three mobile classrooms being added in 1974 and 1976 and the second base area in 1978. An area for the reception children was created in 1998 and a new classroom is due to be built in 1999. A swimming pool was added in 1978.

2 The eleven classes currently have a total of 300 pupils, an increase of 65 pupils from the last inspection. The school admits pupils in the September following their fourth birthday, most having had pre-school experience in the village playgroups. Pupils leave the school at the end of Year 5. Forty nine pupils are currently on the special needs register and three pupils have statements of special educational need. About 4% of pupils are of minority ethnic origin and eleven come from homes where English is the second language. Only 4% of the pupils are entitled to free school meals which is well below the national average. Most pupils enter the school with attainment in literacy and numeracy which is in line with national expectations for pupils of that age.

3 The school aims to provide the best possible quality of education for its pupils. The current school improvement plan makes the continued improvement of attainment and skills in literacy, numeracy and information technology the key priority within a broad and balanced curriculum and a developing programme of quality assurance.

## Key Indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	22	35	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	19	21	20
	Girls	33	33	33
	Total	52	54	53
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	91(79)	95(92)	93(90)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	20	22	20
	Girls	34	33	34
	Total	54	55	54
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	93(88)	96(92)	96(88)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

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1

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

## Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	4.0
	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

## Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	12
Satisfactory or better	99
Less than satisfactory	1

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

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

#### **Attainment and progress**

4 Pupils enter the reception classes with attainment which is average in all areas of learning including language and literacy. They make good progress in all areas of learning because of good teaching and an effective curriculum for the under fives. Attainment in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, personal and social education, the creative arts and physical development is satisfactory. Attainment is therefore generally well in line with national expectations when pupils enter classes in Year 1. Parents feel that the school promotes high standards.

5 The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 show attainment to be above the national averages. In comparison with schools with similar characteristics the results are average in reading, above in writing and average in mathematics. The pattern of the school's national test results over the period 1996 to 1999 shows attainment to be well above national averages in writing, just above in reading and above in mathematics. The findings of the inspection indicate improving attainment in English, mathematics and science. This is because of the successful introduction of the literacy hour, the good start made with the introduction of the numeracy lesson and new guidelines for science, all of which have provided staff with clear guidance and structures for teaching these subjects. In turn this has led to improved teaching and better standards.

6 Pupils transfer from the school at the end of Year 5 and therefore the National Curriculum tests for Key Stage 2 are not administered. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 5 is well on track to meet national averages when pupils take the tests at the end of Year 6 in the high school.

7 In English, the majority of the present reception pupils, who have experienced a well-planned and balanced literacy programme, show attainment which is broadly in line with national expectations for that age and some show attainment which is higher.

8 Standards in speaking and listening in the reception classes and at the end of Key Stage 1 are average. Pupils' listening skills are very well developed and they pay close attention to stories and modelled reading in the literacy hour and other subjects. They are confident when responding to teachers' questions and taking part in discussions and their progress is good. Drama and role play are well planned and used in some classes to allow pupils to express themselves. By the end of Year 5 pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is average and progress is good. Pupils listen carefully throughout the literacy hour, take an active part in class discussion and are keen to answer questions. They are developing skills which enable them to express their ideas and opinions clearly. In a class discussion about prayer in different faiths pupils showed great interest in the subject and were very keen to ask questions and contribute individually.

9 In Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in reading and standards are average. Most have a good sight vocabulary of familiar words and they are able to use letter sounds and blends effectively when reading unfamiliar words. They enjoy reading with their teachers in the shared text session of the literacy hour, in which staff model good reading very effectively. Pupils all have a reader and a library book and read regularly at home as part of the school's homework policy. By the end of Year 5 standards of reading are at least average, with many achieving above the national expectation because they make good progress. Many pupils read fluently and higher attaining pupils read with accuracy, can predict and can use inference and deduction. All pupils read with expression and clearly enjoy their books, which are very carefully matched to their level of attainment.

10 Standards in writing are above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. From the time when pupils first enter the reception classes, they are keen to write and do so with confidence. This continues in Key Stage 1 when they write with fluency and learn to check and re-draft their work. Most pupils write in a legible and neat script and the majority of pupils are able to spell familiar words accurately. By the end of Year 5 pupils' attainment is average overall and often above average in writing. Pupils have a good understanding of writing conventions, of

writing for a particular audience and of the structure of language. Pupils in Year 5 are beginning to understand how and why authors use analogy, metaphor and simile in their writing and some use them in their own stories and poems. They can analyse the structure of a poem and compare different poets who use a similar or contrasting theme. Most pupils can plan, draft and re-draft their writing and are able to word process their work to produce best copies. Writing is effectively developed in science, RE, design and technology, geography and history.

11 Progress in English is sound in Key Stage 1 and generally good in the reception classes and in Key Stage 2. The school's focus on raising standards in English through the setting of challenging targets and the effective teaching of the national literacy strategy is proving to be very successful. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.

12 Attainment at the end of reception year in mathematics is sound with pupils having a firm understanding of counting numbers up to 10. Some pupils work comfortably up to 20. Pupils can describe simple two-dimensional shapes and their properties. At the end of Key Stage 1 and by the age of 10, pupils' attainment is in line with national averages. Pupils understand mathematical language and terms relating to two and three-dimensional shapes. Understanding of number is a strength with pupils freely adding and subtracting to 10, and some regularly work with larger numbers. Pupils record information clearly in simple tables and graphs. In Key 2 pupils continue to develop a good understanding of number. Older pupils work comfortably with numbers up to a million. Increasing use of investigative mathematics gives the higher attaining pupils the opportunity to extend their knowledge. Data is collected and recorded in graphs and diagrams and information technology is used in some cases to collate results and set questions for other pupils. Mathematics is consistently used to improve work in other subjects, such as art and science.

13 Pupils make good progress during the reception year and Key Stage 1. Effective work in number and patterns leads to good progress in mathematical thinking. Pupils' progress is also good in Key Stage 2. This is mainly the result of good teaching and a consistent approach to mathematics. Inspection evidence indicates that the National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive impact on pupils' progress. The school makes good use of support staff who are well organised and work closely with class teachers. This support also helps pupils with special educational needs to make good progress. Higher attaining pupils benefit from the setting arrangements involving Year 5 and older Year 4 pupils.

14 Above average attainment in science throughout the school begins in the reception classes where pupils are encouraged to make predictions and give reasons for their answers, for example when studying the five senses. Pupils in Key Stage 1 generally enjoy investigating and they describe what they do in detail. They have a good understanding of dark and light and order sequences successfully. Pupils can predict what might happen when the shape and texture of material is changed and make many relevant observations when weighing up evidence. This pattern of working is continued in Key Stage 2. Pupils understand the need for fair tests. They can test out their predictions, for example, in constructing electrical circuits with conductors and insulators and in carrying out investigations into shadows.

15 Three key factors ensure pupils make good progress throughout the school. They are interested in and excited by the investigations they have to carry out, they work from first-hand experience and they are given clear guidance by teachers and support staff. Pupils are secure in the understanding they gain, and skills are developed and refined. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs make good and sometimes very good progress because of the high level of support they receive.

16 At the end of the reception year and by the ages of seven and ten most pupils' attainment in information technology (IT) is in line with national expectations in communicating information and most aspects of modelling, data handling, monitoring and control technology. Pupils have a clear understanding of the value of information communication technologies (ICT) in helping them learn in a range of subjects such as English, mathematics, art and history. However throughout the school pupils' attainment is held back because the school cannot cluster computers for large group teaching where pupils can get the immediate practical experience which consolidates new learning. In Key Stage 1 pupils operate computers with confidence, using the keyboard effectively and the mouse to select and move items. Many can write and save text and can decide the size and style of print. With help, some pupils can use CD ROMS to gain access to information. By the end of Key Stage 2 many pupils can use word-processing and data-handling programs with confidence and independence. They can load files, explore and retrieve

from information systems, generate, modify, improve, save and print text and close computers down properly. They can use the computer to input and interrogate data and present it in a range of ways including charts and graphs. They make effective use of CD ROMS to extend their knowledge and make good use of simulations to develop logical thinking and decision-making skills.

17 Overall, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in IT in both key stages. This is because teachers give close support and make good use of available computers. They teach skills directly and all pupils are closely monitored and supported. Pupils are highly motivated by using computers and in Key Stage 1 become increasingly confident and skilled in their use. Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils progress to more advanced skills including writing programs to guide computerised toys, correcting and improving written work more systematically, making effective use of a range of sources to gain and print information.

18 Pupils' attainment in religious education(RE) is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in both key stages. From the time they enter the reception classes they gain good knowledge and understanding of religious and moral stories. By the time they leave Key Stage 1 pupils have a growing knowledge and understanding about several world faiths. They know some important stories and religious terms and are beginning to understand that faith and belief affect the way people live. They demonstrate this in the prayers they write about harvest time and in their understanding of different stories about creation. In Key Stage 2, they deepen their knowledge and understanding. They know God is represented in different ways in religions and understand that symbolism has great meaning in faith and practice. They know key stories from the Bible and other world faiths and have an awareness of common ground and differences between religions for which they show respect.

19 In both key stages pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in gaining knowledge and understanding of world religions. This is because subject matter is made interesting and pupils are encouraged to compare and contrast experiences in order to understand and appreciate the customs and traditions of others. Pupils talk freely about what they are learning and make good links between religious observance and faith and practice, for example, in Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam. They are able to reflect on and show empathy for the situations they study and can carry out investigations successfully and apply religious values to real life.

20 Standards in art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education (PE) are in line with those expected at the end of Key Stage 1. At the end of Year 5 pupils' attainment in art, design and technology, geography, history, music and PE is in line with national expectations. Pupils' progress is satisfactory in art, geography, and PE in both key stages. It is good in design and technology and history in both key stages. In music progress is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. All pupils have equality of access to the curriculum and there is no significant difference in attainment by any groups of pupils in any subject. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they make good progress.

### **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

21 Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They listen well in class, want to learn, are interested, work hard and are confident when expressing their opinions. Pupils enjoy lessons, respond positively to their teachers and other adults and contribute to the positive ethos for learning in the school. Parents confirm that their children enjoy school and that homework is approached in a positive way. The school has a new home-school agreement that sets out clear expectations for pupils, parents and the school and updates the school's policy on attitudes and behaviour. Pupils are aware of their responsibilities and respond well to them in and around school. Individual targets for attitudes and behaviour have a positive impact and are a strong feature of the school.

22 Behaviour is very good throughout the school. Pupils are self-disciplined and move around the school in a calm and orderly manner. They respond well to instructions and behave well during breaktimes and assemblies. Pupils settle quickly for registration and respond to the beginning of lessons in a disciplined way. Their behaviour is good because expectations of all staff, teaching and non-teaching, are consistently high. Discussion with pupils confirms that they want the school to reinforce good behaviour so that they have a safe and secure environment. Parents' responses indicate that they feel pupils behave well.

23 Relationships in the school are very good between pupils and with all staff, and are based on fairness,



courtesy and mutual respect. This contributes strongly towards making the school a good place to learn. Pupils work well together, supporting each other in class and in groups. Pupils with special educational needs are also well supported by staff and pupils and relationships with them are very good.

24 Pupils' personal development is very good. They have a considerable number of responsibilities around the school, are given tasks at all ages and expectations of them are high. The youngest age groups are responsible for cleaning up after practical activities. Older pupils prepare the hall for assemblies and help teachers with many organisational tasks which gives them a feeling of self-worth and independence. Older pupils support younger ones, promoting a continuation of the positive ethos. Staff trust pupils, in particular allowing a relaxed approach to older pupils coming early into school in the morning to start work. This trust is not abused as pupils fully understand their responsibilities. Pupils have a clear understanding of the school's values and beliefs, respecting the views of others and defending their right to an opinion. The input of the small number of pupils from other ethnic backgrounds is respected and they have the confidence to make interesting contributions in lessons about their own cultures.

#### - **Attendance**

25 Attendance is very good and well above the national average. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. There is almost no unauthorised absence. Registration is efficient, effective and complies with statutory requirements. The vast majority of pupils come to school on time and lessons start promptly. The high standards maintained in attendance and punctuality have a positive impact on the quality of learning in the school.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

26 The overall quality of teaching is good and is a strength of the school, contributing significantly to standards of attainment and the good progress made by pupils. In about two out of three lessons observed teaching was good or better and in just over one in ten it was very good. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection when it was judged to be generally sound. At that time no teaching observed was very good and in a minority of lessons teaching was unsatisfactory.

27 Teaching in the reception classes is good or better in eight out of ten lessons. Staff plan very effectively for the needs of the pupils and give them a very good start to their schooling. In Key Stage 1 teaching is generally good and is good or better in just over half of lessons. In Key Stage 2 teaching is good and is good or better in just over six out of ten lessons. In only one lesson observed was the quality of teaching unsatisfactory. In mathematics, science, RE and history, teaching is of good quality in both key stages. In English, teaching is sound overall in Key Stage 1 and good overall in Key Stage 2. In IT, art and PE teaching is of sound quality in both key stages. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching in design and technology and in geography in either key stage, and music in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1 teaching in music is good.

28 Teachers have good subject knowledge in English, mathematics, science, history and RE, and at least sound knowledge in all the other subjects. Their management of lessons is good because they are competent in handling the subject material and adapting it to suit the needs and abilities of pupils. All teachers expect pupils to apply themselves diligently to tasks. Generally they are successful and pupils work quietly and persevere, think carefully about what they are doing and present their findings clearly. Teachers and support staff give all pupils, including those with special educational needs, much valuable support. Teachers' expectations of the standards of work required from different groups of pupils are reinforced rigorously in the oldest classes in Key Stage 2 but less so elsewhere. Better provision is needed to enable higher attaining pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1, to tackle more challenging work and attain higher standards.

29 Teachers' planning is thorough and gives a clear indication of what pupils should learn. In English and mathematics, planning is soundly based on the national literacy and numeracy strategies. In other subjects, teachers plan effectively from good schemes of work. Planning for pupils with special educational needs is very effective and all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Most lessons proceed at good pace and have a good balance between the teachers' input and practical activities carried out by the pupils. Some class sessions at the beginning of lessons,

particularly in Key Stage 1, are too long and limit the opportunities for pupils to work on set tasks. Resources are well organised and are used well to improve pupils' learning.

30 Teachers use a good range of methods and strategies which help pupils to make good progress. Direct class teaching is used effectively to introduce new knowledge and skills and develop pupils' thinking. Task setting is generally good and ensures that pupils apply and consolidate their knowledge, develop their understanding and practise skills. Oral work provides pupils with very good opportunities to talk about what they know and understand. Good opportunities are provided for investigation and enquiry in science, history and RE. Pupils have good opportunities to work individually, in pairs and in small groups.

31 Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and their management of it is very good in almost all lessons. This makes a major contribution to the quiet working atmosphere of the school. Teachers are able to teach successfully and constantly review the progress pupils make in lessons. The quality of teacher's assessments is generally good and they use assessment information well. Praise and encouragement are features of all lessons and keep pupils well motivated and focused upon their work. Teachers use skilful questioning to find out what pupils know and if necessary to re-direct their efforts. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is positive and values what they have done but there are few written comments in exercise books which evaluate pupils' learning and suggest areas for improvement. All staff now need to include targets for improvement when marking pupils' work. Homework is set regularly in the form of reading tasks and learning spellings and number tables. Pupils accept that they will do work at home and this has a positive effect on learning.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

32 The curriculum in the reception classes is broad and balanced and provides good coverage of the national areas of learning for under-fives. The curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2 is also broad and balanced and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and RE. Strong emphasis is given to teaching the national literacy and numeracy strategies and they are working effectively. Pupils in Key Stage 1 work more than, and Key Stage 2 less than, the recommended minimum lesson time each week. The amount of time lost over a term in Key Stage 2 is substantial. The school intends to lengthen the school day in Key Stage 2 to meet national guidelines and should do this as soon as possible.

33 All subjects of the National Curriculum and RE meet the statutory requirements. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when the school was criticised for a lack of whole-school policies and schemes of work. These are now giving very effective guidance to teaching and learning. Helpful information about the curriculum is provided in the school's prospectus, which also makes clear the school's approach to sex education and RE. A very good booklet for parents gives helpful information about the curriculum in Key Stage 2 but there is less information available about Key Stage 1 and this should now be remedied.

34 Equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils is a strength. Teachers' planning takes account of pupils' differing needs especially in Key Stage 2. Teachers are very successful in including all pupils in class discussions. They have good knowledge of pupils' individual circumstances and value the contributions they make. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Individual education plans (IEPs) are of very good quality and targets are clear and specific. The requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are fully met.

35 Planning for curriculum continuity and progression of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding is generally very good because it is based on clear policies and schemes of work. Teachers plan together in year groups and key stage groups and good oversight is provided by the key stage curriculum coordinators. Subject managers are effective in monitoring the termly plans for coverage of the National Curriculum but there is little monitoring of standards or the quality of teaching. There is very good consistency of work between classes because of joint planning and there is good consistency in the range of organisational strategies and teaching methods that are used throughout the school. Liaison with the high school is carefully planned and the records that are passed on give a very good indication of standards attained, rates of progress made and other achievements.

36 Staff organise a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, including sport for boys and girls. The school has increased its provision since the previous inspection and these activities are clearly enjoyed by those who

attend. The curriculum is further enriched by a good programme of visits to places of interest and by visitors to school.

37 The school has made good progress in addressing the key issue about assessment and recording in the previous inspection report. There are now good systems in place to track progress, predict future attainment and set targets for improvement for individuals, classes and year groups. Records for every pupil, together with samples of work, give a good indication of their attainment and progress. Record folders contain some pieces of work which have been accurately assessed against level descriptors in the National Curriculum but generally pupils' work is not assessed or moderated against these often enough to give a true overall picture. Overall, good use is made of assessment data to inform planning and this results in increased awareness amongst teachers of pupils' capabilities. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 confirmed that teachers make clear what they are expecting and the targets they expect them to reach.

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

38 The school makes very good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils. The recommendation in the previous inspection report that pupils should be given more opportunities for reflection and to develop awareness of their own and other cultures, has been successfully addressed.

39 The provision for spiritual development is very good. Acts of collective worship are of very good quality. They are carefully planned and well delivered, and the head teacher, staff, appropriate visitors and the pupils all make a contribution. Daily assemblies consistently provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on an appropriate theme, for example, during the inspection the main theme was Remembrance Day, and the assemblies were moving, thought provoking and spiritual in character. There are regular opportunities to sing hymns, respond to prayers and listen to music. In lessons and other activities there are good opportunities for pupils to reflect on how they might think or act in a particular situation or how they might help others. In RE pupils regularly reflect on their own lives, their families and others in the world at large.

40 Provision for moral development is very good and the school gives it a high priority. Clear policies for behaviour and anti-bullying, supplemented by class rules developed with pupils, are consistently and effectively implemented. Discipline is based on respect and expectation. The system of rewards and sanctions is implemented consistently by teachers and fully understood by the pupils. Staff teach pupils to understand what is right and what is wrong and encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions. Teaching and non-teaching staff create an orderly and caring environment and provide very good role models for pupils.

41 The school makes very good provision for the social development of its pupils. They are taught to share, help each other and to show consideration for others. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to work together in pairs or in groups. Older pupils regularly help younger ones. The school organises a very good range of educational visits, including residential experience, which provide pupils with valuable opportunities for social interaction outside the classroom. Pupils develop a sense of citizenship through raising money for charities, visiting the elderly with Harvest Festival gifts and taking part in extra-curricular activities.

42 Provision for cultural development is very good. The school's aims recognise the need to prepare all pupils to live and work in harmony with one another in a multicultural society. Opportunities are created to reflect on the art and music from different countries. Theatre groups have visited and performed in the school. In history and geography, visits and field work make an appropriate contribution to the curriculum and the local area is well used as a resource to increase pupils' awareness of their own culture. RE focuses on Christianity and the other major world faiths which raises pupils' awareness of different religions and traditions. There is an appropriate range of multicultural literature, and displays such as the current ones on Divali, broaden pupils' understanding of other cultures, beliefs and ways of life.

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

43 The school provides effective support, guidance and welfare for its pupils. All groups are treated fairly and appropriately. Systems for monitoring and recording pupil's progress are detailed and informative so that staff are able to monitor the progress of individuals and classes, but subject managers should now monitor the attainment of

groups more rigorously. Individual support and guidance is good as teachers know their pupils well and work hard to give appropriate support.

44 The school has good arrangements with the secondary school to which the majority of pupils transfer at the end of Year 5 and a programme of visits allows pupils to experience their new school. Secondary staff visit the school to meet their pupils and to discuss individual issues. As transfer takes place before the end of Key Stage 2, the decisions made relating to curriculum coverage are especially important. These are fully agreed. Pupils with special educational needs are supported individually on transfer and in school they are well supported by teaching and non-teaching staff. Links with other agencies are good and individual needs are sensitively met.

45 The discipline and behaviour policy is very effective and pupils' behaviour is very good. The recent introduction of home-school agreements confirms the school's commitment to working with parents to support pupils. High expectations linked to clear rewards and sanctions underpin the success of the behaviour policy. Rare incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils are confident of support in such cases and trust that the school will act appropriately.

46 There is an effective system for monitoring attendance which promotes good practice and complies with legal requirements. The school expects regular attendance and reminds parents of the need to keep the school informed of absences. This is effective and parents are very supportive. The staff handbook clarifies practice for all permanent and temporary staff regarding registration procedures. Registers are regularly checked by the head teacher.

47 The school has a good health and safety policy. A risk assessment has been carried out and some minor issues dealt with. Staff and pupils are aware of health and safety matters and their responsibilities relating to them. Pupils are regularly advised about areas for consideration including the use of playground apparatus. Visitors to the school are required to sign in at the office and wear a badge. Child protection procedures are sound with a detailed policy understood by all staff. Accident procedures are also effective. The school has a good number of trained first aiders providing effective support throughout the day.

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

48 The school enjoys the support of the vast majority parents who are encouraged to visit and be actively involved in their children's education. Parents regularly help in the classrooms, accompany pupils on visits and support their children's learning by hearing them read at home and helping them with other homework. There is an active parent teacher association which organises social and fund raising events and distributes regular newsletters. The head teacher and staff make themselves readily available to parents on a daily basis and parents feel welcome in the school. Most find it easy to approach the school with complaints or problems and are confident that these would be responded to in an appropriate manner.

49 Communication between the school and parents is good. Regular newsletters and letters inform parents about specific events. Notice boards display school and community information inside the school entrances. There is a comprehensive and informative school prospectus. The governing body holds an annual meeting for parents and publishes an annual report. Both the prospectus and the annual report include all the required information. Parents of children in Key Stage 2 are very well informed about the work that their children are doing and the school sends out a very comprehensive induction booklet which contains detailed curriculum information. Parents of children in Key Stage 1 do not receive similar information and some have indicated that they do not feel as well informed about what their children were being taught. Inspection evidence supported their concerns. The annual reports about pupils are detailed and informative, state what pupils can and cannot do, and indicate progress being made. However, these reports are sent out very early in the academic year and do not give a full picture of the whole year's progress. Appropriate opportunities are offered to parents to attend meetings where they can discuss their children's work and progress with the class teachers. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed and fully involved in their children's work.

50 The school is considerably enriched by its links with the community. Pupils make good use of the local and wider community for topic and project work, and there is a good range of educational and social visits, including a residential visit for Year 5. Visitors to the school enhance the curriculum and support pupils' personal development.

Children make appropriate contributions to local and national charities. The school premises are used by local community groups and the school makes regular use of local facilities, for example, the nearby community sports centre. There are good links with village playgroups and with the local secondary school. The good links with parents and the community make a significant contribution to the pupils' academic progress and personal and social development and considerably enrich the curriculum.

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

### **Leadership and Management**

51 Overall, the school is well led and managed. The head teacher and governing body have a clear vision for the school as one in which pupils are expected to attain highly in the core subjects, in which pupils and staff are enabled to feel successful and in which parents are fully involved and feel that their children receive a good education. Within this framework of expectations the head teacher gives firm direction for the school and the last three years has seen an overall trend of gradually rising standards in English, mathematics and science. Standards in these subjects are above national averages and broadly in line with those of similar schools because teachers feel well supported and the overall quality of teaching is good.

52 The positive ethos of the school is a major strength because it is fully inclusive of all pupils in the school, encourages them to learn and helps to make teaching effective. Teachers expect good behaviour and hard work and generally demand pupils' best efforts. In turn pupils are cared for and valued as individuals and their successes are highlighted and rewarded. The ethos is also embraced by support staff who make a particularly strong and effective contribution. The school functions well as a caring community and supports pupils' progress and the standards they strive to achieve. The positive learning ethos also includes a strong emphasis on equality of opportunity, anti-racism and personal development, and these are central to all aspects of school life. Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.

53 The school's aims have been developed with staff and governors and have a substantial influence on the life and work of the school. The curriculum includes residential visits and is of good quality with a strong emphasis on maintaining good levels attainment in literacy, numeracy and science. Very good long, medium and short-term planning embracing the national curriculum programmes of study, good teaching and the effective use of resources is helping to raise standards.

54 The supportive leadership of senior managers means that all staff feel that they can contribute to curriculum development and they show initiative in doing this within a consistent team approach. Management roles and responsibilities are clear and there are agreed and published job descriptions. As a result there are good school systems for the identification of needs, for prioritisation and strategic planning. Subject managers are enthusiastic but insufficiently involved in monitoring and evaluating their subjects. They need training and agreed strategies and resources, including time, to be effective in both key stages in further improving the quality of the curriculum.

55 The school has a small but developing programme of quality assurance. It involves a degree of monitoring the effectiveness of teachers by senior managers but feedback is insufficiently focused to help teachers to improve. The monitoring of teaching now needs to be made more systematic and regular in identifying strengths, weaknesses and targets for further improvement. Pupils' attainment and progress is carefully monitored with a thorough tracking system in which their work is evaluated both for standards and for continuity and progression of pupils' learning. Good use is made of assessment data to inform planning.

56 The school's development plan covers a period of three years with the immediate year planned in detail. It is mainly concerned with the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies and the improvement of RE and IT. These are appropriate priorities. The overall plan has the coverage which reflects a careful and comprehensive audit of the current situation in each subject and aspect of school life. It has good programmes for action with implications for resources, staff time, and funding and curriculum and staff development identified, along with success criteria and appropriate methods of monitoring progress. The good quality of the development plan and the collaborative nature of the process provide a good basis for school improvement. In addition the IT coordinator has produced a good ICT development plan with clear targets for improving provision and for raising standards which

reflects a commitment to raising pupils' attainment and improving the quality of the curriculum and teaching. The action plan which followed the last inspection addresses the key issues carefully and has resulted in the successful implementation of most of them. Progress on most of the key issues is good. There are now school policies and schemes of work for all subjects and teachers use assessment and recording effectively to evaluate attainment and set targets. Standards of teaching in music have improved in Key Stage 1 but there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement in Key Stage 2. Strategies for monitoring pupils' progress are now good, but although a start has been made in monitoring teaching there is much still to be done. Cloakroom and toilet facilities for pupils in the mobile classroom are now satisfactory.

57 The governors are strongly committed to the support and development of the school and fully meet their statutory requirements. They are well informed and have a broad strategic overview of the school's strengths and an increasing understanding of what needs to be done in order to further improve the school. They actively discuss most aspects of the work of the school but should now be more actively engaged with educational priorities such as setting targets for attainment in literacy and numeracy for 2002 and keeping them under review in the light of current attainment of pupils. With their effective and continuing support of the school and their help to senior managers in devising the post-inspection action plan, and in closely monitoring and checking the progress of its implementation, the school has the strong capacity to go on improving.

### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

58 The school has sufficient staff with appropriate experience and expertise to meet curriculum needs, including those of pupils under five. A good range of staff has been appointed since the previous inspection and they work very well with the established staff to form a united team. The school benefits from a large number of support staff in Key Stages 1 and 2, and a sufficient number in the reception class. They are well deployed, appropriately qualified and experienced and give strong support to pupils including those with special educational needs.

59 Induction arrangements for newly qualified members of staff are effective. Opportunities for professional development are well organised and well used. The programme of staff development for the implementation of the literacy hour and the additional training for the numeracy strategy has improved consistency of teaching approaches across the school and established very good cooperative working between teaching and support staff. The appraisal cycle has been successfully completed within the specified period.

60 Accommodation is only just adequate. The open-plan classrooms, although just large enough to accommodate the current numbers in the classes, are limiting when pupils are working on practical tasks in groups. This situation is partially alleviated by the use of small withdrawal areas. Accommodation for the reception classes is small but well used for a range of practical activities. The hall is small and cramped when used for whole school gatherings such as assemblies. The shortage of storage rooms and cupboards means that resources are stored around classrooms and in corridors further restricting the space available for teaching. Two hard surface play areas and a school field provide good outdoor facilities. The outside play area provides a safe area for pupils under five. The school's accommodation is clean and well maintained. The staff create a rich learning environment with interesting displays of pupils' work. The main school building has good access for the disabled including toilet provision.

61 Overall, the school is well resourced. At the time of the last inspection resources for RE were inadequate. Since then the coordinator has built up a good range of high quality materials, artefacts, pictures and books. Learning materials and equipment are good in English, mathematics, science, design and technology and PE, but resources for IT need to be supplemented on a planned basis. Resources are well deployed, well organised and accessible and treated with care and respect by pupils.

### **The efficiency of the school**

62 The head teacher, staff and governors have identified appropriate educational priorities in a good school development plan. The priorities relate to each other to form a coherent plan for school improvement with a strong emphasis on the implementation of current national imperatives. The financial implications are worked out by the head teacher and staff and agreed with governors. This results in a balanced budget which finances the development plan. Staff with management responsibilities assist with financial planning, particularly in the improvement of learning resources. The head teacher monitors spending closely and provides regular reports for the governing body.

63 Governors receive the financial information necessary for them to consider and take part in decisions relating to all aspects of the budget. Current priorities are to improve standards of attainment in literacy and numeracy through the successful introduction of the national strategies and to further develop science and IT. Funding is allocated for an appropriate range of purposes, including provision for teaching staff and curriculum development. Good balance is achieved between these and good use is made of the grant for professional training. The decision to employ a considerable number of support staff results in very good in-class support for pupils' learning and improves their attainment. Careful financial management has resulted in a small balance and this is being well used to help resource the literacy, numeracy and IT initiatives.

64 The head teacher and governors addressed the key issues of the last inspection report in a methodical way and have mostly succeeded in carrying them out. The school effectively uses its learning resources and staff to support all aspects of the pupils' education. Teachers make particularly good use of the accommodation. Additional support for pupils with special educational needs is well used and results in very good provision so that these pupils make very good progress.

65 Financial control is good and finances are kept in very good order. Procedures are effective, responsibilities are appropriately delegated and systems for monitoring and control are efficient. Financial administration is good. Relevant information is made available to the governors' finance committee which enables it to oversee the budget and financial expenditure effectively. The latest auditor's report states that the school has included satisfactory controls within the financial systems to ensure that the school's finances are administered in accordance with current guidelines, and the recommendations made have been fully implemented. The school's secretary gives very effective support and provides efficient and unobtrusive systems and routines which support the work of the school, enabling teaching to take place effectively.

66 Good leadership, the good quality of teaching and the curriculum, the good levels of attainment and good progress, the very good behaviour and positive attitudes the pupils, the average unit costs and good use of resources are all indicators that the school is doing well. The school provides good value for money.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

67 At the time of the inspection there were 56 pupils in the two reception classes. They share a newly created base situated in the centre of the school. Pupils enter the reception class in the September before they are five. Only a few children have had nursery education but most children have attended a local pre-school playgroup. Attainment on entry to the reception class is in line with national expectations in literacy, numeracy and in the other areas of learning. Pupils make good progress and on entry to Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils have attained the expected standards in most areas of learning, including language and literacy and mathematics. Some pupils have attained higher standards. Pupils with special educational needs also make very good progress. The detailed cooperative planning embracing both the desirable learning outcomes and the early stages of the National Curriculum provides a broad and balanced curriculum which is relevant to the needs of the under-fives. Assessment and the recording of attainment and progress is systematically completed by staff and used effectively to inform future planning. Overall the two reception classes are highly effective and give the pupils a very good start to their education.

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#### **Personal and social development**

68 Pupils make good progress and have good levels of attainment in the personal and social area of learning by the time they leave the reception classes. Pupils are secure, confident and happy and benefit from well-structured routines. They have well-developed skills of independence, play together well and cooperate successfully in imaginative play. They are given opportunities to take responsibility for various tasks, such as helping to tidy up and they share activities and equipment fairly and without fuss. Pupils are encouraged to choose activities and they often sustain their concentration and interest for considerable periods. They are encouraged to help each other with unfamiliar tasks, for example introducing a computer game to another child who has not played it before and they do this with a sense of wanting to help and share their knowledge. They work well in groups and on their own and are able to take turns fairly. Pupils are generally very well behaved and cooperative. They particularly enjoy and respond well to their involvement in the school assemblies and having school lunch in the hall with the older pupils. Arrangements for transfer are good and pupils settle into their new classes very quickly and smoothly. The opportunities they have had to share in activities with the rest of the school prepare them well for the more structured sessions in Key Stage 1.

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#### **Language and literacy**

69 By the end of the reception year pupils' attainment in language and literacy is in line with nationally expected levels. Well-structured planning and organisation for literacy has contributed significantly to the raising of standards and the majority of pupils are attaining the desirable learning outcomes, with some attaining above them. Pupils make good progress with all aspects of language and literacy but in particular in spoken language. All staff take every opportunity to develop spoken language skills and introduce the pupils to appropriate vocabulary related to activities and learning experiences. Pupils have very well-developed listening skills, enjoy listening to stories and pay close attention to adults and each other. Pupils contribute well to class stories and discussion and good opportunities for role play help pupils to make up stories of their own. Many of the pupils recognise and write their own names and many can identify the initial sound of their first name and a number of other common words. A few pupils can spell some simple words and are beginning to recognise regular spelling patterns.

70 Pupils have access to a wide variety of quality books and they show great interest in them. They know how to handle books properly, are able to talk about pictures and use them to inform their understanding of stories. Higher attaining pupils are able to recognise and read simple words and phrases, reading from the format of large texts. They know that text usually reads from left to right and they are beginning to identify capital letters, full stops and sentences. They also know that pictures and symbols are used to communicate meaning. Structured opportunities to communicate through drawing pictures and making marks helps pupils develop control over letter



shapes through regular practice. Many of the activities provide practice for the skills of writing and the higher attainers begin to copy or write simple sentences about their pictures and experiences. Pupils take their books home and most receive good support from their parents. Parents are kept well informed of what their children are learning in literacy and numeracy through posters placed on the entrance notice board.

## - **Mathematics**

71 Attainment in the mathematical area of learning indicates that the majority of pupils meet the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five and some attain Level 1 of the National Curriculum. They make good progress and steadily acquire early number concepts through a carefully structured programme of activities. They have good understanding of appropriate mathematical language, can recognise shapes and can sort, match and sequence objects according to size, colour, shape and pattern. Some pupils can count and recognise numbers to ten and have opportunities to practise these skills through singing games and rhymes and daily routines, such as counting the number of pupils present and the number of pupils who have milk. Pupils develop an understanding of pattern and number through a wide variety of imaginative play activities and can solve simple problems. The very good resources for mathematics help pupils to develop their understanding of sequencing and sorting. The two computers which are available for pupils' use, have a satisfactory range of good quality software which enables them to practise recognition of shape, colour and number.

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

72 Pupils make sound progress and their attainment in the various aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world is broadly average, with some pupils attaining above national expectations. Many pupils can talk with interest and knowledge about their families and the immediate neighbourhood. Staff plan carefully to provide activities and visits which increase pupils' awareness and understanding of present and past events within their own families and the local community. Most can use a programme on the computer with some help, using the mouse to move the cursor, and are aware of the value of the computer in helping them to learn in other subjects, such as mathematics.

## - **Physical**

73 Pupils' physical skills are well developed, they make sound progress and the majority attain national expectations by the time they are five. A good range of outdoor equipment enables pupils to practise and refine skills of climbing and balancing and improve their awareness of their own and others' space. Pupils run and jump with confidence and learn to catch and throw and control their movements. A range of bikes and wheeled vehicles encourages their coordination skills as does smaller apparatus such as jigsaws and construction toys. Pupils have well-developed manipulative skills, using scissors and other small tools with confidence and accuracy, and moulding dough to make models.

## **Creative**

74 Pupils make good progress and their attainment is generally good. Pupils work with an extensive range of media and can use paints to explore pattern and colour in their pictures. They recognise the primary colours and most of the secondary colours. They are able to select materials for collage and can cut out shapes with a reasonable degree of accuracy. Pupils use their imagination in dramatic play, the re-telling and invention of stories and in art and music. They enjoy music making sessions and are able to sing in tune, sustain a rhythm and remember a large number of action songs and rhymes.

## - **Teaching**

75 The quality of teaching in the reception classes is good. Staff work together extremely well as a team, complementing each other's strengths, planning together and consistently applying their agreed approaches to teaching, behaviour management and the organisation of the day's activities. Their knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the under-fives' curriculum and of the needs of young children, is good. They are skilled at improving pupils' language and vocabulary and at developing their understanding through carefully targeted questions. Planning is detailed and effective. It links clearly to the desirable learning outcomes and the early stages

of the National Curriculum and identifies clear learning objectives.

76 The ethos of the reception classes is one of care and concern, with an emphasis on providing a rich learning environment with high expectations for the quality of teaching and pupils' attainment. This encourages pupils to become independent, secure and settled so that they are ready to learn. Well developed systems and organisation promote a structured and stable environment in which pupils flourish. Relationships between the staff, pupils and their parents and carers are excellent and supportive. Staff are sensitive, firm and calm when dealing with any unacceptable behaviour. Pupils respond well to this approach which provides them with clear guidelines for their relationships with others.

77 The system for the assessment of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding is effective. It is used consistently by all staff and provides a clear record of the progress which pupils are making from entry to the reception classes until they leave. Detailed and informative records are passed on as pupils move into Key Stage 1. Parents contribute to the assessment of their children's progress and receive regular reports as well as having daily access to the staff to share concerns and successes.

#### - **Curriculum provision**

78 The reception curriculum embraces the six areas of learning and also takes into account the early stages of the national literacy and numeracy strategies. It is broad and balanced and is relevant to the pupils' needs and experiences. Suitable emphasis is placed on language and literacy, numeracy and personal and social development. Planning is detailed and ensures that appropriate links are made between the different areas of the programme. For example the two computers are used very effectively, not only to develop simple keyboard skills but also to consolidate understanding of number and the alphabet. There is smooth continuity between the reception classes and Key Stage 1 because there is a carefully planned programme of regular contact and good on-going liaison between staff. There is effective transfer of pupils' records.

### **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

#### **English**

79 Pupils enter the reception classes with standards of attainment in language and literacy which are broadly average. They make good progress and the majority of the present four plus age group, who have experienced a well planned and balanced literacy programme, show attainment which is in line with national expectations for their age and some show attainment which is higher. The results of the Key Stage 1 1999 National Curriculum tests indicate that the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above in reading and writing is above the national average. When the school's performance is compared with schools of a broadly similar intake, the results at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading are average and in writing are above average. There has been steady improvement since the introduction of the literacy hour and the latest results show a distinct improvement on 1998. Inspection evidence indicates that the majority of pupils in Key Stage 2 are well in line to achieve the national averages by the end of Year 5. The literacy hour is having a very beneficial effect upon attainment, progress and pupils' confidence in reading, writing, spelling and grammar throughout the school. The implementation of the Additional Literacy Strategy with pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 is helping to raise standards for lesser attaining pupils. The school should continue to monitor the effectiveness of all aspects of the literacy hour and its impact on attainment in the foundation subjects. There are no significant differences between different groups of pupils.

80 Standards in speaking and listening in the reception classes and at the end of Key Stage 1 meet national expectations. Progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and often good in the reception classes. Pupils' listening skills are very well developed and they pay close attention to stories and modelled reading in the literacy hour and other subjects. They are confident when responding to teachers' questions and taking part in discussions. Teaching and non-teaching staff are sensitive to the needs of pupils with special educational needs and they encourage them to contribute through carefully worded questions. They then give them time to answer fully. Drama and role play are well planned and used to allow the children to express themselves. By the end of Year 5, attainment in speaking and listening meets national expectations and pupils' progress is good. Pupils listen carefully throughout the literacy hour, take an active part in class discussion and are keen to answer questions. The literacy hour is improving pupils'

vocabulary and their understanding of the structure of the English language. They are developing skills which enable them to express their ideas and opinions clearly, as in a class discussion about prayer in different faiths when pupils showed much interest in the subject and were very keen to ask questions and contribute individually.

81 Standards in reading in Key Stage 1 are average and pupils make satisfactory progress. Most have a good sight vocabulary of familiar words and they are able to use letter sounds and blends effectively when reading unfamiliar words. They enjoy the opportunity to read with their teachers in the shared text session of the literacy hour, in which staff model good reading very effectively. Pupils have a reader and a library book and read regularly at home as part of the school's homework policy. Parents are generally supportive and hear their children read regularly. By the end of Year 5, standards of reading are at least average, with many achieving above the national expectations because progress is good due to consistently good teaching. Many read fluently and higher attaining pupils read with accuracy, can predict and can use inference and deduction. Pupils read with expression and clearly enjoy books which are carefully matched to their level of attainment. Pupils make good use of the collections of high quality non-fiction books for their work in history and RE. Most pupils make effective use of a dictionary and the contents and index pages of their books, to help them retrieve information. They understand the vocabulary associated with the structure of a book and can talk about a range of familiar authors with enthusiasm and confidence.

82 Standards in writing are above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 because, from the time pupils first enter the reception classes, they are keen to write and do so with confidence. This continues in Key Stage 1 and they write with fluency and learn to check and re-draft their work. Most pupils write in a legible and neat script and majority of pupils are able to spell familiar words accurately. Spelling homework helps to raise standards. Pupils use basic punctuation appropriately most of the time. By the end of Year 5 attainment in writing is average overall and often above average. Pupils' progress is mainly good. The opportunity to study texts of high quality and to benefit from modelled writing sessions means pupils have a good understanding of writing conventions, of writing for a particular audience and of the structure of language. Pupils in Year 5 are beginning to understand how and why authors use analogy, metaphor and simile in their writing and some use them in their own stories and poems. They can analyse the structure of a poem and compare different poets who use a similar or contrasting theme. Most pupils can plan, draft and re-draft their writing and are able to use a word processor to produce best copies. Pupils with special educational needs receive carefully targeted and very effective help from support staff, which enables them to complete their work successfully. Standards of handwriting, spelling and punctuation are good. The majority of pupils present their work very neatly and take pride in the appearance of their books.

83 Overall, pupils' progress in English is sound in Key Stage 1 and generally good in the reception classes and in Key Stage 2. The school's focus on raising standards in English through the setting of challenging targets and the effective teaching of the national literacy strategy is proving successful. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress across the school in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. This is largely due to the very good support they get in lessons.

84 Pupils have very positive attitudes towards reading and writing. They are attentive, concentrate very well and are enthusiastic about their lessons. In all classes pupils' behaviour is very good because they are motivated by the texts they are studying and the tasks they are asked to complete. They work well during group activity sessions and pupils are able to work independently for sustained periods of time from the earliest stages in school. They show high levels of respect for each other, their teachers and all support staff.

85 The quality of teaching is sound and sometimes good or very good in Key Stage 1. It is mainly good and sometimes very good in the reception classes and in Key Stage 2. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is shown in the consistent approach to the planning and delivery of lessons across the school, the establishment of effective assessment systems and target setting for individuals, and the very effective use of questioning skills. Teachers have adopted the literacy strategy with enthusiasm and commitment. They plan well together with strong leadership and support from the subject manager. They bring good subject knowledge to their lessons together with a lively teaching style, good use of time and pace and high expectations for their pupils to succeed. The clear objectives in teachers' planning are shared with pupils and evaluated at the end of sessions to see how far they have been met. Group activity tasks are carefully and accurately matched to pupils' individual and collective needs and targets. Both commercial and home-made resources are well used by all staff and are of good quality. Pupils have regular homework which is set and marked by the staff and is an important factor in the in raising attainment. The

majority of parents hear their children read and make sure that their homework is completed.

86 The English curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of the pupils. Good cross-curricular links are being developed. It fully meets National Curriculum requirements. The monitoring and assessment of pupils' progress is good in the reception classes and both key stages and pupils learn to evaluate their own work and are made aware of how they can improve. Group and individual targets set clear goals which pupils are keen to meet and exceed. Marking is thorough and encourages the pupils to improve their work. All pupils have full access to the curriculum, and pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported. Pupils are given opportunities to write for a variety of purposes in science, RE, design and technology, geography and history. The skills of speaking and listening are particularly well supported and used across the curriculum.

87 The school has tackled all the issues raised at the last inspection and has looked beyond them to explore other ways in which attainment can be raised and sustained. Appropriate challenge is provided for pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils. There is strong leadership from the subject manager who has provided very effective training and support for staff to introduce the literacy hour. The targets set for attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 and in 2002, when pupils will be at the secondary school, are ambitious but not unattainable. The rigorous analysis of data that the school has undertaken, target setting, the beginning of observation of teaching and the scrutiny of planning and pupils' work, all contribute to knowing where improvements need to be made. The school needs to make this monitoring more systematic and regular in order to continue to improve attainment and to achieve the challenging targets they have set.

## Mathematics

88 In the National Curriculum tests of 1999 pupils' attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 was above the national average. In comparison with schools with similar backgrounds, pupils' attainment in Key Stage 1 was about average. The figures for 1999 show an improvement on those for the previous year. The percentage of pupils achieving higher levels has also increased. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' attainment in lessons presently is sound in the reception year and in line with national expectations in both key stages. This is an improvement from the last inspection.

89 Attainment at the end of reception year is sound with pupils having a secure understanding of counting numbers up to 10. Higher attaining pupils work comfortably with numbers up to 20. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils understand mathematical language and terms relating to two and three-dimensional shapes. Their attainment in number is good with most understanding addition and subtraction up to 10. Higher attaining pupils regularly work with larger numbers and have a good understanding of place value. Pupils record information clearly in simple tables and graphs. In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to develop a good understanding of number and older pupils work comfortably with numbers up to a million. Increasing use of investigative mathematics helps higher attaining pupils to extend their knowledge. They collect data and record it in tables and diagrams, sometimes using information technology to collate results. Pupils have a good understanding of two and three-dimensional shapes. The introduction of the national numeracy strategy is leading to improved progress and attainment and pupils' ability to calculate mentally and orally has improved in all age groups.

90 Pupils make good progress in the reception classes and Key Stage 1. Well-planned work in number, patterns and shapes leads to good progress in pupils' mathematical thinking. Pupils' progress is also good in Key Stage 2. This is mainly the result of good teaching throughout the school and a consistent approach to mathematics. The school makes good use of skilled support staff who work closely with class teachers and as a result pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Higher attaining pupils benefit from the setting arrangements involving Year 5 and the older Year 4 pupils because teachers are able to target groups and extend pupils of similar ability which leads to them making good progress. Pupils are able to apply their mathematical skills effectively in other subjects, for example, when measuring patterns in art and during practical lessons in science when examining shadows on the playground.

91 Pupils enjoy mathematics. They have positive attitudes, settle well in lessons and respond to instructions thoughtfully. Pupils' behaviour is good because they are challenged and interested. They work well together and support each others' learning. Pupils enjoy the whole class activities because they have significant interaction with

teachers. This contributes to the progress made by pupils of all abilities. Well-organised group work allows pupils to work at their own pace and to support each other.

92 The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of their pupils. Careful planning ensures pupils make progress by building on their previous experiences and helps teachers match work closely to the needs of all pupils. Teachers identify clearly what it is pupils are to learn and a brisk and lively opening with oral or mental tasks often sets the tone for lessons. Teachers use questions effectively to include pupils of all abilities and to assess their understanding. Group tasks are appropriately organised to be suitable for all pupils' needs and help pupils work sensibly together to complete tasks within timed periods. Plenary sessions are mostly well used to bring together the main learning points for the lesson but on occasions teachers run short of time and they simply make a brief check on the activities covered. Teachers use assessment to judge pace and to sequence objectives to be covered and assessment is well used to inform future planning. Regular marking of work also informs assessment. Teachers make good use of praise although they rarely write comments or provide points for improvement. Teachers set individual targets for pupils which increases pupils' motivation. Where teachers set targets that are about mathematical development rather than about improving presentation, pupils' progress is enhanced.

93 The breadth and balance of the mathematics curriculum has been maintained since the introduction of the national numeracy strategy and statutory requirements are met. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teaching and non-teaching staff and make good progress. Homework is set throughout the school and pupils are encouraged to practise number bonds at home which helps to consolidate learning.

94 Mathematics is well led by an able and enthusiastic subject manager and all staff receive in-service support from her. Liaison throughout the school is good. The subject manager has started to observe teaching of the numeracy strategy. Visits are recorded but observations are descriptive rather than evaluative. Training in observation and monitoring skills, especially of teaching is now needed to further improve the subject. Support staff are well deployed and managed and give good support to all pupils. The targets set for attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, when pupils will be in the high school, are challenging but not unattainable. The school is well placed to raise attainment in mathematics.

## Science

95 The results of teachers' assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 indicate that standards are slightly above national averages. This is an improvement from the 1998 results and inspection findings confirm that attainment is generally a little above national averages. In Key Stage 2 attainment is also generally above the national expectations. Since the last inspection standards have continued to rise which is largely due to a more systematic approach to curriculum planning and teaching and a more consistent approach to enquiry based learning.

96 Above average attainment begins in the reception classes where pupils are encouraged to make predictions and give reasons for their answers when, for example, studying the five senses. Pupils in Key Stage 1 enjoy investigations and describe what they are doing in detail. They have good understanding of dark and light and order sequences successfully. Pupils can predict what might happen when the shape and texture of materials is changed and make relevant observations when weighing up evidence. This pattern of working is continued in Key Stage 2. Pupils understand the need for fair tests. They can test out their predictions, for example, in constructing electrical circuits with conductors and insulators and in carrying out investigations into shadows. Pupils generally present information well through writing, drawing, measurement and making graphs. Most pupils demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the topics they cover.

97 Three key factors result in pupils making good progress throughout the school. They are interested in and excited by the investigations they have to carry out, they work from first-hand experience and they are given clear guidance by teachers and support staff. Consequently, pupils are secure in the knowledge and understanding which they gain and they successfully develop and refine their skills. Lower-attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs make good and sometimes very good progress because of the high level of support they receive. Sometimes, however the progress that higher attainers make is limited because their thinking is not sufficiently challenged.

98 Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They are curious and gain much enjoyment from their work. Their behaviour is very good and they work very well as classes and in smaller groups with a high degree of self-discipline. Pupils show initiative in organising their work and relationships between them are very good as they test out ideas with each other and reach conclusions.

99 Overall, the quality of teaching is good and there is some very good teaching in Key Stage 2. All teachers have good subject knowledge and plan work very effectively. In the best lessons, learning objectives are shared with the pupils and are reinforced positively with individuals and groups. Teachers are skilful in using a wide range of methods and strategies and their management of behaviour is good and often very good. They give clear explanations and they ask and answer questions in ways that draw out pupils' understanding. Tasks are well matched to the needs and prior attainment of pupils and good guidance is provided. Where teachers tell pupils what to observe and record, pupils' capacity for decision making is limited. Teachers make good oral assessments, checking what pupils are doing, praising and encouraging them for their efforts and helping them take the next steps. Pupils are given written assessments in their books that value their efforts, but teachers do not sufficiently evaluate and identify targets for pupils to help them improve.

100 Provision for science is very good because of the development work which has taken place since the last inspection. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and ensures full coverage of the requirements of the national curriculum. There are effective systems for assessing attainment and information about pupils is generally used well to inform curriculum planning. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development because of the joy they experience in discovery and the fact they work so well together in different ways.

101 The subject is successfully managed and as a result, there is a coherent approach based on enquiry and investigation throughout the school. This has led to better teaching and an improvement in standards. Monitoring and evaluation is only carried out to a limited extent and not enough to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching further. Pupils use a wide range of good quality resources. Their work, together with the resources they have used, is reflected in a number of imaginative and interactive displays throughout the school.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS**

### **Information technology**

102 By the ages of seven and ten most pupils' attainment in IT is broadly in line with national expectations in communicating information and most aspects of modelling, data handling, monitoring and control technology. Pupils have a clear understanding of the value of information communication technologies (ICT) in helping them to learn in a range of subjects such as English, mathematics, art and history. However throughout the school their attainment is held back because the school cannot cluster computers for large group teaching where pupils can get immediate practical experience to consolidate new learning. The school has plans for this which should now be given priority and implemented as soon as possible so that standards can be raised to the levels of which many of the pupils are capable. Additional software and staff training will be needed to support this development.

103 In the reception classes pupils learn how to switch the computer on and off and use the keyboard. In Key Stage 1 pupils operate computers with confidence, using the keyboard effectively and the mouse to select and move items. Many can write, correct and save text and can decide the size and style of print. Extended pieces of writing are rare but the computer is proving a useful tool in helping to motivate pupils to write as part of the school's emphasis on the quality of writing. With help, some pupils can use CD ROMS to gain access to information, for example to find out about wild animals and the weather. By the end of Key Stage 2 many pupils can use word processing and data handling programs with confidence and independence. They can load files, explore and retrieve from information systems, generate, modify, improve, save and print text and close computers down properly. They can use the computer to input and interrogate data and present it in a range of ways including charts and graphs. This data is then well used to set tasks for fellow pupils. Pupils make effective use of CD ROMS to extend their knowledge and good use of simulations which develops their logical thinking and decision-making skills.

104 Pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages, whilst those with special educational needs make good

progress. This is because teachers give close support and make good use of the available computers. They teach skills directly and all pupils are closely monitored and supported. Pupils are highly motivated by using computers and in Key Stage 1 become increasingly confident and skilled in their use. Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils progress to more advanced skills including writing programs to guide computerised toys, correcting and improving written work more systematically, making effective use of a range of sources to gain and print information. The subject manager has produced a very good scheme of work for the school which supports good progression and continuity.

105 Pupils' attitudes to IT are very positive, so they concentrate for extensive periods. Both girls and boys are good at taking turns on the computers and they help each other in sensible and constructive ways, taking care to operate equipment responsibly. Behaviour is good and pupils who help others effectively reinforce their own expertise and gain in confidence.

106 The overall quality of teaching of IT is satisfactory in both key stages. Teachers are increasingly knowledgeable and confident in their use of IT equipment and software and the scheme of work provides a very good structure for teaching. Every class receives direct teaching of IT weekly and all classes are strongly supported by the skilled and effective classroom support assistants. There is a common teaching style throughout the school. Pupils are taught new knowledge and skills in IT lessons with a good balance between explanation and demonstration by the teachers. Practical work by pupils then takes place in twos and threes over a longer period, which slows learning. Learning objectives are clear and shared with pupils. Teachers' expectations are high and assessment is well used to help pupils make good gains in knowledge, understanding and skills. In the present circumstances this is an effective strategy and is leading to satisfactory progress and attainment. In order to further raise standards the school will need to implement its IT development plan as soon as possible.

107 The subject has improved since the last inspection because it has been given priority and is well managed. Pupils' attainment, the quality of teaching and resources are all much better. The curriculum for IT is very good and now embraces the national scheme of work, which assists planning for curriculum continuity and progression in pupils' learning. Subject coordination of the subject is enthusiastic and effective. There is a good development plan for the continued improvement of IT in the school. Staff expertise and training needs, including classroom support staff, are identified and logged and assessment is supported by a growing portfolio of examples of assessed and moderated work. Planning is monitored by the subject manager and advice and practical help is given when necessary. This should now be extended to include the monitoring of teaching. Resources are of good quality and although limited in numbers are readily accessible. A phased programme for acquiring mobile computers for use in classrooms will be needed to increase the use of ICT across the curriculum

#### - **Religious education**

108 Pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in both key stages. From the time they enter the reception classes, they gain good knowledge and understanding of religious and moral stories. By the time they leave Key Stage 1 pupils have a growing knowledge and understanding about several world faiths. They know some important stories and religious terms and are beginning to understand that faith and belief affect the way that people live. They demonstrate this in the prayers they write about harvest time, in their understanding of different stories about creation and through story sequences about 'helping hands'. In Key Stage 2, they deepen their knowledge and understanding. They know that God is represented in different ways in religions and understand that symbolism has great meaning in faith and practice. In their writing of a guide to a synagogue, older pupils in Key Stage 2 explore deeper concepts underpinning faith with tolerance and insight. They know key stories from the Bible and other world faiths and have an awareness of common ground and differences between religions for which they show respect.

109 In both key stages pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in gaining knowledge and understanding of different religions. This is because subject matter is made interesting and pupils are encouraged to compare and contrast experiences in order to understand and appreciate the customs and traditions of others. Pupils talk freely about what they are learning and make good links between religious observance, and faith and practice, for example, in Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam. Pupils generally make good progress in developing skills. They are able to reflect on and show empathy for the situations they study and they can carry out investigations successfully and apply religious values to real life.

110 Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive and they show interest in and enthusiasm for the subject. They listen attentively to interesting stories, join in discussions enthusiastically and sustain concentration. Their behaviour and the quality of relationships is very good and pupils listen to and respect the views and traditions of others. Pupils respond very well to the very good provision made for their spiritual, moral social and cultural development. This is evident in the thoughtful approach to the celebrations of harvest and Divali, the acts of remembrance and the valuing of different faiths and cultures.

111 The quality of RE teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the subject material. They plan effectively and have high expectations of their pupils. Teachers use explanation followed by discussion and practical activities, often of an investigational and problem-solving nature, very successfully to motivate pupils. Good use is made of time and most lessons have good pace. Oral assessment is good because it encourages pupils in their learning and helps them to think critically. Resources are used well and the good use of artefacts makes the subject interesting.

112 The curriculum for RE is broad, balanced and relevant and is taught in keeping with the locally agreed syllabus. Themes and topics for all year groups are clearly identified and followed. Teachers know their pupils well and the quality of assessment is good. There is no formally agreed procedure for recording attainment and progress but a helpful draft profile has been drawn up for this purpose. The leadership and management of the subject is very effective, raising its profile since the last inspection, framing a clear policy and scheme of work and building up a substantial collection of good quality books and artefacts which are used very purposefully. The subject is much improved from the last inspection.

## **Art**

113 As in the last inspection most pupils attain the standards expected for their age at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils in Year 5 also attain the expected standards. Throughout the school much of the work in art is based on drawing and painting. In Key Stage 1 pupils learn to use a wide range of materials and understand how to select appropriate tools for particular activities. In Key Stage 2 they continue to refine their skills in using tools and reach an appropriate standard by Year 5. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In every class pupils have experience of drawing, painting, printing, textiles, three-dimensional work, modelling and the use of information technology to enhance work. In Key Stage 1 pupils develop a sound understanding and use of colour, pattern and form. Printing involves the good use of blocks and sponges, experimenting with single and multiple colours. Three-dimensional work is less evident but there are some good examples of simple models and puppets. Pupils in Key Stage 1 enjoy using clay and are beginning to develop the skills required to work with it. In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to work on observational drawing and painting but show a greater awareness of different art styles. By studying the work of artists such as Monet and Van Gogh they have the opportunity to experiment with different techniques and styles. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 explore a range of cultural influences in their art, for example aboriginal styles from Australia. Examples of paintings from the Victorian era are well used to stimulate discussion and provide further experience for pupils. Older pupils work with a range of printing techniques exploring pattern, colour and texture. By Year 5 pupils use computers to create simple patterns and pictures and to design posters.

114 In both key stages pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils' attitudes towards art are good and they approach their work with enthusiasm. The policy and scheme of work ensure that all pupils receive a programme of activities that is continuous and progressive. Pupils progress both in terms of the range of materials used and also in the level of skills they demonstrate. For example observational drawing in Key Stage 1 concentrates on colour, tone and balance. In Key Stage 2 detailed pencil sketches make use of hatching styles. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in both key stages. Pupils follow instructions carefully and examples of completed work indicate progress across a range of skills, particularly drawing and painting.

115 Discussion with pupils indicates they really enjoy art and look forward to working with a range of media. Pupils' attitudes in lessons are good and they show sustained concentration and a pride in their work. Pupils discuss and reflect upon the beauty and style of a range of art leading to a greater understanding of the emotions involved in creating pictures. Pupils learn to work together and respect each other's artistic abilities. They learn that everyone has the right to express themselves through art. The influence upon art of many cultures is considered with pupils from other ethnic backgrounds contributing happily with their own experiences. All pupils have equal access to the subject.



116 The quality of art teaching is satisfactory overall and good in Key Stage 2. Management of pupils is good throughout the school. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and clear expectations of their pupils. Good use is made of time and resources with staff encouraging pupils to take responsibility for setting up and clearing away. Teachers discuss ideas with individuals and groups, encouraging pupils to reflect on their feelings towards their work and that of others. Praise and encouragement creates a good atmosphere for artistic experimentation. Planning is satisfactory ensuring adequate coverage, based on the scheme of work. Assessment is at present based on teachers' judgements on completed work. The school will use the imminent national guidelines for art as an opportunity to review art throughout the school. Records, plans and assessment will need to be evaluated at this time.

117 Art is well managed by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable subject manager who has produced good policy and scheme of work. The subject manager monitors the coverage and quality of work but not teaching and her role should now be extended to cover this.

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## - **Design and technology**

118 As in the last inspection it was possible to observe teaching of design and technology only in Key Stage 1. However, evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' previous work and teachers' planning, and from conversations with the subject manager and pupils suggest that attainment is in line with national expectations in both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils are able to use their developing knowledge of materials and methods of cutting and joining to generate ideas and designs to make products to fulfil a brief suggested by the teacher. For example, pupils developed their own designs to make glove puppets. By the age of ten pupils are able to measure, cut and join with increasing accuracy. They can respond to tasks of increasing complexity, selecting appropriate materials and, in some cases, producing large scale models of good quality. For example, pupils in Year 4 designed and made musical instruments. Some were designed to be played in more than one way. Most functioned effectively and were well finished. The standards of construction of models are broadly in line with those reported in the last inspection.

119 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in both key stages because teachers' planning follows a good scheme of work and provides structured experiences. Pupils' attitudes are very positive and behaviour is good because their tasks are challenging and provide good opportunities to collaborate with children. Pupils' experiences in the reception classes ensure that they develop an appropriate breadth of skills. The analysis of work shows clear evidence that these increase as pupils move through the school, the products improving in neatness, accuracy and complexity.

120 There was insufficient evidence during the inspection to make a firm overall judgement on the quality of teaching although that seen in Key Stage 1 was mainly good. However the range and quality of the models on display indicates that teachers have a good understanding of the design process and how this is linked to the final product. The variety of models produced shows that pupils now make independent decisions from an appropriate and increasing range of possibilities as their skills develop.

121 The curriculum is broad and balanced because the school has constructed a clear scheme of work. Management of the subject is good, clear oversight of provision is maintained and although support and monitoring of planning are effective, monitoring of teaching is needed to further improve standards. The school has responded satisfactorily to criticisms contained in the previous inspection report.

## **Geography**

122 Geography was not taught during the inspection. However analysis of pupils' work indicates that by the ages of seven and ten their attainment is generally in line with national expectations. Pupils in Key Stage 1 can make simple maps and follow directions. Older pupils in Year 5 can read maps and use a key. They are also able to use an atlas using symbols and understanding different features. Younger pupils understand the differences between their own locality and that in a different area. By studying a coastal area pupils learn how the environment affects the way people live. Pupils at the end of Year 5 use a range of geographical skills effectively to compare their own locality with other parts of the United Kingdom. Pupils in Key Stage 2 use appropriate geographical language to describe similarities and differences between regions of the world. Older pupils concentrate their study on the impact of weather and environmental improvements in different areas. Pupils in Key Stage 1 study both the school

environment and a local village during field visits. Older pupils undertake day visits and have the opportunity to participate in a residential visit. All pupils have the equal opportunity to acquire skills through first hand experience. Pupils with special educational needs have equal access to all areas of working and make good progress.

123 Scrutiny of pupils' work including those with special educational needs indicates that their progress is sound by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. For example, in Year 1 pupils are able to draw a simple map illustrating their local area using pictures. By Year 5 pupils use sophisticated skills to understand maps and plot areas around the world.

124 No overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching, but planning is satisfactory with programmes of study covered through the scheme of work. Careful planning ensures that the subject is taught systematically. The geography curriculum is broad and balanced with a clear progression of skills and understanding. A wide range of activities ensures that pupils experience many styles of working including written work, practical skills and fieldwork.

125 Geography is well managed by an enthusiastic subject manager. Since the last inspection a new policy and scheme of work have been introduced ensuring full coverage for all age groups. New resources have been purchased and there is a satisfactory range of books around the school. To further improve standards the subject manager should monitor and evaluate attainment and the quality of teaching in geography on a systematic and regular basis.

## **History**

126 Only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 1, in which pupils demonstrated a good understanding of past and present, old and new through observations of old photographs. They could explain differences and could make detailed drawings to illustrate them. Additional evidence, drawn from the scrutiny of pupils' past and present work, discussion with the subject manager and with pupils, indicates that attainment is at least in line with the national expectation and often above it. Attainment in Key Stage 2 is generally above the national expectation. In Year 3 pupils demonstrate good knowledge and understanding about life in ancient Egypt and can explain the role of the archaeologist and why study of the past is so important for us today. In Years 4 and 5 they have good knowledge and understanding of life in Tudor and Victorian England. A feature of the work is the ability of pupils to interpret their findings, to empathise with people then and to compare and contrast what they learn with their own experiences. Their writing about life in Victorian England is of good quality and often moving.

127 Pupils make good progress overall because they are well motivated and enjoy learning. This applies equally to pupils with special educational needs who are very well supported. Pupils make good progress in gaining knowledge because it is well presented to them in explanations, in appropriate texts, through the use of videos and the very good use of artefacts. They also make good progress in developing skills, for example, in recalling, recording and analysing information, in posing questions and forming hypotheses and in using their imagination when looking at different points of view. This in turn leads them to make good progress in developing their understanding.

128 Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning in history because topics are made lively and interesting for them. Their behaviour and relationships with others are very good and they sustain concentration well. Their response to the very good provision for their spiritual, moral social and cultural development is also very positive. Their learning helps them to reflect about cause and effect and the impact on people's lives.

129 Inspection evidence suggests that the quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject material. They plan effectively and tasks are well structured and supported. Their expectations are high because they want pupils to be involved in meaningful enquiry. Tasks are generally well matched to their needs and abilities. Time is used well. Lesson planning indicates that there is a good balance between direct teaching and engagement in practical activities. Teachers' assessments are of good quality and help pupils to gain knowledge and understanding.

130 The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant because it gives pupils good opportunities to study a selection of interesting topics in depth. The scheme of work takes full account of the requirements of the National Curriculum. Teachers have a good picture of pupils' performance through oral assessment and the marking of

pupils' work. Leadership and management in the subject has been successful in establishing a practical and exciting approach to the subject. This has ensured that the school has made good progress since the last inspection. Current approaches to monitoring and evaluation, however, are insufficient to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching further.

131 Good use is made of a wide range of resources, which are continuing to be extended. They are of good quality and are well deployed throughout the school. The interest and confidence of teachers and support staff, together with the effective use of resources, have a very positive effect on attainment and progress.

## - **Music**

132 The previous inspection identified music as needing improvement and made it a key issue. Good progress has been made through the production of a helpful policy and scheme of work. No lessons were planned in Key Stage 2 during the period of the inspection. Additional evidence is drawn from discussion with the subject manager, attendance at the assemblies, scrutiny of the policy and scheme of work, the analysis of teachers' plans and attendance at the lunch-time recorder club.

133 Inspection evidence suggests that at the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment are in line with national expectations. No overall judgement can be made on attainment in Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils are able to sing in tune and can control their voices for loud or quiet effects. They recognise and can name a range of percussion instruments and use them effectively to accompany songs and their own compositions. They have a wide repertoire of traditional and modern songs and hymns, which they enjoy singing and perform well. In assembly, they confidently sang a Tanzanian song in the language of the country. In the armistice assembly for Key Stage 2, all the pupils contributed to the singing of songs of a past era in history and the choir performed effectively for all the school. A group of pupils accompanied the choir competently on recorders, using notation. In a further assembly, pupils listened to a series of short Baroque musical extracts and could respond to differences of character and mood.

134 Progress in music is good for pupils in the reception classes and in Key Stage 1. Older pupils have access to extra-curricular activities such as the choir, led by a non-teaching member of staff and the recorder group, led by a parent. No overall judgement can be made on progress in Key Stage 2.

135 Pupils enjoy music, are enthusiastic and show positive attitudes which are reflected in their levels of involvement and concentration. They work together well in groups and take turns at playing instruments without fuss. They listen with interest and respect to the contributions of their peers and are able to discuss their compositions with percussion instruments. Sometimes they are able to suggest ways in which they can be improved. When pupils are given opportunities to play to an audience in assemblies, they take great pride in performing to the very best of their ability. The standard of singing in assemblies and class sessions is sound. There is a small recorder group which plays with a good sense of ensemble, producing a sweet tone.

136 The quality of teaching is good in the reception classes and in Key Stage 1. It is not possible to make a judgement on teaching in Key Stage 2. The policy and scheme of work provide good support for teachers of the younger pupils. The lack of a teacher with specialist knowledge has hindered the improvement of the subject and the present subject manager has many other responsibilities. Development is now needed to ensure that the skills and expertise attained by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 can be further extended in Key Stage 2. Teachers in Key Stage 1 have sufficient knowledge and confidence to teach the music curriculum effectively, which is a marked improvement since the last inspection. Their expectations of pupils are high and pupils respond to this with very positive attitudes and a desire to listen carefully and perform well. Lessons are planned with care and in detail and teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well.

137 The curriculum has appropriate breadth and balance and staff make links with other areas of the curriculum where appropriate. The quality and range of resources are adequate and they are well cared for by the pupils and stored carefully.

## **Physical education**

138 Pupils' attainment in PE is in line with standards expected nationally by the end of KeyStage 1 and by the end of Year 5 when pupils leave the school. Pupils in the reception classes are able to climb, balance on and travel along low apparatus with control. They can jump and land, some showing awareness of body shape in the air and good control in their landings. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils throw and catch both large and small balls with appropriate skills. They work successfully on passing, receiving and controlling a football. They plan sequences of movement and understand why they become breathless. By Year 5 most pupils have developed good skills in dodging and marking opponents in team games. In dance they respond appropriately to the varied rhythms of different pieces of music. Some show clear beginnings and endings in dance patterns and an awareness of body shape when travelling. Most have a keen awareness of shape in gymnastic movements and balances, and in athletics many are able to coordinate vigorous use of the arms to increase the distance achieved in jumping. Pupils' good attainment is due to teachers giving sufficient emphasis and time to developing the quality of pupils' responses.

139 Pupils make sound progress in both key stages. This is particularly the case when the lesson organisation ensures high levels of activity. For example, in a lesson involving younger pupils they moved for almost 40 minutes in a variety of ways. The teacher stopped them to give clear guidance for improvement and sometimes adapted the tasks to achieve this without seriously interrupting the flow of activity.

140 Pupils' attitudes to PE are good. They enjoy lessons and listen carefully to teachers' explanations and guidance. Behaviour is good. Pupils work quietly and often silently in the hall which helps them to perform safely and concentrate on the quality of their work. They cooperate well in small groups, sharing the decision making and using equipment responsibly. They work well together in composing dances and have good sporting attitudes to winning and losing in games

141 In both key stages the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers have good general teaching skills and although their personal knowledge and understanding varies, they make good use of guidance in the school's documentation and plan in pairs or threes which facilitates the sharing of expertise. Where teachers have good subject knowledge they are able to assess pupils' responses perceptively, intervene appropriately and improve the progress made. Where they are less confident tasks are sometimes too closely directed and pupils are given insufficient opportunities to experiment within a movement idea before selecting and composing a gymnastic or dance sequence. This reduces activity levels and narrows the range of pupils' responses. Sometimes too long is spent observing the work of other pupils. Though valuable, this needs to be managed so that it does not interrupt the pace and level of physical intensity. The management of pupils' behaviour is good and often very good. Staff use a good range of positive strategies. They expect high standards and pupils respond well to the courteous manner in which they are treated.

142 The curriculum is broad and balanced. Staff plan blocks of lessons devoted to one activity that pupils have the chance to develop and build their skills over several weeks. Management of PE is good and the school has effective systems to enable teaching to be supported, although to further raise standards this should now include monitoring of teaching. The school has satisfactory indoor and good outdoor facilities for PE and staff run a sound range of extra-curricular clubs and activities, which are well attended. Activities include regular visits from professional sports people and residential visits.

143 The subject has improved significantly since the last inspection. There is a good programme of games, gymnastics is well planned and there are more extra-curricular activities. In particular there is an able and enthusiastic subject manager who has produced a good policy and scheme of work so that continuity and progression are now good.

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#### - **Swimming**

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

145 Overall, the standards of swimming attained by pupils when they leave the school at the end of Year 5 are in line with national expectations. Their technique in the three main swimming strokes is at least sound and often good and the majority of pupils achieve the minimum National Curriculum standard of being able to swim at least 25 metres. Pupils' attainment in water safety and personal survival skills is below expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school.

146 The quality of teaching is sound. Strengths of teaching include clear routines and organisation, the efficient use of time and the pace of lessons. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good and provide a secure and positive learning environment. Weaknesses in teaching derive from teachers' limited specialist knowledge and understanding of skill development in swimming. This means that some pupils are not enabled to progress at a faster rate because teachers' use of assessment to identify and correct faults in technique is not sufficiently developed. Appropriate provision is made for supporting weak and non-swimmers. Grouping by ability within a class enables teaching to meet more closely the needs of different groups of pupils and effective additional arrangements are made to include those pupils who are identified as having special educational needs in swimming.

147 Curriculum provision for swimming currently is unsatisfactory in that planning for progression and continuity is weak and does not focus sufficiently on intended gains in pupils' learning. Swimming is included within the overall provision for PE in Key Stage 2 but does not make any explicit contribution to other aspects of the whole school curriculum. Arrangements for the assessment and recording of pupils' progress in swimming are unsatisfactory. The organisation of the swimming programme is a strength and the school makes effective and efficient use of the time and resources available. Swimming provision has only recently been re-introduced following an extended closure of the pool.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

148 The inspection was conducted by a team of five inspectors who spent the equivalent of 24.5 days in school. Over 52 hours were spent observing lessons or parts of lessons. A sample of previous work from pupils in all year groups was analysed and the team listened to 36 pupils read formally and many more informally. Inspectors attended registration periods and all of the assemblies. The total time spent gathering first-hand evidence was nearly 79 hours.

149 Additionally, inspectors talked with all members of staff and learning support staff. A group of pupils from Year 5 was interviewed and inspectors talked informally with many pupils in their classes and at other times. Extra-curricular activities, playtimes and lunchtimes were observed, as was pupils' arrival and departure from school. Resources, displays and accommodation were examined. Completed questionnaires from 123 parents were analysed and 28 parents attended a meeting with the registered inspector before the inspection started. A wide range of documents and photographs provided by the school was scrutinised, including teachers' planning and pupils' records and reports.

## 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
R – Y5	300	3	49	13

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers (R-Y5)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.77

#### Education support staff (R-Y5)

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked each week	26.3
Average class size	27.3

### Financial data

Financial year:	1998/1999
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Total Income	432,325
Total Expenditure	443,433
Expenditure per pupil	1,572.46
Balance brought forward from previous year	38,914
Balance carried forward to next year	27,806

**PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	221
Number of questionnaires returned:	123

**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	21	68	6	1	4
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	29	63	2	3	3
The school handles complaints from parents well	12	46	31	8	3
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	16	63	9	9	3
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	15	66	11	7	1
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	22	59	12	7	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	18	46	28	7	1
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	17	62	10	7	4
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	31	54	11	4	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	26	56	13	4	1
My child(ren) like(s) school	50	41	7	1	1

**Other issues raised by parents**

No other significant issues raised. The parents’ meeting was generally positive and supportive of the school.