

INSPECTION REPORT

Greenfields Primary School
Shrewsbury

LEA area : 893 Shropshire

Unique Reference Number: 123446

Inspection No: 186727

Headteacher: Mr. K.J. Bryant

Reporting inspector : Ms. P. McNamara

OFSTED Inspector Number : 17226

Dates of inspection : 27th to 30th September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707735

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Type of school : | Infant and Junior |
| Type of control : | Community |
| Age range of pupils : | 4 to 11 years |
| Gender of pupils : | Mixed |
| School address : | Hemesworth Way Shrewsbury Shropshire SY1 2AH |
| Telephone number : | 01743 236397 |
| Appropriate authority : | The governing body at the above address |
| Name of chair of governors : | Sylvia Lyle |
| Date of previous inspection : | January 1996 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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|---|--|--|
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| Ms. A. Smith Lay Inspector | | Attitudes, behaviour and personal Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning |
| Mrs. P. Brittain | English Design and technology Information technology | Curriculum and assessment |
| Mrs. P. Houghton-Hill | Science Music Physical education | Provision for pupils with special educational Teaching |
| Mr. C. Minton | History Geography Religious education | Areas of learning for children under five Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural |

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The school has significantly raised attainment in English and mathematics across Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The standards in all other subjects are satisfactory across both key stages. Standards are good in science in Key Stage 1 and in geography in both key stages.
- The very effective teaching for the children who are under five is a strength.
- There is a high percentage of good and very good teaching within both key stages.
- The school is led very effectively by the headteacher.
- Children's spiritual, moral and social development is fostered well and their cultural development is a particular strength.
- There is a very positive ethos that encourages pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
- The pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress.
- The governing body effectively supports and promotes the school.
- There is a strong partnership between the school and parents and they value the work of the school.
- The school gives very good value for money.

Where the school has weaknesses

There are no significant weaknesses in any area of provision. However, in order to build on the significant improvements made in English and mathematics the school should now:

- I. further improve the teaching in science to ensure a better match of work to the ability range in each class;
- II. finalise and update schemes of work to support the raising of attainment in other subjects;
- III. extend the application of information technology across other subjects.

This is a good school with many strengths. The areas for development should form the basis of the governors' action plan. The plan will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has developed well since the last inspection. It has maintained the positive features outlined in the previous inspection report and all the issues raised have been addressed. The quality of teaching is more consistent across both key stages and there is a greater percentage of good and very good teaching. Planning and assessment procedures have been developed to more accurately build on pupils' prior learning and this has resulted in improved standards in English and mathematics. The roles and responsibilities of the governors, senior management team and curriculum co-ordinators have been clarified and strengthened. The headteacher has established a comprehensive system of monitoring curriculum planning and teaching across the school. Regular analysis of data has been undertaken by the headteacher and governors and, this is used very effectively to raise standards in the core subjects. The school has successfully exceeded the targets set for last year. The school is led very well by the headteacher and governors and with the support of the senior management team, is well-placed to make further improvement.

Standards in subjects

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

| Performance in | Compared with all schools | Compared with similar schools | |
|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| English | A | A | <i>Key well</i> |
| Mathematics | C | C | <i>A above average</i> |
| Science | D | D | <i>B average</i> |
| | | | <i>C below average</i> |
| | | | <i>D well</i> |
| | | | <i>E</i> |

These calculations are based on the average levels attained by all 11-year-old children in the school in July 1999, including pupils with a statement of special educational needs.

End-of-key-stage standard assessment test results for 1999 show that significant improvements have been made in English compared with results in 1998. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above in English is very high compared both with all schools nationally and with similar schools. In science the percentage attaining Level 4 and above is in line with the national average. Standards in mathematics have been maintained and remain above the average when compared with all schools nationally. In Key Stage 1 improvements have been made in mathematics, where the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 and above is very high when compared with all schools nationally. The good standards in reading, writing and science in Key Stage 1 have been maintained. More pupils achieved Level 3 and Level 5 in all aspects of English, mathematics and science at the end of the two key stages in 1999 than in the previous year. The work seen in English, mathematics and science during the inspection confirms the improvements made in these subjects, particularly in the key skills of literacy and numeracy. In all other subjects the work is of a standard expected for children of the same age except in geography where the standard of work is above average. Pupils' competence in information technology is average. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with that expected by the agreed syllabus. Overall the pupils who are under five make good progress. Most pupils of all abilities in Key Stages 1 and 2 make at least satisfactory, and often good, progress, particularly in English, mathematics, geography and in science at Key Stage 1.

Quality of teaching

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

*Insufficient teaching was observed to make a judgement about quality in religious education in Key Stage 1 and in design and technology, geography and physical education in both key stages. Teaching is at least satisfactory in 98.6 % of lessons. It is good in 35% of lessons and very good in 37%.

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 | Generally good both in classrooms and around the school. |
| Attendance | Good; above the national average. |
| Ethos* | A very positive ethos where pupils are respected and their high self-esteem has a positive impact on their confidence to tackle new learning. |
| Leadership and management | There is strong and effective leadership from the headteacher who has a clear educational vision linked to raising standards. The governing body actively supports the school. |
| Curriculum | Broad and balanced. Successful implementation of the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies. Effective use of the school grounds and surrounding areas to enhance learning. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully and leads to improved standards, particularly in English and mathematics. Some schemes of work are still to be reviewed and updated. Short-term planning in science needs further consideration |
| Pupils with special educational needs | Very good provision which is supported well by classroom and special support assistants. Children make good progress. |
| Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development | Good overall, with the cultural development of the children a particular strength. |
| Staffing, resources and accommodation | Good overall. Good deployment of non-teaching staff. The professional development of staff is good. The accommodation is bright and attractive and resources are used well to enhance learning. |
| Value for money | Very Good. |

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

The parents' views of the school

| What most parents like about the school | What some parents are not happy about |
|---|---|
| <p>IV. Parents feel very welcome and play an active role in the life of the school.</p> <p>V. Parents are kept well-informed about the progress that their child is making.</p> <p>VI. The teaching staff and headteacher are very accessible.</p> <p>VII. The children enjoy going to school.</p> <p>VIII. Information provided about induction procedures, special events and the work to be taught is good.</p> <p>IX. The reading diaries are an effective method of communication with the class teachers.</p> | <p>X. Whilst parents understand the system of insure about how these impact on the progress</p> |

Inspectors' judgements support the parents' positive views. There were no concerns expressed by a significant number of parents. The school is looking to develop the system of setting targets with individual children.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

There are no significant weaknesses in any area of provision. However, in order to build on the significant improvements made in English and mathematics the headteacher, staff and governors should now:

1. further improve the teaching in science to ensure a better match of work to the ability range in each class and to increase the level of challenge for the higher-attaining pupils;
(see paragraphs 8, 10, 19, 36, 41, 46, 135, 139, 140)
2. finalise and update schemes of work to support the raising of attainment in other subjects, including how questioning can be used to target children of different abilities;
(see paragraphs 37, 39, 41, 46, 153, 170, 171, 173, 180, 182, 203)
3. extend the application of information technology across other subjects.
(see paragraphs 20, 46, 135, 178, 182)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1 Greenfields Primary School opened in 1989 with four classrooms. Since then it has expanded and now has eleven classrooms including two demountable classrooms sited at the rear of the main building. A nursery class was established in 1998 which provides 24 part-time places for children from the locality. The school is situated in the Bagley ward on the outskirts of Shrewsbury in Shropshire.

2 The school admits pupils from the local area which comprises a mixture of private, housing association and council-owned property. 13% of the children are entitled to free meals which is below the national average. There are 45 children on the special educational needs register. Seven children currently hold statements of educational needs which is above the national average.

3 Almost all children attend the nursery or have playgroup education before attending the school. Assessment profiles carried out in the nursery indicate that pupils' attainment is broadly average. 17 pupils within the reception class were under the age of five at the time of the inspection.

4 The prospectus has clear and appropriate aims which make reference to the pupils' academic, social and personal development. The headteacher, staff and governors are committed to continue to raise standards in literacy and numeracy. The following targets have been identified for 1999/2000:

- review the teaching of mathematics following the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy;
- review the teaching of religious education;
- introduce a home-and-school agreement;
- review the policy for special educational needs;
- review the teaching of information technology;
- enhance the quality of structured play in the early years and Key Stage 1.

5 Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

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

| Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1999 | 23 | 24 | 47 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|----------|---------|-------------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | Boys | 23 | 20 | 23 |
| | Girls | 23 | 23 | 24 |
| | Total | 46 | 43 | 47 |
| Percentage at NC Level 2 or above | School | 98 (100) | 91 (98) | 100 (98) |
| | National | 82 (80) | 83 (81) | 87 (84) |

| Teacher Assessments | | Reading | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | Boys | 23 | 22 | 22 |
| | Girls | 23 | 24 | 23 |
| | Total | 46 | 46 | 45 |
| Percentage at NC Level 2 or above | School | 98 (100) | 98 (100) | 96 (100) |
| | National | 82 (80) | 86 (85) | 87 (86) |

Attainment at Key Stage 2

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

| Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1999 | 11 | 18 | 29 |

| National Curriculum Test Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above | Boys | 11 | 10 | 9 |
| | Girls | 16 | 12 | 14 |
| | Total | 27 | 22 | 23 |
| Percentage at NC Level 4 or above | School | 93 (63) | 76 (74) | 79 (55) |
| | National | 70 (65) | 69 (59) | 78 (69) |

| Teacher Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above | Boys | 11 | 11 | 11 |
| | Girls | 12 | 13 | 13 |
| | Total | 23 | 24 | 24 |
| Percentage at NC Level 4 or above | School | 79 (79) | 83 (82) | 83 (76) |
| | National | 68 (65) | 69 (65) | 75 (72) |

Attendance

| Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year | | % |
|--|---------------------------|-----|
| Authorised Absence | School | 4.8 |
| | National comparative data | 5.7 |
| Unauthorised Absence | School | 0.8 |
| | 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 | 35.2 |
| Satisfactory or better | 98.6 |
| Less than satisfactory | 1.4 |

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

6 The percentage of pupils in Key Stage 1 reaching Level 2 and above in the end-of-key-stage tests in 1998 shows that, in comparison with all schools nationally pupils' attainment in reading was very high, and well above the national average for writing and mathematics. When compared with schools with similar characteristics attainment in reading and mathematics was very high and writing was well above the national average. In science, which is evaluated by teacher assessment, pupils' attainment was very high when compared both with all schools nationally and with similar schools.

7 The percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 was well above the national average in reading, below average in writing and science and well below the national average in mathematics.

8 The percentage of pupils in Key Stage 2 reaching Level 4 and above in the end-of-key-stage tests in 1998 shows that, in comparison with all schools nationally, pupils' attainment in English was close to the national average, was above average in mathematics and well below average in science. When compared with schools with similar characteristics attainment in English was below average, well below average in science and well above average in mathematics.

9 The percentage of pupils attaining Level 5 was above the national average in English, and close to the national average in mathematics and science.

10 The results of the 1999 end-of-key-stage tests indicate improvements in attainment across both key stages. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 and above is well above the national average in reading, above average in writing and science and very high in mathematics when compared both with all schools nationally and with similar schools. In Key Stage 2 the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above, when compared to all schools nationally and with similar schools, is well above the national average in English and close to the national average in science. In mathematics attainment is above the national average when compared with all schools nationally and close to the average for schools that are similar.

11 More pupils achieved at Levels 3 and 5 in all aspects of English, mathematics and science at the end of the two key stages in the 1999 end-of-key-stage tests than in the previous year.

12 An analysis of end-of-key-stage data from the last five years, undertaken by the headteacher and governors, shows that there has been significant improvements in pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics in Key Stage 1 and in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2. The above-average standards in science and writing in Key Stage 1 have been maintained.

13 There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Progress in English, mathematics and science is monitored by age and gender and has previously resulted in the early identification of under-achieving boys and summer-born children who have subsequently received effective, targeted support.

14 Attainment on entry to the nursery represents the full range of abilities, with a large percentage of children attaining average standards of literacy and numeracy. They experience a broad and balanced programme of activities across all areas of learning. Progress is good in all aspects of learning. By the time they reach compulsory school age, overall attainment is above average in aspects of literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world and average in all other areas of learning.

15 The school set targets for 1999 for the end of Key Stage 2 and these have been exceeded in

English, mathematics and science. Challenging targets have been set for 2000.

16 Findings from the inspection indicate that by the end of Key Stage 1 overall attainment in reading, writing and speaking and listening is above average, and children of all abilities make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 2 overall attainment in English is above average and children make good progress in all aspects of the subject. The National Literacy Strategy has been adopted by the school and is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress in both key stages. Plenaries are used effectively to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills and to develop their understanding and knowledge of language. Handwriting and spelling are above average and the presentation of pupils' work is generally good.

17 Attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 in mathematics is above average and the pupils make good progress. This good progress continues in Key Stage 2 and by Year 6 children's attainment is above average. Children of all abilities make good progress in mathematics. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is a significant factor in the consistent quality of the teaching and is also having a positive impact on pupils' confidence and accuracy when using a range of strategies to solve problems.

18 Opportunities for consolidating literacy and numeracy skills are evident in history, where children demonstrate empathy in written stories, and in science and geography, where data are recorded in a range of charts, tables and graphs.

19 Attainment in science by the end of Key Stage 1 is good and pupils make good progress. Progress within Key Stage 2 is satisfactory and this results in average attainment by the end of the key stage. The lack of a scheme of work, with objectives clearly identified for each year group to support the teaching in all classes, means that progress is variable, particularly in the experimental and investigative element of science. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to consolidate their learning of scientific concepts in practical activities across both key stages.

20 Information technology has an appropriate focus, and attainment is average by the end of the key stages. Progress is satisfactory overall but children need more opportunities to apply their capabilities across other subjects. In religious education pupils' attainment is in line with the requirements of the agreed syllabus and they make satisfactory progress.

21 In geography pupils' attainment in both key stages is above that expected for children of the same age and pupils make good progress. In all other subjects standards are in line with those expected for children of the same age and progress is satisfactory. Insufficient physical education was observed during the inspection for an overall judgement to be made about the standards achieved by the end of each key stage, but the progress made by the children across both key stages is good.

22 Pupils on the special educational needs register make good progress. They are supported well by class teachers and classroom and special support assistants.

23 The school has made significant improvements in attainment in English and mathematics and has exceeded the targets set for 1999. The headteacher and governors have accurately identified the need to support pupils' learning and this is reflected in the hours of support assistant time funded by the school. This is contributing to the improvements being made. The governors have set challenging targets for 2000 and the school is well-placed to achieve them.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

24 The school is a caring and well-ordered community. The children who are under five are developing positive attitudes to their work and are keen to learn. The personal development of these youngest pupils is very good and structured play activities encourage them to work in a collaborative

manner. For example, reception and Year 1 children considered their class rules and in the discussion which followed voiced their understanding of the value of co-operative work and play.

25 Pupils across all year groups show good attitudes to their learning. They are attentive, able to concentrate and persevere with their work. During a history lesson in Key Stage 1, pupils applied themselves very well and showed great interest and perseverance in using a range of sources to appreciate a sense of the chronology involved.

26 The school seeks to foster an ethos of tolerance. Relationships are good and characterised by respect for others. Pupils frequently help each other and co-operate well, for example in a design and technology lesson on circuits in Years 5 and 6. In general, pupils are eager to answer questions and to share their explanations with their peers. Plenary sessions at the end of lessons are handled skilfully by teachers and serve to promote oracy skills.

27 Overall, children's behaviour is good in the classroom, around school and in the playground. Pupils understand the behaviour expected. They are courteous and friendly and show consideration for others.

28 Throughout the school there are good examples of children taking responsibility. In the nursery they are encouraged to look after books and toys, putting them away carefully. Pupils continue to be involved in daily routines and are given increasing responsibility as they progress through the school. Older pupils help to care for the youngest in their first weeks at school. They act as librarians and register monitors and help with various activities.

Attendance

29 Attendance continues to be good, with figures above the national average. There are very few persistent, unexplained or unauthorised absences.

30 Pupils arrive punctually for the beginning of school. At this time parents are able to speak with teachers, settle younger children and help with a range of early-morning activities. These arrangements are valued by parents and contribute to a purposeful start to the school day. Statutory requirements for the completion of registers are met.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

31 The teaching is satisfactory or better in over 98% of lessons. It is very good in 35% and good in 37%. Only one lesson observed was of unsatisfactory quality. Good and very good teaching occurs in all subjects and key stages. The high percentage of good and very good teaching is a strength and has increased since the last inspection.

32 Teaching in the nursery is consistently very good and is also a significant strength. There is an effective balance between the direct teaching of new skills and planned opportunities for independent structured play. There are daily opportunities for numeracy and literacy activities and an appropriate focus on the personal and social development of the pupils. The staff in the nursery and reception class plan well together. This ensures continuity and progression and that pupils' progress is tracked carefully.

33 The teaching of English through the literacy strategy ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. There is thorough and effective planning, time is well-used in the lessons and a range of challenging tasks is provided for the independent activities. There is good use of grammatical terminology. Where the teaching is satisfactory it is because the lessons lose pace when the pupils

prepare for group activities.

34 The numeracy strategy is used well throughout the school and the teaching is very good overall. Prior learning is used very well to match tasks to the wide ability range in each class, questioning is effectively directed to different groups of children and demonstration is used well to develop knowledge and understanding in a range of skills. In the few satisfactory lessons, questioning was used less effectively, resulting in some lack of challenge, and time was not always used well.

35 The teaching of science is good overall and is never less than satisfactory. Where the teaching is good, the learning objectives and tasks are explained clearly to the children and questioning is clear. Where appropriate, the range of carefully planned activities is managed well.

36 In the satisfactory teaching, activities are not matched carefully to prior attainment and there is insufficient challenge within the tasks, leading to a lack of challenge for the higher-attaining pupils.

37 In other subjects the teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good, with one unsatisfactory lesson observed in information technology owing to a lack of challenge for some of the children and inappropriate behaviour going unchecked.

38 A feature of the very good teaching is the very effective questioning which provides further challenge and takes the pupils' learning forward, for example in a history lesson in Year 1 where the teacher posed further questions for pupils to extend their initial answers and in a physical education lesson in Year 3 where timely interventions improved the sequence of movements. The effective teaching also makes very good use of resources to enrich the pupils' learning and focuses on specific concepts. For example, in a history lesson in upper Key Stage 2 children developed historical skills and concepts when undertaking a simulated archaeological dig. Learning objectives and tasks are explained effectively, classroom management is very good and lessons are conducted at an appropriate pace. The good teaching contains many elements of the very good teaching, but questioning is not used so effectively to extend various ability groups or individuals. Subject knowledge is generally good for all subjects.

39 Where the teaching is satisfactory, the children sometimes lose concentration because the pace is too slow. Pace is lost when pupils move inappropriately from whole-class to group activities. There is also insufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils, for example in some history lessons where questions and activities are too limiting.

40 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils are supported well by teachers and classroom assistants. The classroom assistants liaise very effectively with the teachers so that the pupils' learning is carefully targeted and related to both the children's needs and the overall objectives of lessons.

41 The teachers' curriculum planning has improved since the last inspection. Clear learning objectives are identified for long, medium and short-term planning and these are then shared with the pupils. Planning for literacy and numeracy is very good. The current planning for science does not differentiate sufficiently for children of varied abilities within the class. In history and geography and other foundation subjects, good and very good teaching is able to build on and develop a single learning objective recorded in the planning, but this development does not occur when the teaching is satisfactory.

42 Regular assessments are used effectively in English and mathematics and marking is carried out conscientiously. This could be developed further to include references to learning objectives and to specific targets.

43 Homework is set across both key stages and focuses mainly on literacy and numeracy. More

demanding tasks are set as pupils move through the school. The home-and-school reading diaries are used well to develop specific skills.

The curriculum and assessment

Curriculum

44 The curriculum for the children who are under five is planned according to the desirable outcomes for children's learning and is linked appropriately to the National Curriculum. There is clear progression and continuity for the children from the nursery to the reception year. A comprehensive induction programme for children entering both the nursery and the reception class ensures that they settle quickly. Detailed assessments of the children's attainment in literacy, speaking and listening, number and social skills are carried out when children enter the nursery and again as part of a baseline profile undertaken in the reception class. These enable the children's needs to be met effectively.

45 The curriculum in both key stages is broad and balanced. Issues raised in the previous inspection concerning a balanced curriculum have been addressed well. Current schemes of work help to ensure that the teaching addresses all the programmes of study with an appropriate emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge. Subjects are planned and taught separately or as part of thematic work. There is an agreed allocation of time for the teaching of all subjects of the National Curriculum and most are taught on a weekly basis. Some subjects are blocked for parts of a term. There is some specialist teaching in Key Stage 2 when teachers take a lead in information technology or a foundation subject and teach this subject to classes other than their own. All classes set time aside daily for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. During the inspection all teachers were observed teaching literacy and numeracy.

46 There are policies for religious education, design and technology, music, information technology, physical education and art and schemes of work for English, mathematics, spelling, handwriting, music, physical education, art and information technology. In the main these offer helpful guidance for teachers. The school has adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the existing schemes of work for English and mathematics have been amended recently in the light of this. Where there are no individual schemes of work the long-term planner is used. In order to raise standards further and enhance continuity and progression schemes of work should be further developed to clarify learning objectives for each year group where these are unclear. Schemes of work for science, design and technology and information technology have been identified for review and are to be updated.

47 The curriculum planning clearly takes account of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Joint planning is in place to ensure balance and consistency in what is to be taught. Parents are informed about what is to be taught each term. There is a homework policy, which indicates clearly what is expected.

48 All children have equal access to the curriculum and children with special educational needs are fully integrated into all aspects of the life of the school. There are currently forty-five children on the school's register of special educational needs, with seven having an individual statement of educational needs. Provision for these children is very good. They receive effective support from the special educational needs co-ordinator, visiting specialist teachers, additional support staff and their class teachers. Parents are actively involved in their children's learning through regular meetings with the staff. Children included on the special educational needs register have very detailed individual education plans which are used well by class teachers to raise attainment further. The policy for special educational needs complies fully with the requirements of the code of practice.

49 The policy for personal, social and health education includes provision for drugs awareness education which involves the local police working with the pupils in Year 6. Sex education is taught in Years 5 and 6. Opportunities to explore issues relating to equal opportunities and multicultural awareness are provided in cross-curricular work and religious education lessons and this is a very positive feature.

50 The curriculum is enhanced through a range of visits and visitors to the school. These include visits to Arthog, The Stiperstones and other sites of interest including museums such as Blists Hill. Children in Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to attend residential visits which is much appreciated by parents and children. Visitors include theatre companies, puppeteers and an Indian visitor and they broaden the children's cultural experiences. A very good range of extra-curricular activities is provided for the children from Year 2 to Year 6. Clubs are run at lunchtimes and after school by members of staff, supported by parent helpers. These activities include football, netball, athletics, the arts, drama, book club, recorders and a choir. Children take part in inter-school sporting competitions. Approximately one hundred children participate in these activities.

· *Assessment*
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51 The need to develop and implement a system of regular assessment and recording of pupils' attainment to inform planning and enhance progression was highlighted as a key issue in the previous inspection. The assessment policy is currently under review but procedures are in place which clearly identify the various types of assessment and the recording of the pupils' progress to be undertaken. Assessments focus mainly on the core subjects, in particular the children's attainment in English and mathematics and they inform curriculum planning in both key stages. This has contributed to significantly improved levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy.

52 Initial assessments are carried out when the children start in the nursery and these are used to identify areas of need. Baseline assessments, using the local education authority's scheme, are carried out in the reception class. Assessments are detailed and are used effectively to ensure continuity and progression in the children's learning.

53 In Key Stages 1 and 2 assessments are carried out regularly by the teachers. The outcomes of these assessments, which are monitored by the headteacher and senior management team, identify the next steps to be learned and help to inform future planning in English and mathematics. Some assessments are used to identify individual targets but this is at an early stage of development. There has been a detailed analysis of key stage SATs data and non-statutory data by the headteacher and class teachers. This is used to focus on areas of need for individual children and to set targets for attainment in all year groups and to inform the planning and the teaching. This process has contributed significantly towards the upward trend in attainment in mathematics, science and English. Weekly evaluations are also used to inform future curriculum planning.

54 Annual reports to parents meet statutory requirements. Parents are invited into school to discuss their child's report, and formal open evenings are held three times a year. Parents are also encouraged to visit the school to discuss their children's progress at any time. Parents of children who are on the special educational needs register are fully involved in regular reviews of progress and, when necessary, in the statementing process.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

55 Provision for the children's spiritual, moral and social development is good. Provision for cultural development is very good. These aspects make a positive contribution to the school's ethos.

Spiritual development

56 Acts of collective worship are led well and fulfil statutory requirements. Opportunities are provided for children to pray, reflect, sing, celebrate achievements and consider the values promoted by the school. Music is used appropriately to foster a sense of occasion and reflection. Worship follows a series of planned themes.

57 The children are provided with opportunities for self-reflection through an appropriate range of

subject areas, including English, history, art and religious education. For example, stories are used well to encourage children to reflect on the actions of characters. The good relationships evident in classes mean that pupils and staff are able to discuss their opinions and views freely and confidently. The children show sensitivity and maturity when asked to reflect on the feelings, values and beliefs of others. For example, in a lower Key Stage 2 religious education lesson, the children confidently discussed the qualities of a friend, appreciating the importance of trust.

Moral development

58 The provision for the children's moral development is good. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong through acts of collective worship, a structured personal and social education programme and by example. The vast majority of children behave well because they know that it is the right thing to do. A whole-school approach is underpinned by a helpful behaviour policy. The effectiveness of the school's approach to discipline ensures that it is a safe, orderly and secure learning environment. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect throughout the school. The older children are involved in an anti-drugs programme led by the local police.

· *Social development*

59 There are appropriately high expectations of the children's social behaviour. The school is a very friendly and welcoming community where all are respected and valued. The emphasis placed on the development of pupils' high self-esteem has a positive impact on their confidence in tackling new learning. Residential visits and regular opportunities for fieldwork encourage the children to work together in a co-operative and collaborative manner. The use of structured play activities in the early years curriculum contributes very effectively to the development of the children's social skills. The children establish positive relationships with both adults and each other. They are courteous and polite. An ethos of caring and responsibility is fostered effectively through the children's involvement in the community. Representatives from the local community are invited into school, and the choir visits the local senior citizens' home. The children take part in charitable fund-raising activities, including the raising of money for a local hospice.

Cultural development

60 Since the previous inspection the school has significantly extended provision for the pupils' cultural development. Visiting artists, authors, poets and musicians are invited to work with the children on a range of projects. The children have opportunities to experience music, art and dance from a wide range of cultures. Cultural diversity is promoted effectively across a range of curriculum areas including English, history, music, art and geography. A recent whole-school arts week focused on art techniques from an extensive range of cultures, including aboriginal painting, Indian rangoli artwork, African masks and American Indian dream-catchers. There are regular visits to museums and art galleries. Provision for the children's cultural development is very good.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

61 The school is a safe, secure and caring environment in which the headteacher and staff know their pupils very well and are responsive to their needs. Academic progress and personal development are monitored carefully. The school has a good personal and social education programme. This is designed to encourage and promote self-esteem, independence and confidence in pupils, together with respect and care for others.

62 A detailed behaviour management programme has been in place for several years and this has been reviewed in the last year. The policy includes an anti-bullying statement and there are clear procedures for dealing with any issues of bullying or bad behaviour. Individual classes also discuss and agree their own rules.

63 The school has clear policies and procedures to ensure the safety and protection of pupils. There is a named child protection officer, and appropriate procedures have been adopted and are known by all staff. Effective routines are in place relating to health and safety, including first aid provision, equipment checks and fire drills. The school liaises well with external specialists to ensure very good provision for children with special educational needs.

64 Registers are taken promptly and efficiently. Unexplained patterns of absence are fully investigated and, if necessary, the educational welfare officer is involved. In response to an issue in the last inspection report, the school now complies fully with the statutory requirements for registration.

65 Parents and pupils have access to the information necessary to aid their choice of secondary school and the ensuing transfer arrangements are thorough and well-established. In preparation for this important change, the school works hard to prepare pupils through activities such as the residential visit to Arthog. Last year the school also took part in a personal and social education programme designed to ease the transfer between the primary and secondary sectors.

Partnership with parents and the community

66 The school has established a very strong partnership with parents, many of whom stay a few minutes with their children or help with early-morning activities at the start of the school day. The reading diaries used throughout the school also provide a good point of informal contact between parents and teachers. A number of parents help on a regular basis with activities such as reading, art and computing. Parents very much value their ready and easy access to members of staff, including the headteacher.

67 Very good information is provided in the prospectus and a range of detailed and helpful letters. Parents in particular value the newsletters that describe forthcoming themes to be studied. The school also invites parents to make use of its resources to support their children in these studies. Useful meetings are held to inform parents of issues such as class organisation, home-and-school agreements and new curriculum initiatives. Parents of children new to the nursery and reception classes are invited to sessions designed to explain the approach to learning in the early years. Parents are kept well-informed about their children's progress through an annual written report and consultations each term which are attended well. Good efforts are made to include and inform parents of the progress made by pupils with special educational needs.

68 An active parent-and-school association contributes fully to the life of the school. Events are well-supported and raise funds which are put to good use. The association, through its committee members, also plays a meaningful role in other aspects of the school and is involved with the production of the home-and-school agreement.

69 Links with the community support aspects of the pupils' personal and social development and the range of good residential visits also contributes effectively. Theatre and musical activities extend the range of cultural experiences offered. Regular fund-raising for children's charities serves to encourage pupils' knowledge and understanding of wider issues.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

70 The overall leadership of the school is very good. The headteacher provides strong and positive leadership which gives clear direction to the work of the school. Clear and appropriate aims have been produced and these are met well, particularly those relating to educational achievement. The

development of the school is guided by a detailed school development plan which has, as its core, the raising of standards in literacy and numeracy. Since the previous inspection appropriate curriculum and management targets have been identified in school development plans. Strategies have been put in place which have resulted in overall improvements in management, the quality of teaching and pupil achievement.

71 The headteacher leads a team of staff who are successful in their commitment to raising standards. In response to the previous inspection report the staffing structure has been re-organised to further support the school's commitment to the raising of standards. Classes have been grouped into year teams and year co-ordinators appointed. These co-ordinators lead and support planning and curriculum development within the year groups. Together with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, they form an effective senior management team.

72 All key issues highlighted in the previous inspection report have been addressed well. Governors have greater involvement in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school, planning and assessment procedures have been developed and the staffing structure reorganised into an effective year-group system. These have contributed to the improvements in both the quality of education provided and standards achieved across both key stages.

73 The headteacher has established a comprehensive system of monitoring and evaluating both the quality of teaching and standards achieved by pupils. Planning is monitored weekly, and classroom practice on a regular basis, with advice and support offered where necessary. This monitoring, together with the very thorough and systematic analysis of data undertaken by the headteacher, senior management team and governors, has been the major factor in the significant improvement in standards achieved in English, mathematics and science over the past five years.

74 Curriculum co-ordinators have individual job descriptions which clearly link specific tasks and timescales to priorities in the school development plan. Co-ordinators undertake their role with professionalism, energy and enthusiasm and take a leading role in whole-school improvement. The professional development of staff is given a high priority by both the headteacher and governors and appraisal is seen as an important part of this development. A system of shadow co-ordinators to support the lead co-ordinator for some curricular areas has been established to extend subject expertise and could be extended to all subjects.

75 Individual schemes of work and policies have been produced for most areas of the curriculum. There is a system in place to review policies. The policies and schemes are generally detailed and structured and support teachers with planning within classes and across year groups. The National Literacy Strategy is used as the core scheme of work for English and the National Numeracy Strategy has been adopted as the core scheme for the teaching of mathematics across the school. These frameworks contribute towards the effective planning and consistency in the quality of teaching across all year groups.

76 The school development plan for 1999 and 2000 identifies appropriate priorities, lead personnel, timescales, costs and success criteria. Targets clearly identify the school's commitment to raising standards and sustaining the upward trends in attainment in English, mathematics and science. The inclusion of target-setting, the detailed analysis of baseline assessments, end-of-key-stage SAT results and of additional tests across all classes ensures that progress is monitored effectively. Governors and staff are actively involved in school development planning and the analysis of data.

77 Issues highlighted in the previous inspection report regarding the governing body not discharging its legal responsibilities relating to aspects of the curriculum, and in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school have been addressed effectively. Governors hold an additional meeting each term to discuss curriculum issues and regularly visit the school to observe and monitor planning. All legal requirements are in place with regard to the curriculum. There is an effective

committee structure with clear terms of reference. Governors are able to see examples of children's work during curriculum meetings and look at SAT papers and data and the headteacher's termly report to monitor standards and the progress being made. Governors have set challenging targets for the end of Key Stage 2 in the year 2000 in English and mathematics. Targets set for 1999 were exceeded in both English and mathematics. The governors take their responsibilities seriously and meet them very well.

78 There is very good provision for children with special educational needs, who are supported effectively by class teachers, special support assistants and classroom assistants. This effective support has resulted in some children moving down stages on the school's special needs register. The school has a clear commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils. Children who hold a statement of educational needs have full access to the curriculum through a system of structured support from both the school's staff and visiting specialist teachers. Progress within subjects is monitored by age and gender and this has resulted in the past in the early identification of under-achieving boys and summer-born children who have benefited from targeted support.

79 The office staff provide calm, effective and efficient support to the headteacher and help to ensure that the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

80 The school is regarded very well by parents. The vast majority are very positive about its work and appreciate the commitment of the staff and headteacher. They appreciate the way in which any concerns brought to the attention of the headteacher are handled. The information provided for parents about day-to-day organisational and pastoral issues, induction procedures, special events and the work to be taught during the coming year is good. Parents particularly like the reading diaries which children bring home as an effective method of communication with the teachers. Whilst parents understand the system of setting specific targets for individual children, some are unsure about how this impacts on the progress being made by their child, and this needs to be developed further.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

Staffing

81 The school has an experienced teaching staff who are appropriately qualified and well-deployed. All teachers have curricular responsibilities and have received in-service training related to their areas of responsibility. The role of curriculum co-ordinators has been developed and strengthened and includes elements of monitoring and review. Appraisal arrangements have been established, and detailed and specific job descriptions exist which include agreed targets for the year ahead.

82 In recent years a number of new members of staff have been appointed, some recently qualified. There are good induction arrangements to support these teachers.

83 There are very good arrangements for the professional development of all teaching and support staff. The focus for professional development reflects the priorities of the school. Teachers attending courses report back at staff meetings. Governor training also takes place to meet new developments in education and existing responsibilities.

84 Support assistants are trained well and make a good contribution to the pupils' learning. They are deployed carefully to help in all classes during the literacy hour and to support children with special educational needs. Lunch-time supervisors work hard to ensure that the school runs smoothly for the benefit of the children. Administrative staff make an efficient and helpful contribution to the daily life of the school.

Accommodation

85 The accommodation is good and used well. It is in a good state of repair and decoration, and is

cleaned well. Wide passages provide useful space for practical and small-group activities. Two demountables have spacious classrooms and cloakroom areas and are fitted with sinks. A new nursery has been built recently and this provides an excellent base for the youngest children. There is an attractive and spacious library, centrally situated, with inviting displays of books and art. The school has adapted a small room to aid the specialist teaching of children with hearing impairments.

86 The school is situated in pleasant grounds which are used to support the curriculum. The children use these facilities to undertake geographical and environmental studies and games lessons. The facilities include an outdoor adventure play area which is very popular with the children.

• *Resources*

87 Resources for learning are satisfactory or good in all subjects, and are managed and maintained well. Since the last inspection the school has established a computer suite with sufficient information technology hardware for whole-classes to use the suite. Information technology equipment in classrooms is older and of less benefit.

88 Generally the school has a good supply of books which are in good condition. In particular there is a wide and interesting range of fiction. Reference books are supplemented by a wide range of good-quality material from the library loan service. The loan service also offers an extensive range of artefacts to support the curriculum, particularly history.

89 Good use is made of learning resources beyond the school site with a wide range of educational visits to support the work in science, geography and history. Residential visits are also organised and these benefit the personal and social development of the pupils.

• **The efficiency of the school**

90 Financial planning is thorough. It is linked clearly to the detailed school development plan which accurately identifies, prioritises and costs both curricular and non-curricular targets for improvement. The governors' finance committee has a clear priority to link spending decisions to the raising of standards in numeracy and literacy and they meet this priority well. Governors have addressed the need to monitor the cost-effectiveness of the school in relation to the standards achieved by meeting regularly to improve their understanding of curriculum matters. They use this increased knowledge, along with their involvement in analysing end-of-key-stage SAT results, to establish success criteria to monitor the progress of targets within the school development plan.

91 The budget is managed well by the headteacher and finance committee. The day-to day control of income and expenditure is delegated to the headteacher and administrative assistants. Spending is monitored regularly by the finance committee. Governors set spending levels for the headteacher and these are highlighted within the terms of reference for the finance committee. Items highlighted during the last audit report have been addressed fully.

92 The allocation of income per pupil is just within the lower quartile for all schools nationally. In setting the budget for 1999-2000 the governors have given priority to maintaining the existing structure of eleven classes and the level of classroom assistant hours to support learning within literacy lessons across all classes. A small proportion of the budget has been retained for contingencies.

93 Subject co-ordinators manage modest budgets which are used effectively to focus on specific areas identified for development. There have been no recent major purchases. Specific training grants are used appropriately to support the professional development of all staff and governors in accordance with the priorities identified in the school development plan. Funds raised by parents have been used to purchase computer systems for the recently-established computer suite and equipment for the nursery.

94 The budget for special educational needs is spent well and contributes towards the good progress made by many of the children with statements of educational needs and those requiring support with their learning.

95 The accommodation is organised well and good use is made of available space. Resources are generally used effectively to enhance the children's learning.

96 Taking into account the children's attainment on entry, the good rates of progress for the majority of children, especially in literacy and numeracy, the very positive ethos, the quality of the provision for the early years and the significant levels of good and very good teaching, the school now gives very good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

· Areas of learning for children under five

97 At the time of the inspection there were twenty-two children in the nursery. In the reception class there were seventeen children under five years of age and six Year 1 pupils.

98 Overall provision for the children under five in both the nursery and reception class is very good. The quality of teaching of this age group is a strength, ranging from good to very good. In the main it is very good. The curriculum is planned very well. All areas of learning are taught appropriately. The staff in the nursery and reception class plan activities well together. This ensures that progression and continuity is maintained effectively. Teachers employ a very good balance of direct teaching, to introduce and develop specific skills, and independent structured play activities. For example, children explored the concept of full and empty by playing with wheeled toys in a sand tray. Tasks provided for the children are consistently of a high standard. They are challenging and matched well to pupils' abilities. This represents a significant improvement from the findings of the previous inspection.

99 The high priority given to oracy and purposeful play contributes positively to the standards attained in all areas of learning, particularly in the children's personal development and in literacy and numeracy. For example, the use of a game in the reception class effectively encouraged the children to use vocabulary associated with shape. The children are given daily opportunities to develop numeracy and literacy skills. For example, children use planning books to record their choices during independent work. Registration is used very effectively to consolidate numeracy skills, as the children count those present and enter the total on a chart. Equal access is provided for all children, and very good use is made of good-quality resources. Those children with special educational needs make good progress.

100 From the beginning of the term after children become four, they have access to nursery provision each morning. Children can spend up to two terms in this setting. At the start of the term in which they become five the children move into the reception class. Nursery provision has been established for only three terms. The school is to be commended for the very positive and effective manner in which this new provision has been introduced. A lot has been achieved in a short space of time.

101 Baseline assessments are administered during the children's first half-term in the reception class. Nursery profile records are used effectively to inform this process. Assessment data show that the school's intake reflects a broad range of ability, with the majority demonstrating average levels of attainment. High expectations and effective teaching result in the majority of children making good progress in all areas of learning. Consequently, by the time the children reach statutory school age, a significant number exceed national expectations in their speaking and listening skills and in aspects of

their knowledge and understanding of the world. In all other areas of learning the majority of children demonstrate average levels of attainment.

Personal and social development

102 The personal and social development of the children is very good. The children demonstrate enjoyment, enthusiasm and confidence in their learning. The vast majority play and work well together. They establish positive relationships with adults and their peers. The teachers and support staff work consistently and diligently to foster a sense of fairness and self-discipline in the children. For example, structured games are used well to introduce the importance of rules. The children take responsibility for organising, selecting and tidying their resources. They are given daily opportunities to plan their activities, make suitable choices and express opinions whilst reviewing their work. The vast majority share resources well, concentrate and persevere with their tasks. The children are introduced to an appropriate range of cultural and religious experiences through the use of stories and artefacts. Strong emphasis is given to the importance of caring about the needs and feelings of others. The vast majority demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning. They are confident and keen to explore and apply themselves to tasks.

Language and literacy

103 By the time the children reach statutory school age many demonstrate speaking and listening skills which exceed those expected for their age. Direct teaching, effective questioning and structured play opportunities are used effectively to focus on the development of these skills. The vast majority listen attentively, offer opinions and give simple explanations when challenged. Stories are used well to set a context for role-play activities to develop the children's imaginative and expressive vocabulary. The children demonstrate enjoyment and interest in books. The youngest children understand that print carries meaning. They use picture clues well. Some older children can read a range of simple words and are beginning to use their knowledge of letter sounds independently when tackling unfamiliar words. They can locate their name card independently, and recognise matching letters in each other's names. For the youngest children in the nursery writing is at a very early stage. The older children make good attempts at forming letters and writing words. Good provision is made for the children to practise their writing in purposeful contexts.

· *Mathematics*

104 A wide range of challenging activities is used in both the nursery and reception class to develop the children's mathematical knowledge and understanding. Games and whole-class teaching time are used effectively to extend children's use of mathematical vocabulary. For example, a game was used well in the reception class to encourage the children to use words such as square, circle and triangle. The youngest children are learning to recognise and sequence numbers to ten. Good use is made of songs and rhymes to consolidate their understanding of number. They are encouraged to count together on a daily basis. Most are able to count numbers up to ten accurately. Some are able to undertake simple number problems which involve addition and subtraction, for example by adding the number of boys to the number of girls present during registration. They can sort a set of objects by colour or size.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

105 Books, artefacts, visits and visitors are used very well to extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Attractive interactive displays motivate and enhance the children's learning environment. Very good use is made of resources to promote progress. For example, in a geography lesson, the use made of an old aerial photograph of the school, followed by a walk around the school site, effectively supported pupils in identifying changes in their environment. They are introduced to other lands and cultures through art and music. For example, they took part in a Calypso Carnival which included singing and dancing. Children are introduced to the past through stories, songs and

nursery rhymes. They are able to select and explore materials, question and use observational skills when carrying out simple investigations. For example, in a science lesson the children made simple predictions about what would happen when water was added to porridge oats. They are provided with opportunities to make models using various materials and construction kits.

Physical development

106 The teachers provide the children with a wide range of activities to develop both fine and gross motor skills. For example, there are opportunities to use the hall for gymnastics, games and dance. The youngest children are provided with regular opportunities to take part in physical education outside. The children use paintbrushes, scissors and small apparatus with care when undertaking activities. They demonstrate increasing control in their movements. They are able to follow simple instructions when using equipment.

Creative development

107 A wide range of resources is used effectively. Many opportunities are provided for the children to experiment and express themselves through painting, printing, drawing, model-making, singing and the playing of untuned musical instruments. Children further develop their creativity through stories, poetry and imaginative play. They show enthusiasm and enjoyment when singing together and listening to music. There are good opportunities for children to develop their imaginations by responding to stories and through role-play.

Induction arrangements are very good. Prior to the inspection parents commented very positively about the effective links established between the nursery and reception class. Home visits are made by the early years co-ordinator and the nursery nurse before the children begin in the nursery. The children are invited to spend a whole day, a morning and an afternoon session in the reception class prior to their starting full-time education. A termly induction meeting is held for the parents of such children. These procedures ensure that the transition from nursery to reception is a positive experience. Although a policy statement has been written, the co-ordinator appreciates the importance of working with staff and governors on the formulation of an early years curriculum policy.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

109 By the end of Key Stage 1 the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 and above in reading in 1998 was very high in comparison with the national average with those attaining Level 3 being well above the national average. In writing the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 and above was well above the national average but the percentage of pupils reaching Level 3 was well below in comparison with the national average. In 1999 the vast majority of pupils attained the national, age-related expectations of Level 2 and above in both reading and writing with an improvement in the percentage of children attaining Level 3.

110 Reading has a high profile and children show good understanding of the texts that they read. In Year 1 many pupils are already independent writers and by the end of Year 2 most pupils are able to use capital letters and full stops accurately in independent writing. There are clear strategies for spelling in use which help young children to write confidently. They use appropriate and interesting vocabulary when they write in a range of forms including accounts, letters, poetry and imaginative writing. Valuable opportunities are provided for pupils to talk about their experiences and to listen to each other, for example during story times and religious education lessons.

111 By the end of Key Stage 2 the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above in English in

1998 was close to the national average and the percentage of pupils reaching Level 5 was above the national average. 1999 results show significant improvements, with a very high percentage of children reaching Level 4 and above when compared with all schools nationally. The majority of pupils in Years 5 and 6 currently display confidence as readers and develop a good level of fluency and accuracy. Pupils are able to discuss their favourite authors and books. Text and sentence-level work based on selected texts further enhances children's attainment in reading by focusing on punctuation, expression and inference of meaning. The quiet reading time planned into the beginning of each afternoon or during morning sessions provides opportunities for the children to study or enjoy texts in a sustained manner in groups or on an individual basis using both fiction and non-fiction texts. Pupils have well-developed dictionary and thesaurus skills. Older children are taught study and research skills and know how to locate reference books using the library system. Reference books are used independently by children to support their work in other curriculum areas, for example in history when researching ancient Greek leaders. Speaking and listening skills are developed well in literacy sessions when discussing characters and events in the selected text. Children write well independently and in a range of styles and forms about the texts that they are studying, such as summarising and picking out main events in the story of Theseus and the Minotaur. They are able to write instructions and evaluations and write about their feelings in response to a story.

112 At the time of the last inspection pupils' attainment in English was judged to be average by the end of both key stages. Indicators show a sharply rising trend in results over the last three years.

113 Pupils make good progress during Key Stages 1 and 2 in developing their speaking and listening, reading and writing capabilities. In Key Stage 1 progress in speaking and listening is aided in literacy sessions when children articulate their views about a story. In Key Stage 2 role-play was used in one lesson where children had to give reasons for the way in which characters acted in a mystery story and this extended children in justifying and giving reasons as well as in formulating questions. Through the effective teaching of reading by class teachers and the additional support of trained learning support assistants in both key stages the pupils who are on the special educational needs register also make good progress. A good handwriting script is used throughout the school and work is generally presented well with the majority of children exhibiting a joined style by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils have a good range of known spellings and make appropriate use of word cards, word lists, dictionary and thesaurus. By Year 6 pupils write with accuracy using a good range of vocabulary and varied sentence structure in a wide range of styles and forms.

114 Frequent opportunities are provided for pupils to practise their writing skills outside literacy sessions and through other curriculum subjects. For example, in history when writing about Ancient Greece, children research information about their leaders, in science they use writing frames to structure their work and in design and technology write design briefs and evaluate their work. Homework is set appropriately for all children and is having a positive effect on attainment. In some cases marking gives children clear guidance about where they should make greater effort. Marking could be used more effectively to aid children's development and independence by linking it more closely to the learning objectives in the sessions and the targets set for individual children.

115 Pupils' reading skills are developed effectively through the sharing of whole-class texts and through group and individual reading. In addition to the daily timetabled literacy session for all classes, quiet reading time is set aside each afternoon or during a morning session, when pupils are able to participate in group-reading activities or personal reading. Teachers have selected an appropriate range of books to develop pupils' reading repertoire and to provide appropriate texts as the basis for structured sentence and word-level work. Pupils in Key Stage 1 successfully learn phonic skills and also use whole-word strategies, and the meaning of the text, to help them to read. Pupils' sight vocabulary is extended through the repeated sharing of the same text by the use of big books which are revisited over the course of a week. At Key Stage 1 a set scheme is used as a spine to the reading programme and books are banded into levels of difficulty. Pupils are encouraged to take books home and a strong commitment to home reading is shown by the majority of parents. Teachers' comments in diaries vary

in frequency and content. It is planned to provide a new prompt sheet to guide teachers and parents when they comment.

116 The quality of teaching in literacy sessions ranges from satisfactory to very good. In the main it is good in both key stages. In the very good teaching at Key Stage 1 and 2 teachers' subject knowledge is good, expectations are high, grammatical terms are used well, pupils become progressively aware of verbs, adverbs, adjectives, speech marks and paragraphs and previous learning is consolidated. Whole-class sessions are used to involve children in discussions about the features of text and characterisation. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace and tasks are explained clearly. There are clear learning objectives and effective use of differentiated and targeted questioning. Group work is planned with a range of challenging tasks to match differing abilities. Very good use is made of the plenary sessions to assess and extend levels of understanding. In the lessons where teaching is satisfactory interesting texts are chosen to develop the learning objectives and planning is often good, but the work that follows lacks pace and is insufficiently matched to pupils' capabilities and too much time is given to unchallenging questioning. This can sometimes result in a loss of attention and to some restless behaviour by a few children which reduces the overall effectiveness of a lesson. Time is wasted when changing from one part of the lesson to the next resulting in less effective use of time while children settle to the next task.

117 Clear procedures are in place for assessing attainment and plotting progress methodically. The findings from local education authority tests and the statutory and optional SATs and other school-based assessments are used to monitor, track and target individual progress in reading and writing and contribute significantly to the raising of attainment in English. The co-ordinator has monitored the subject by a range of means including a detailed analysis of test papers. The school is targeting pupils believed to be under-achieving at both key stages. This group and individual targeting for literacy support is proving successful. The effective training and deployment of support assistants who work with children with identified special educational needs is also beneficial. Findings from these procedures enabled the headteacher, in collaboration with the governors, to set targets for 1999 which were exceeded, and challenging targets for 2000. The school is well-placed to continue the upward trend in results given the success of these initiatives.

118 The subject is led well by the enthusiastic and well-trained co-ordinator who is supported well by a shadow co-ordinator. They are both able to provide support to colleagues in both key stages when planning and through staff training sessions and individual help. The National Literacy Strategy forms the basis of, and gives structure to, the teachers' planning and is supplemented by the scheme of work and policies for handwriting and spelling produced by the school. The co-ordinator manages a budget and recent purchases are more class-based fiction books and group text resources to meet the demands of the curriculum. Currently the reference library has a good range of well-chosen material but books are limited in number. It is planned to address this issue in the next financial year. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met well.

Mathematics

119 Inspection findings indicate that overall attainment in all aspects of mathematics is above average in relation to national expectations by the end of both key stages and pupils make good progress. Trends in attainment show that significant improvements have been made in mathematics in both key stages since the previous inspection and this is reflected in end-of-key-stage SAT results.

120 The percentage of pupils in Key Stage 1 reaching Level 2 and above in end-of-key-stage tests in 1998 was well above the national average compared to all schools nationally and was very high when compared with schools with similar characteristics. By the end of Key Stage 2 the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above was above average compared with all schools nationally and well above average when compared with schools with similar characteristics.

121 The results of the 1999 end-of-key-stage tests indicate improvements across both key stages.

The percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 and above is very high and those attaining Level 4 and above remains above the national average. However, the proportion of pupils who attain at Level 3 and Level 5 is greater in both key stages than in 1998.

122 Targets set by the school for end-of-Key-Stage-2 attainment in mathematics were exceeded in 1999. Challenging targets have been set for 2000. The school has undertaken extensive analysis of end-of-key-stage SAT results along with regular assessments to group children effectively to ensure that appropriate levels of attainment are met. A structured scheme of work introduced three years ago clearly outlines learning objectives for each year group. This has recently been reviewed and updated to reflect the National Numeracy Strategy framework and is used to support short-term planning which clearly identifies learning appropriate for both the age and ability of pupils in each class. This clarity of planning, along with the analysis of data, has contributed to the significant improvements in attainment since the previous inspection.

123 Numeracy skills are developed well. A high priority is given to the development of mental calculating strategies. The adoption of the national numeracy approach to the teaching of mathematics has provided a consistent structure which includes daily practice of calculating strategies. This structured approach is also having a positive effect on the quality of teaching across both key stages.

124 Children are provided with opportunities to apply numeracy skills across other subjects, for example when handling data as part of a river study in geography and when carrying out investigations in science.

125 Children make good progress in all aspects of mathematics in both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress through carefully-focused support from both the class teacher and classroom assistants and special support assistants. As a result of this support many achieve in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2.

126 By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of children can choose and use a range of calculation strategies to solve problems, and explain how the problem was solved. They are able to use halving and doubling and their knowledge of addition, subtraction and multiplication facts to solve problems, for example in finding the correct change from amounts up to and including £1. The majority of pupils use appropriate mathematical language when describing tasks that they are undertaking. They demonstrate an understanding of place value in numbers up to 1000, properties of 2-D and 3-D shapes and are able to produce a range of good-quality bar graphs and pictographs. The higher-attaining pupils display a good understanding of weight and volume and carry out investigations involving calculating strategies.

127 By the end of Key Stage 2 the majority of children can identify and use a combination of operations to solve problems involving numbers, including fractions and decimals, and explain clearly their methods and reasoning. They are able to carry out long multiplication sums accurately, demonstrate a good understanding of the four rules of number and carry out investigations of area, volume and probability. Higher-attaining pupils are able to add and subtract decimal numbers accurately and compare decimals, fractions and percentages. Most children across the key stage can present information in a range of tables, graphs and charts. They can measure accurately and are able to calculate area and volume.

128 The overall quality of teaching is very good in both key stages but ranges from satisfactory to very good. Where teaching is most effective lessons are structured carefully, and objectives for each year group are detailed. There is very good questioning targeted at individuals and groups of children based on prior learning. There is very good use of mathematical terminology, and expectations are set to encourage pupils to use this language in their answers. Demonstration is used very effectively to develop children's knowledge and understanding of strategies and skills, for example in a Year 6 lesson where methods for finding fractions and their decimal equivalents were explored using the white board. The very good teaching results in good and sometimes very good progress being made by children of all

abilities.

129 Where the teaching is satisfactory questioning is used less effectively to target children of differing abilities in the class, the pace of the lesson is slow and too much time is taken moving from whole-class to group work.

130 The subject is led well by the co-ordinator who has a clear understanding of how to continue to raise standards and support teachers in their planning and classroom practice. A programme of development has resulted in a core scheme of work being purchased to support teaching and staff involvement in the analysis of data and SATs results across the school. This information has been used to identify individual children who require additional support with mathematics. The next stage of development identified by the co-ordinator is to monitor the impact of the numeracy strategy and related planning. This will be an important exercise to ensure that the numeracy strategy does not narrow or suppress the above-average levels of attainment achieved by the school prior to its implementation.

131 The requirements of the National Curriculum are met well.

Science

132 In the 1998 end-of-Key-Stage-1 teacher assessments attainment was very high in comparison with all schools nationally and when compared to similar schools. A below-average percentage of pupils attained Level 3. In the 1998 end-of-Key-Stage-2 tests attainment in science was well below average in comparison with all schools nationally and with similar schools. The percentage attaining Level 5 was close to the national average.

133 In the 1999 Key Stage 1 teacher assessments pupils' attainment was above the national average and a greater proportion of pupils attained Level 3 than in the previous year. In the 1999 Key Stage 2 tests pupils' results were close to the national average and showed a marked improvement from 1998, and a greater proportion of pupils attained Level 5. There was no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys. Findings from the inspection confirm these outcomes.

134 Progress in science is good overall in Key Stage 1. By the end of the key stage many pupils have good understanding of the scientific process. From first entry to school onwards they are encouraged to observe and investigate the environment around the school. For example, pupils in reception go on a "listening walk" and record what they hear. By the end of the key stage, pupils are able to observe the eating habits of snails over time carefully and make sensible conclusions. They have regular opportunities to record their findings in charts, although graphs are not used regularly and there is little use of information technology to support or extend learning. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of life cycles in Year 2. Higher-attaining pupils are able to hypothesise about life cycles of all living things, including plants, following a study of the life cycle of a butterfly. Pupils know that different materials can be used for different purposes and that materials can change when heated. They learn to use appropriate language. For example, they explain how a shadow is formed when light is blocked.

135 Progress is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 2. Progression is generally secure in the acquisition of knowledge and introduction to scientific concepts. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 investigate how to change the shape of a plasticene ball in order to make it float in water and in Years 5 and 6 they study the effect of density on floating in a variety of liquids and solutions. By the end of the key stage, they have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things. This includes a good awareness of issues relating to health and drugs education. They use appropriate vocabulary in relation to their work with materials. For example, they know the meaning of filtering and evaporation. They have satisfactory understanding of the effects of gravity and other forces. Pupils have regular opportunities to experience whole-class and group investigations. Throughout the key stage they are able to discuss fair testing and prediction. They use charts and graphs to record

measurements and learn to interpret data, for example when investigating the best ratio of sand and cement to test the strength of concrete blocks in Years 5 and 6. However, there is not always clear progression in investigative skills with insufficient opportunities for pupils to test their own questions. There are few planned opportunities to use information technology.

136 Pupils' work in science makes a positive contribution to the development of literacy and numeracy. Throughout the school they are provided with prompts to assist in the recording of investigations. These prompts encourage the development of logical and systematic report writing. There is a clear emphasis in lessons on the introduction and use of appropriate scientific vocabulary which develops the pupils' ability to express key scientific ideas precisely. Mathematical skills are developed through the use of charts and graphs. For example, pupils in Year 6 plot the results of exercise on the pulse rate over time.

137 The good support and tracking of progress for pupils with special educational needs helps them to access the whole curriculum with confidence and enables them to make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in science.

138 Pupils in both key stages respond well to science. They listen carefully and are keen to answer questions. Most pupils move sensibly from whole-class to group activities and co-operate well with each other when undertaking group tasks. They show interest when talking about their learning.

139 The quality of teaching throughout the school is usually good. It is never less than satisfactory. All teachers identify a learning objective in their planning, but planning is not yet differentiated regularly to the varying abilities of pupils in a class. Where the teaching is good, learning objectives are explained carefully to the pupils, questioning is clear and tasks are both prepared and explained well. Lessons are conducted at an appropriate pace and relationships with the pupils are very positive. Where appropriate, there is a good range of carefully-planned activities, including investigations and the opportunity to research the pupils' own questions related to the area of study, for example in a lesson on shadows in Year 4. When the teaching is satisfactory, activities are not matched closely to prior attainment and tasks are not differentiated sufficiently to meet the needs of all pupils. In one lesson observed the pace was slow and children did not maintain their concentration.

140 The previous inspection identified that the long-term plan for science did not identify learning objectives or opportunities for assessment. The current long-term plan has addressed these issues and it ensures coverage of the National Curriculum. It remains variable in detail and content. The co-ordinator has monitored the curriculum planning and teaching in the school. Science is a major focus in the school development plan and the co-ordinator has accurately assessed the need to draw up a revised policy and to include year-group targets for all aspects of science in the scheme of work. It is recognised that this is needed to support teachers in planning appropriate learning objectives for the mixed-age classes in order to meet the needs of all pupils, in particular the higher-attaining pupils, and to match learning more closely to prior attainment. Analysis of the end-of-key-stage tests and assessments is carried out each year and the findings are used to inform the teaching. There is a good range of resources to support the teaching of science. Good use is made of the local environment and visits to support the pupils' learning.

141 The requirements of the National Curriculum are met in full.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Art

142 During the inspection four art lessons were observed. A scrutiny of pupils' current and

completed work was undertaken and consideration was given to photographic evidence included in art portfolios and displays within the classrooms and areas around the school. The overall standards in art are those expected for the children of the same age. The range of experiences that the children have is a strength of the subject.

143 In the previous inspection standards in knowledge and understanding of the subject were judged to be poor. Significant improvements have been made. Pupils have a wide experience of working with local artists from a range of backgrounds including clay, environmental art, printing and modelling. Much of the art undertaken in lessons is based on the work of both European and non-European artists. Children are able to describe and discuss painting techniques of artists such as Picasso and use this knowledge in their own work. Children have also studied the work of Paul Klee, Monet, Van Gogh, Louis Tiffany and Rousseau as well as Aboriginal and African art.

144 Children across both key stages are provided with a wide range of experiences using different media. Children undertake observational drawings using pencil and charcoal and some show a good level of drawing skills, particularly in Key Stage 1. These skills need to be developed further in Key Stage 2, building on prior learning to raise the quality of finished work. Children explore colour using watercolours, inks, paint, pastels and chalks. Many children are able to blend and mix colours for effect and make good progress when introduced to new skills. Sketchbooks are used across the school. Where these are used most effectively children are encouraged to explore techniques using a range of media and to make good-quality sketches.

145 The teaching of art is good. Clear objectives are set and a good range of resources is made available. Very effective use is made of demonstration to guide children in the use of new materials and techniques and technical language are used well.

146 The scheme of work ensures coverage of skills and techniques related to all aspects of art and this guides teachers' planning well. The arts weeks that the school has held for the last two years make a significant contribution to the range of artistic experiences that the children are given. The overall quality of the work undertaken during these weeks is good. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and has put together a helpful portfolio of photographic evidence illustrating progression and continuity that should inform future developments in the subject.

108 **Design and technology**

147 Two lessons in design and technology were observed. Further evidence has been gained from discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of current and previously completed work. By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils are working to a standard expected for their age. The pupils show an understanding of designing and making in simple contexts. They can generate their own simple designs and translate these into finished products to meet a specific design brief. Most pupils can select and use a range of simple tools and materials appropriately, including paper, textiles, wood and construction kits. They are able to draw on their experiences of familiar products to help them to develop their own ideas. For example, when they designed and made kites, which they were able to evaluate by flying or when designing and making a windmill, they evaluated existing products before planning their own.

148 Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make satisfactory and at times good progress in their design-and-make skills. By Year 6 they can use tools with greater accuracy. They appreciate the importance of design, constructing and the use of more detailed plans. In Years 5 and 6, for example, children were seen working on cogs, pulleys and drive belts and children designed a switch to reverse the direction of a motor following on from work on circuits. Due attention is given to health and safety matters and pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for working safely.

149 Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. The good support which they

receive in literacy and numeracy assists them in the recording of their ideas, and with skills such as writing instructions and measuring.

150 The children demonstrate positive attitudes to design and technology. They enjoy the tasks and work with diligence, perseverance and interest. When questioned about their work they respond enthusiastically. The vast majority listen to instructions attentively and co-operate well with others.

151 Too few lessons were observed during the period of the inspection to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching, which ranged from very good to satisfactory. In one very good lesson the teacher demonstrated very good subject knowledge and provided an appropriately challenging task for children. Where the teaching was satisfactory the teacher used questions and demonstration but the lesson was lacking in pace and the children did not have enough time to practise the skills being taught.

152 The links made between design and technology and other curriculum areas are good. For example, during a study of water children evaluated umbrellas and made working umbrellas from different materials. While studying India, pupils in Years 3 and 4 made food dips choosing from a range of ingredients and evaluated their product by taste, colour and texture. The subject supports literacy and numeracy well. The pupils are given opportunities throughout both key stages to develop a range of writing, including reports, tables and lists, in the context of their recorded designs and evaluations.

153 The resources for the subject are satisfactory. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and organised or led staff workshops when this was a major focus for the school in 1998 in order to increase teachers' confidence. The policy has been identified for review. In order to support teachers' planning and teaching the scheme of work adopted needs to provide more detailed objectives for each year group which will assist further in planning for continuity and progression.

Geography

154 Only one geography lesson in Key Stage 1 was observed during the inspection, and none in Key Stage 2. However, evidence from extensive discussion with pupils, and from a scrutiny of books, work on display and teachers' planning, indicates that in both key stages children are working at levels above that expected for their age. This demonstrates an improvement from the previous inspection, at which time attainment was found to be average.

155 In Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress in their development of geographical skills. They use the local environment very well to develop skills such as the drawing of plans and maps. For example, in Year 2 the children can locate landmarks on a map by using a key and simple co-ordinates. Pupils make good progress in their use of geographical vocabulary. By the end of the key stage they can describe a locality using terms such as river, factory and hill. They understand and explain terms such as physical features. They confidently explain similarities and differences between different localities. For example, they can compare land use in their immediate locality with that of the Stiperstones. By Year 2 pupils can express views about the environment well. They are aware of some environmental concerns, such as the effects of the flooding of the River Severn on the town of Shrewsbury. They can explain how the locality has changed.

156 In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make good progress. By the end of the key stage they can confidently explain the use of resources such as maps and measuring equipment. The pupils make good progress in their geographical knowledge and understanding through the effective use of fieldwork. For example, the children's understanding of river formation was extended very successfully as the children followed the course of a river down a Welsh mountainside. Pupils have a good understanding of geographical language. For example, they can confidently explain the meaning of tributary, source and estuary. They are able to describe some of the physical and human features of a range of places such as India, Greece and the United Kingdom. Their work in other curriculum areas, such as history, supports

their geographical work well. They are aware of the similarities, differences and links which exist between countries. They are secure in naming and locating countries in an atlas.

157 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, and attain standards commensurate with their capabilities.

158 Good links have been made between geography and literacy, particularly through the use of stories in Key Stage 1. The subject is used effectively to provide contexts for the children to write in a range of genres including guide books, letters and reports. The subject supports the teaching of numeracy and information technology well. For example, in upper Key Stage 2 the children measured the depth and flow of a local river. This led to the plotting and drawing of a cross-section of the river.

159 The children demonstrate an interest and enjoyment in the subject. They talk very positively about the fieldwork that they have undertaken, particularly the work completed on a residential visit to Wales. In the lesson observed the pupils were attentive and made valuable contributions to whole-class discussions.

160 Too few lessons were observed across the school to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. However, the one lesson observed in Key Stage 1 was of a good standard. The good elements of the lesson included the clarity with which the lesson's objective was shared with the children. The teacher used, and in turn expected the children to use, appropriate geographical vocabulary. The lesson was linked well to prior learning.

161 The teachers' planning and pupils' books show that very good use is made of a range of resources. In the main, the teachers demonstrate very secure subject knowledge and high expectations. However, in order to support less confident teachers a scheme of work needs to be formulated which identifies year-group expectations. This will ensure that teachers are clear about the stages of development in geographical and enquiry skills. The scheme can then be used to inform short term planning to ensure that appropriately differentiated objectives are set for each lesson. In some lessons the learning objective is insufficiently demanding for the higher attaining pupils.

162 The subject is currently led soundly by the headteacher and shadow co-ordinator. Good ranges of resources are available, and these are used effectively by teachers. The central library stock is small, but good use is made of the local education authority library service to extend book provision. Very good use is made of external resources, such as a residential visit and the local environment. There is a helpful long-term plan which ensures that the curriculum is planned and taught appropriately. The subject is taught through themes in Key Stage 1, and via study units in Key Stage 2. Currently the school does not have a policy, but the co-ordinator plans to formulate one within the current academic year.

History

163 By the end of both key stages the pupils are working at standards appropriate for their age. Overall pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages. They make good progress in Key Stage 2 in their knowledge of a range of historical periods.

164 In Key Stage 1 the pupils use common words and phrases related to the passing of time, such as then and now, with confidence. Good links are made with literacy. For example, in a Year 1 class children confidently sequenced events in a story. By the end of the key stage pupils can sequence events in their own lives in chronological order. Year 2 pupils demonstrate simple factual knowledge about the past. For example, they can describe some of the characteristics of houses and shops built a hundred years ago. In making simple observations from sources such as artefacts and books, they are able to answer questions about the past. The children have recorded their work in an appropriate range of forms, including reports and drawings.

165 In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. By Year 4 they recognise that the past can be divided into periods of time such as Victorian Britain. At the end of the key stage pupils use terms such as, B.C., decade and century. They are able to explain the use of a time line and can sequence historical periods in chronological order. In the main, good progress is made in pupils' knowledge of a range of historical periods such as Ancient Greece and Tudor Britain. The majority of pupils discuss their findings from historical research with confidence. Effective links are made with literacy. For example, the reading of Greek myths in Years 5 and 6 effectively increased the children's understanding of Ancient Greek culture. Pupils use reference books and artefacts with independence when pursuing a line of enquiry. Year 6 pupils can explain the difference between fact and opinion, and recognise that the past can be interpreted in different ways. They produce work which is appropriately structured and organised.

166 Sound links are made with numeracy in the context of the children's work on chronology and data-handling. For example, children in Years 3 and 4 analysed census data in their local studies work.

167 In the main the children with special educational needs make good progress. They work at a level commensurate with their capabilities.

168 The pupils demonstrate enjoyment and enthusiasm in their historical studies. They are particularly positive about work which involves the use of artefacts and visits to sites of historical significance. Artefacts are displayed attractively and, when accompanied by written open-ended questions, help to promote interest and curiosity. For example, the effective use of displays on Ancient Greece in upper Key Stage 2 successfully challenged the children to consider historical evidence when making judgements about the past. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on the lives of others and to consider the contribution made by a range of cultures to present-day life.

169 The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. It is mainly good. Where the teaching is good or better the lesson's learning objective is stated clearly. Questions are used skilfully to assess children's levels of understanding in order to ensure that different expectations of various pupils are maintained. For example, in a Year 1 class the teacher skilfully extended children's initial answers by inserting additional questions as they completed their work. Artefacts are used creatively to inspire and extend children's knowledge and understanding of historical periods. For example, a simulated archaeological dig in upper Key Stage 2 provided a good opportunity for children to explore historical evidence.

170 Where the teaching is satisfactory insufficient use is made of questions to challenge pupils' level of historical understanding. Children's ideas are readily accepted rather than challenged

171 In the main teachers are not matching work to the needs of the higher-attaining pupils in a sufficiently rigorous manner. Learning objectives, and the use made of resources, need to reflect the needs of these pupils more closely, in order to ensure that they are challenged to use higher-order research skills. For example, increased opportunities need to be provided for these pupils to solve problems, through the use of extended research projects, which demand the interpretation of a wide range of sources.

172 The subject is currently co-ordinated soundly by the headteacher. The school uses the local environment and visits to historical sites very well to support the teaching of the subject. Good-quality artefacts and books are loaned from the local education authority library service. The headteacher monitors the quality of pupils' recorded work and reports back findings to the staff. A long-term plan and scheme of work supports the teaching of the subject satisfactorily. A two-year rolling programme of study units ensures that an appropriate balance is maintained across a range of historical periods and cultures. There is no specific policy. The school has appropriately identified this as an area to be developed.

173 Teachers would benefit from more explicit guidance in the scheme of work with regard to expectations for specific year groups. Clear progressive learning steps need to be identified for each key element in the history curriculum. This guidance then needs to be used by teachers at the short-term planning stage to ensure that learning objectives are matched to pupils' abilities. Work is marked conscientiously but, in the main, is used primarily to praise rather than to challenge. Increased use should be made of marking to extend children's ideas and challenge their level of historical understanding.

108 **Information technology**

174 The school has addressed the issue raised in the previous inspection of non-compliance with statutory requirements and it now meets legal requirements. From the lessons observed, the scrutiny of work and discussions with children, inspection findings indicate that in information technology most pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 are working at levels appropriate for their age

175 In Key Stage 1 pupils experience all aspects of the National Curriculum. The majority of children are developing skills in information-handling and understand the processes required to gather information, create a graph, design using an art package and make simple interpretations. For example, Year 2 children used a tile program to design patterns linked to mathematics and art which culminated in the making of a collaborative clay tile. The children are developing appropriate skills in control and most can operate a programmable toy by giving single-step commands by the end of the key stage. Most have a basic grasp of keyboard skills and can select from a menu. By the end of the key stage they can communicate information using text and pictures. Most can explain how to select capital letters, delete errors and create graphs. They can operate a cassette tape recorder and explain how to rewind and fast-forward a tape in their class listening corner.

176 In Key Stage 2 children are developing skills in communicating information. By the end of the key stage most children can combine text and pictures. In Years 3 and 4 children show that they can program repeated patterns and create designs using a tile program. By Year 6 they confidently learn new skills such as scanning a picture and incorporating it in their writing. They show that they are able to use a spreadsheet and can use the data to create a graph, for instance during work on the weather. They demonstrate good understanding of different scales through work linked to geography during a study of the local area.

177 In Key Stage 1 the majority of children make satisfactory progress in all areas of information technology. For example, in reception children learn to use a CD-ROM linked to reading, in Year 1 they create pictures to illustrate their work and by Year 2 they can use an art program to design tiles. However, the children need more opportunity to use the skills learned and build upon their knowledge of information-handling by using the computer to support their work across the curriculum.

178 In Key Stage 2 the majority of children make satisfactory progress. Children in Years 3 and 4 can explain how to program a computer to control events in a predetermined manner, for example programming a computer to draw a repeating rotated pattern of squares. In communicating information, for example, the majority of children can alter the size and style of text. They understand how to move text, and can navigate and extract information using CD-ROMs. Children in Years 5 and 6 undertake a skills audit to enable their teachers to focus skills teaching more accurately and to provide pupils with impetus for independent learning. However, the application of information technology across other subjects is currently under-developed. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in all year groups

179 Pupils' response to information technology is generally good. The children are eager to use the equipment and keen to explain what they are doing. Whether working in small or large groups, they are generally very supportive of each other although when the pace of the lesson is slow a significant

minority become very restless and this impacts on the learning of others.

180 During the inspection the teaching observed ranged from unsatisfactory to good. In the main in Key Stage 1 it was satisfactory and in Key Stage 2 it was good. When the teaching is good teachers challenge the pupils well to use their skills and time is allocated appropriately to the demands of the task. Good discipline is maintained and children are clear about what is expected of them. When the teaching is satisfactory, although the learning objectives are usually clear, they are insufficiently challenging for the time allotted. In the one unsatisfactory lesson observed time was wasted organising the children and inappropriate behaviour was not checked sufficiently which affected the pupils' progress.

181 Resources are good and are generally used well. There are some specific resources for the children with special educational needs. The decision to locate the computers in one area has enabled teachers to teach groups effectively. However, pupils currently have fewer opportunities to use computers in their class base.

182 The current co-ordinator is trained well, as are many members of staff. A new co-ordinator is due to take on responsibility for the subject. The co-ordinator has a budget and there are clear priorities for further expenditure including linking up to the Internet, a digital camera and updating class computers to extend the application of information technology across other subjects. The training implications of these purchases are clearly understood. The policy and scheme of work are in need of updating to reflect current practice and support and guide those teachers who are less confident in this area of the curriculum and to ensure progression and continuity throughout the school. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met satisfactorily.

Music

183 During the inspection three lessons were observed. Additional information was obtained from a scrutiny of the scheme of work and teachers' planning, discussions with the co-ordinator and attendance at assemblies. From this evidence it is judged that the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and are working at standards expected for their age.

184 By the end of Year 2 pupils show an awareness of pulse, rhythm and melody when they are singing. They sing with enjoyment and perform well together. They are able to repeat short musical phrases with varied pitch and volume and respond to the moods created by different pieces of music.

185 In Key Stage 2 pupils develop a secure sense of pulse. They can maintain a steady beat when different rhythms are superimposed. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 can use their understanding of musical structures to compose short sequences. Throughout the key stage pupils learn to use symbols to record their compositions. By the end of the key stage they show an awareness of the need to refine and develop their compositions and performances. The pupils appreciate the value of using notation to guide them. They respond to the moods created in a variety of music and gain understanding and knowledge of the music of different cultures and traditions. They sing tunefully and with enjoyment in assemblies.

186 Pupils respond well to music. They show enjoyment in group activities and a willingness to practise and improve. They generally behave well and are responsive to questions and instructions.

187 The teaching of music ranges from satisfactory to very good. Where the teaching is good or very good there is an effective balance between direct teaching and opportunities for music-making in whole classes or in groups. The children's understanding is extended through appropriate teacher intervention and lessons are varied and conducted at a good pace. Where the teaching is satisfactory, subject expertise is more limited and the learning objective is not interpreted through sufficiently interesting activities, resulting in a loss of concentration by some pupils.

188 There is some specialist teaching in Years 3 and 4. This enables the new co-ordinator to teach all classes. The co-ordinator is a very competent musician and is making a positive contribution to the musical life of the school. The newly-written policy and updated scheme of work provide clear and useful support for all teachers and should make a positive contribution to the further raising of standards. Curriculum planning has been monitored and a structure is in place for further monitoring the teaching and learning.

189 In addition to extra-curricular choir and recorder clubs led by the co-ordinator, the school enhances the musical experiences of all pupils through an annual arts week and through visiting groups such as the Tudor Ensemble. Opportunities are taken to participate in local music festivals and other local musical events. A small group of pupils benefits from peripatetic teaching of the violin. A good range of musical instruments is available to the children and the co-ordinator has plans to improve and update the resources.

108 **Physical education**

190 Due to unavoidable timetable alterations and inclement weather, few full lessons in physical education were observed during the inspection and no overall judgement has been made in relation to pupils' attainment and progress by the end of either key stage. Scrutiny of the new and useful scheme of work, teachers' planning and discussions with the co-ordinator indicates that good structures are in place to support progress in a wide and varied physical education curriculum which includes swimming. The scheme of work effectively addresses issues relating to continuity and progression in physical education raised in the previous inspection report.

191 Progress was good overall in the lessons observed. Pupils generally consolidated their skills and then extended them in appropriate activities. For example, in a lesson in Key Stage 1 pupils developed further awareness of how to use their bodies to make a variety of shapes in their own personal space and when moving safely around the hall. In a dance lesson in Key Stage 2 pupils made good progress in developing a sequence of controlled movements and in making sensible evaluations of each other's performances.

192 Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by their class teachers and make good progress.

193 Pupils show enjoyment in physical education. They use large spaces well and safely and they work very purposefully to improve. In the dance lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4 the children responded with great sensitivity to the well-chosen music.

194 The teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. In the very good teaching there is purposeful and effective recall of previous learning, new learning is carefully introduced and explained and time is used very well. There are high expectations of work and behaviour and pupil demonstrations are used sensitively to extend understanding. In the very good dance lesson observed in Year 3, the teacher intervened effectively to encourage sensible evaluations and take the learning forward. Subject expertise and questioning skills are very good. In the satisfactory lesson observed too little time was provided for the pupils to be actively involved.

195 The co-ordinator provides effective support to teachers. Planning is monitored, feedback is given and advice offered.

196 There are several extra-curricular clubs, including football, netball and athletics. Year 6 pupils undertake a residential visit to an activity centre. The shadow physical education co-ordinator is active in identifying talented children and directing them to further opportunities to extend their skills, for example by joining local athletics and football teams. Children regularly take part in inter-school competitions. Resources and equipment are good.

108 **Religious education**

197 Few religious education lessons were observed during the inspection. One lesson was seen in Key Stage 1 and two in Key Stage 2. However, evidence obtained from a scrutiny of pupils' books and teachers' planning, and through extensive discussion with pupils indicates that attainment in religious education is in line with the requirements of the local education authority agreed syllabus.

198 Overall progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. By the end of the key stage the children can relate some of the stories that Jesus told, and make simple judgements about his character and actions. Through listening to stories from a range of faiths the children reflect on their own beliefs and those of others. They are becoming aware of the significance of some religious symbols and artefacts. For example, Year 2 pupils could explain the significance of the cross to Christians.

199 Pupils can name and explain the relevance of a range of Christian festivals and celebrations, including Easter and harvest. They know that the Bible is a special book for Christians.

200 The children continue to make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. By the end of the key stage they demonstrate a sound understanding of Christian ceremonies, such as baptism. They are able to name a range of faiths including Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism and Sikhism. However, with the exception of Christianity, pupils are less secure in describing the main characteristics of world religions. This is an area of religious education which needs to be developed further. The older pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the life of Jesus. They can name a range of religious and world leaders. In an upper Key Stage 2 religious education lesson the children were able to identify the qualities that Jesus demonstrated as a leader. They know that Jesus is the son of God, and can relate some of the miracles that he performed.

201 Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and attain standards commensurate with their capabilities.

202 The children demonstrate positive attitudes during religious education lessons. They express opinions and answer questions confidently. During acts of worship pupils contribute positively. They sing with enthusiasm and enjoyment. They show respect towards each other and the majority listen attentively to the opinions of others.

203 The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. In the main it is good. Where the teaching is very good the teacher has high expectations, differentiated questions are used skilfully to challenge pupils, the lesson develops at a brisk pace and the children's behaviour is very good. Good teaching in religious education is characterised by the teacher using questions and illustrations effectively to encourage self-reflection. For example, in a lower Key Stage 2 lesson the teacher encouraged the children to reflect on their own experiences in order to identify the characteristics of a true friend. Where the teaching is satisfactory the lesson is planned soundly, with appropriate attention being given to prior learning. However, the pace and rigour of the lesson needs to be increased.

204 Good links are made with literacy. Stories are used effectively to explore themes such as honesty and responsibility. The subject provides pupils with good opportunities to write in a range of genres, including prayers, stories and reports.

205 The co-ordinator has recently taken up this responsibility. The subject is highlighted in the current school development plan as an area to be developed. There is a helpful policy and long-term plan which, together with the local education authority's agreed syllabus, effectively supports the teachers' planning. Religious education topics have been carefully linked to cross-curricular themes when links are appropriate, for example exploring creation stories alongside a theme on habitats. The collective worship policy contains a detailed long-term plan. This ensures that the children are provided with a good range of religious themes over the academic year. A helpful daily record is kept of the themes for collective worship. The school keeps samples of work in individual pupil portfolios to assist teachers in their assessments. This system satisfactorily addresses the issue of assessment which was highlighted in the previous inspection report.

206 Resources include a good range of artefacts from a range of faiths. Good use is made of the Schools' Library Service to supplement book provision. The subject is supported through the use of visits and visitors. The co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to monitor standards or the quality of teaching in the subject but the headteacher has monitored the curriculum planning.

207 The requirements of the agreed syllabus are met satisfactorily.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

208 The inspection was undertaken by a team of five inspectors who, over a period of four days, spent the equivalent of 19 days assessing the work of the school. A total of 51 hours 20 minutes was spent evaluating the teaching and learning. 71 lessons or part-lessons were seen.

209 Children from every class were heard to read. The pupils' current work and some other work that had been completed previously was scrutinised. Teachers' written planning and records of children's progress were examined. Discussions were held with members of staff, governors, parents and pupils. Curriculum policies and other documentation relating to numerous issues were read.

210 A meeting was held before the inspection to provide parents with the opportunity to express their views and to inform them about inspection procedures. The meeting was attended by 16 parents. 282 parental questionnaires were distributed and 157 returned. The responses were analysed and used to inform the inspection team. The Registered Inspector met with teachers, non-teaching staff and a number of governors prior or during the inspection to inform them of the inspection process.

211 DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

| | Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent) | Number of pupils with statements of SEN | Number of pupils on school's register of SEN | Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals |
|--------------|---|---|--|---|
| YR – Y7 | 282 | 7 | 45 | 36 |
| Nursery Unit | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers

| | |
|---|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent) | 10.6 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 26.6 |

Education support staff

| | |
|---|------|
| Total number of education support staff | 7 |
| Total aggregate hours worked each week | 92.7 |

Qualified teachers (nursery unit)

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent) | 0.5 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 10 |

Education support staff

| | |
|---|------|
| Total number of education support staff | 1 |
| Total aggregate hours worked each week | 16.2 |

| | |
|---------------------|------|
| Average class size: | 28.2 |
|---------------------|------|

Financial data

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Financial year: | 1998 |
| | £ |
| Total Income | 401327.00 |
| Total Expenditure | 398509.00 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1398.28 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 15120.00 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 17938.00 |

PARENTAL SURVEY

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out: | 282 |
| Number of questionnaires returned: | 157 |

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 | 51.3 | 45.5 | 0.6 | 2.6 | 0 |
| I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren) | 63.1 | 34.4 | 1.9 | 0.6 | 0 |
| The school handles complaints from parents well | 31.8 | 55.6 | 9.9 | 2.6 | 0 |
| The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught | 34.0 | 58.3 | 5.8 | 1.9 | 0 |
| The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress | 42.3 | 50.0 | 6.4 | 1.3 | 0 |
| The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work | 46.2 | 50.0 | 3.2 | 0.6 | 0 |
| The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons | 37.4 | 47.1 | 12.9 | 2.6 | 0 |
| I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home | 29.9 | 59.7 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 1.3 |
| The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren) | 44.7 | 46.7 | 7.2 | 1.3 | 0 |
| The school achieves high standards of good behaviour | 44.2 | 48.1 | 6.4 | 0.6 | 0.6 |
| My child(ren) like(s) school | 56.7 | 39.5 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 0 |