

## INSPECTION REPORT

**Mark Cross C.E. Aided Primary School**  
Crowborough,  
East Sussex

LEA area : East Sussex

Unique Reference Number : 114558

Headteacher : Mr. D.P. Swan

Reporting inspector : Mr. Robert Greatrex

Dates of inspection : 18<sup>th</sup> B 20<sup>th</sup> October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707279

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school :	Infant and Junior
Type of control :	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils :	4 to 11
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Mark Cross Crowborough East Sussex TN6 3PJ
Telephone number :	01892 852866
Appropriate authority :	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors :	Ms. G. Simmonds
Date of previous inspection :	30 <sup>th</sup> January B 2 <sup>nd</sup> February 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Robert Greatrex RgI	Mathematics Information technology Physical education	Special educational needs Attainment and Progress Teaching Leadership and management Efficiency
John Kerr, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils= welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Catherine Gordon-Smith	Science Design and technology Art Music	Equal opportunities Curriculum and assessment Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Pauline Morcom	English History Geography	Under Fives Pupils= spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- ? Standards in information technology are very high throughout the school.
- ? The consistently very good quality of teaching positively contributes to the good progress pupils make.
- ? Provision for children under five is very good.
- ? Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- ? The school ethos is very good; there is a purposeful climate for learning, attitudes to work are positive, relationships good, and there is a strong commitment to high standards.
- ? Pupils= behaviour is very good.
- ? Provision made for pupils= spiritual and social development is very good.
- ? Provision made for the support, guidance and personal development of pupils is very good.
- ? Procedures for assessing pupils attainment are very good, the use made of personal targets is particularly beneficial in focusing pupils on what needs to be done next.
- ? Close links with other small schools locally have many beneficial effects upon the pupils= academic progress and social and personal development. These links extend to many other aspects of the school and are an important factor in the good quality of education provided by the school.

### WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES

- ? Standards in handwriting and spelling are a relative weakness.
- ? The accommodation is not adequate; this particularly results in low standards in gymnastics and time being lost moving off-site for physical education lessons, assemblies and small group work.
- ? There is no formal appraisal process for staff, nor do they have useful job descriptions.
- ? Neither school monitoring systems nor the organisation of the start of the day encourage punctuality.

**The school=s strengths far outweigh its weaknesses. Furthermore, the school does all it can to overcome the weaknesses caused by the inadequate accommodation.**

**The governors= action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection will be tackled. It 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 made good progress in implementing the findings of the previous inspection. There is no longer any evidence of under-achievement by older pupils in any subjects, other than in gymnastics where it is caused by inadequate accommodation. The curricular framework is clear and cohesive, all subjects have schemes of work, and planning is good. Assessment in English, mathematics and science is good. Current plans, when implemented, will extend this to other subjects. The use of targets for each individual pupil is particularly useful in enabling them to make good progress. Staff with subject responsibilities, headteacher and governors all participate fully in an annual programme of monitoring and review. There are many examples of subsequent improvements. Attendance is now recorded and verified correctly. The strengths of the school mean that it is now very well placed to make further improvements.

## STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests. Care should be taken when using this information. The group of pupils taking these tests in any year is generally very small and the results can be misleading. Year groups differ greatly, too. In 1998, for example, the year groups taking the tests at the end of both key stages included a relatively high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Largely as a consequence of this, results were much lower.

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

Standards of attainment in the 1999 national tests for eleven year olds in English, mathematics and science are well above the national average and show a significant improvement on 1998. Pupils have achieved standards above the national average in three of the last four years. Standards are also above average in English and mathematics when compared with those achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. When pupils' results at age eleven are compared with those they achieved at age seven, the vast majority of pupils make the progress expected of them and a good proportion do better than this.

Standards of attainment in the 1999 national tests for seven year olds are also above the national average. Every pupil achieved the level expected by this age in all of the tests. Approximately one in every fourteen pupils achieved a higher level in writing, twice as many in reading, and three times as many in mathematics.

Since the previous inspection, standards achieved by children under five have remained high, while standards achieved by other pupils have improved.

Throughout the school, standards in information technology are well above expectations for pupils' age, and progress is very good. Progress is good in design and technology, history and elements of physical education such as dance and swimming. Elsewhere, standards are sound in art, geography and music. Less progress occurs in gymnastics, largely because pupils do not have access to the full programme of study.

## QUALITY OF TEACHING

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 B 7 years	7 B 11 years
English	very good	good	good
Mathematics	good	good	good
Science		good	good
Information Technology		very good	very good
Other subjects	very good	good	good

The quality of teaching is consistently good. During the inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In seven lessons in every ten it was good or better, very good or better in one third of lessons, and excellent in one lesson in twenty. Information technology and new national initiatives in literacy and numeracy are well taught. Some excellent teaching was seen in the youngest class, while the quality of teaching was particularly good in

Years 2, 5 and 6. Parents speak highly of the quality of teaching their children receive. Pupils themselves are enthused and look forward to their lessons.

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; sound or satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. A Satisfactory@ (or A sound@) means that strengths outweigh any weaknesses.*

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Pupils= behaviour is very good. It is beneficial to their progress and school life generally.
Attendance	Attendance is good. Absence is rare and generally for genuine reasons. Some older pupils with younger brothers or sisters are regularly late. The staggered start to the school day contributes to this.
Ethos*	The ethos is very good. Relationships are strong and attitudes very positive. There is a purposeful learning atmosphere and clear commitment to high standards.
Leadership and management	The school is well led and there is a clear educational direction. Governors are fully involved. The headteacher and deputy headteacher form an effective team, well supported by the dedicated and hard-working teaching and support staff. Monitoring is thorough and an important factor in the school=s drive to improve.
Curriculum	The curriculum is good. Assessment is well used. Good use is also made of individual targets to clearly define what each pupil needs to concentrate on next. There are a very good range and number of extra curricular activities, visits and events to enrich the curriculum.
Pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very good. The needs of each pupil are carefully and quickly assessed and tasks well matched to each individual. The skilled support staff are used where they will be of most benefit. Progress is checked regularly and parents fully involved from the beginning.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for spiritual and social development is very good, the latter partly due to the strong links with local schools. Provision for moral education is good. Provision for cultural development is very good with respect to pupils= own culture but unsatisfactory otherwise.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Staff work together well as a team. Accommodation is much improved but inadequate for some lessons and other daily functions such as assemblies, elements of the physical education curriculum and school lunches. Learning resources are

	adequate and of good quality. Recent good improvements include resources for information technology.
Value for money	The school gives good value for money.

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

### THE PARENTS= VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>? Their children like school.</li> <li>? The school=s values and attitudes have a positive effect upon their children.</li> <li>? They find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with their children.</li> <li>? They are encouraged to play an active part in school life.</li> <li>? They feel the school achieves high standards of good behaviour.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: right;">?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">happy with the sch</p>

Inspection findings support parents= positive views. The concern of some parents, about homework, has been resolved and provision is now good.



## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

In order to further improve the quality of education provided, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

Raise standards in spelling and handwriting by:

- identifying and meeting each pupil=s needs more accurately and effectively;
  - ensuring better skill progression through the school;
  - raising expectations of how pupils will use these skills in other subjects;
- (paragraphs 19, 58, 146 and 147)

Seek immediate ways to improve further standards in gymnastics and, in the longer term, continue the improvements to the school accommodation to incorporate facilities for gymnastics, assemblies, lunch and small group work;\* (paragraphs 28, 56, 58, 107, 117, 136, 219, 221, 224 and 228)

Improve further the effectiveness of staff by implementing a formal appraisal process and issuing accurate and useful job descriptions;\* (paragraphs 101, 106 and 109)

Seek to improve punctuality by re-considering the staggered start to the school day (paragraphs 42 and 80).

\* These key issues have already been identified by the school

In addition, the following minor points for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

make better use of the library, particularly to enable pupils to develop and practise their study skills, especially their use of the classification system, (paragraphs 31, 203 and 209);

widen the provision for pupils= cultural development to better prepare them for life in a multicultural society, (paragraphs 69, 73, 75 and 192).

## **Introduction**

### **Characteristics of the school**

The school is housed in a recently extended and renovated Victorian building in the small village of Mark Cross near Crowborough. The school serves a very wide area, including hamlets, villages and small towns, many with primary schools of their own.

Currently there are 101 boys and girls, aged from four to eleven, on the school roll. The school is oversubscribed in all but Year 4. There are a similar number of boys and girls.

Except in Year 2, all classes have a two year age span. There are four classrooms, one being recently extended but still relatively small. The school accommodation includes a small library, but there is no hall.

Before starting school, nearly all children have some pre-school experience. The attainment of children when they join the school varies markedly from year to year but, overall, it is broadly in line with national expectations at this age.

There are currently no pupils from ethnic minority groups, or pupils for whom English is an additional language.

Approximately one per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, well below the national average.

There are 21 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, broadly in line with the national average. Of these pupils, none have a statement of special educational needs, a proportion below the national average. Movement of pupils in and out of the school is relatively high, especially in Key Stage 2, and approximately one quarter of these pupils have transferred from other schools.

The school aims to constantly involve and challenge its pupils through quality teaching, wide ranging and purposeful experiences, effective support and excellent staff and pupil relationships.

The current priorities of the school are:

- to continue to develop excellence in teaching and children's achievements;
- to further strengthen links with the Diocese to match those with the local church community;
- to continue to build high quality resources across the curriculum;
- to ensure all staff job descriptions are updated and accurate;
- to continue to develop and improve the school grounds, ensuring variety, interest and children's own ideas are incorporated.

## Key Indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 1

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	9	5	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	14	14	14
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	100(70)	100(100)	100(80)
	National	82(77)	83(81)	87(84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	14	14	14
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	100(70)	100(90)	100(70)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

### Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	32.5
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

**Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>1</sup>**

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	4	5	9

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	3	3	4
	Girls	5	5	4
	Total	8	8	8
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	89(43)	89(43)	89(100)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	3	3	4
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	8	8	9
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	89(43)	89(57)	100 (100)
	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	3
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.2
	National comparative data	0.5

**Exclusions**

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

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

**PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<sup>1</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

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

### **Attainment and progress**

Standards as shown by the national test results and inspection findings at the time of the previous inspection were good for children under five and sound at the end of Key Stage 1. Although pupils generally achieved the national average at the end of Key Stage 2, there was under-achievement by some pupils in some subjects such as art and geography, and some aspects of English, mathematics and science. The judgement of the present inspection is that standards achieved by children under five have remained high, while elsewhere in the school they have improved.

In the 1999 national tests for eleven year olds in English, the equivalent of nine in every ten pupils achieved the expected level and seven in every ten exceeded it. These results are high in comparison with both the national average and the average achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In mathematics, an identical proportion achieved the expected level, and one third exceeded it. These results are also high in comparison with the national average and the average of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In science, an identical proportion achieved the expected level, and nearly half exceeded it. These results are above the national average but similar to the average of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds.

In the 1999 national tests for seven year olds, every pupil achieved the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics. About one in every fourteen pupils achieved a higher level in writing, twice as many in reading, and three times as many in mathematics.

Because of the small number of pupils taking the test each year, care must be taken when interpreting year-by-year test results. Whilst results are very high in both key stages in 1999, they were lower in both key stages in 1998. The 1998 year groups at the end of both key stages were unusual. More than one-third were on the school register of special educational needs. The attainment of the younger cohort of pupils, the current Year 3, still gives cause for concern, and school test results confirm that standards achieved in this year group are consistently lower than those achieved by other year groups.

Trends over time have greater validity. Both eleven and seven year old pupils have achieved standards above the national average for their age in three of the last four years.

The comparison of each individual pupil's progress through the school also has greater validity. The school uses a growing number of nationally-validated tests to monitor the progress of each individual. These results show, for example, that all pupils who took the 1999 eleven year old tests made the gains that are expected, and a good proportion did better than this.

Care must also be taken when comparing a year group's achievements in the end of Key Stage I tests with their achievements four years later, at the end of Key Stage 2. Often quite considerable changes take place in the year group between tests. For example, of the nine pupils taking the tests for eleven year olds in 1999, only four were pupils at the school at the time of the tests for seven year olds.

Over time, both seven and eleven year old girls have achieved well above average test results. During the same period of time, boys attainment has been much lower in most subjects. In English and mathematics, older girls have achieved scores that are an average half a level higher than boys. Similar differences in the attainment of boys and girls were found in these subjects, particularly English, during the inspection. The inspection evidence is that this is not related to teaching. Throughout the school, teachers work hard to gain boys' interest. Staff training on raising boys' attainment has been undertaken. On entry

to school the spread of attainment indicates that there is a larger proportion of girls with higher attainment levels, and a larger proportion of boys with special educational needs. However, year groups are very small, and such evidence must be treated with caution. Even so, the inspection evidence indicates that the school is taking appropriate action to raise the attainment of boys in a situation where there is a pre-existing imbalance in attainment, and both girls and boys make good progress through the school.

Children enter reception with a range of attainment levels similar to those expected nationally for children of this age. They make good progress overall, largely because the provision is very good, particularly the quality of teaching, and they themselves are keen and enthusiastic learners. By the time they are five, most children exceed the levels expected in the nationally recognised curriculum for children of this age, [The Desirable Learning Outcomes](#).

In English, pupils make sound progress in speaking and listening skills overall. They make good progress in their reading. Home and school work closely together to support and guide each pupil's progress, particularly in the younger classes. Progress in writing is good overall, and pupils produce many well-crafted and thought-provoking pieces. However, neither spelling nor handwriting is developed methodically enough for all pupils to make sufficient progress in these two areas.

In mathematics, pupils are given sufficient opportunities in all attainment targets and they make good progress. Work done on numeracy skills in particular is consolidated well in other subjects.

In science, progress is good. Through the school, pupils methodically learn how to recognise and plan a test that is fair. From the youngest age, pupils learn to use their natural inquisitiveness to question what they see around them.

In information technology, attainment is well above expectations for pupils' age and progress is very good. Pupils are confident and competent when using both hardware and software. Particularly impressive is their understanding of the uses and limitations of information technology. By Year 6, they are able to make well-informed choices of how and when it is appropriate to use it.

In art, progress is sound overall. Pupils sketch and draw accurately. They work carefully to explore the styles and techniques of famous artists, skillfully to use graphics programs to produce accurate portraits and imaginative work. This is an improvement upon the previous inspection.

In design and technology they make good progress, developing and honing their skills in a range of techniques. Their perseverance and attention to detail are important factors in the good progress they make. This is an improvement upon the previous inspection.

In geography, pupils make sound progress. They have a good understanding of different localities in Britain particularly, and discuss their similarities and differences. This is an improvement upon the previous inspection.

In history, they make good progress. They have a good sense of chronology. The good range of artefacts supplied by the local loan collection and their parents help bring the subject to life and they learn much from close observation of them. Important to their progress are the good links with other subjects.

In music, progress is sound. Pupils have a good range of opportunities to compose, perform and sing. These are extended by instrumental tuition and the links with other local schools.

In physical education, progress varies. In swimming, games and dance it is good and often very good. In gymnastics however, limitations in accommodation mean the pupils' attainment levels are poor and

they do not experience the full range of the relevant programme of study of the National Curriculum. Even so, the school does much to enable pupils to receive a wide range of opportunities.

Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. Support is well targeted so that it is generally available when pupils need it most. Classroom assistants are also skilled at guiding these pupils. These two reasons are important factors in the good progress pupils make and each year a good number move down or off the register.

An important factor in pupils good progress is the school=s involvement with other local schools. Pupils receive many opportunities, across all curriculum subjects, that would not be possible otherwise. These are particularly beneficial to their intellectual and personal development, and generally mean they are able to adjust quickly to secondary education.

Although pupils use information books in the classroom and information technology, such as the internet or CD ROM, well to research, only the very youngest and eldest use the library regularly. Some have little understanding of how to find a particular book in the library, and this impedes their progress.

The school has implemented the new national initiatives in both literacy and numeracy well, and this is beneficial to pupils= progress. The good level and standard of monitoring too is an important factor. Good practice is shared and, where relative weaknesses found, they are resolved successfully.

The great majority of parents state that the school enables their children to achieve a good standard of work. They believe that the recent national initiatives in literacy and numeracy are enjoyed by their children, and raising standards. They particularly like the topic work, which their children find stimulating, science, recent improvements in information technology and dance.

The generally favourable previous inspection report noted under-achievement in Key Stage 2 in aspects of English, mathematics and science; and in the subjects of art, design and technology, and geography. This has now been resolved, largely through the improved quality of education, particularly teaching, provided.

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

The attitudes and behaviour of children under five are good. They cope well with life in school, adapting quickly to routines and showing an interest and curiosity in all they do. They concentrate well and generally persevere to finish their tasks. Children readily take the opportunities they are given to make choices and give opinions and suggestions, for example about their practical science work. They mix well together and soon form good relations with staff. Parents confirm that their children are happy to come to school.

Throughout the school, pupils show very good attitudes to their work. Their positive approach is beneficial to their good progress and a strength of the school. Pupils enjoy coming to school and take a keen interest in their learning. They form very good relationships with their teachers and with each other, fostering a good work ethos. Most pupils quickly develop a sense of personal discipline. All concentrate and work equally successfully on their own, in pairs or in small groups.

Most pupils respond well to the high levels of challenge. They are eager to suggest answers to questions and to offer ideas. As they mature, they are given more opportunities for personal study. These they take with enthusiasm, even if the task is difficult. They are particularly keen to plan and start

practical work. The majority of pupils make perceptive comments and teachers refer to these and use them to develop discussion. There are very few distractions in class and poor behaviour very rarely disrupts the learning process.

Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils= positive relationships with each other and with adults in the school make a significant impact on their personal development. They are always courteous to adults, whether staff, visitors or volunteers helping in class. Pupils of all ages mix well in the playground where the older pupils have responsibilities, including helping younger ones, which they carry out diligently. They set a good example of caring for each other. This creates a happy atmosphere around the school, where there are very few signs of tension. No pupil has been exclude from the school in recent years.

The personal development of pupils is very good. Pupils willingly take on the opportunities they are given to take responsibility. Pupils understand the need to be responsible, and they take these opportunities seriously. For example, when some noticed that younger pupils were not taking their milk they made the school staff aware of it. Pupils show concern for the needs of each other. They are patient with those who need longer to answer. They readily participate in the good range of extra-curricular activities, discovering new interests and learning more about the world. Some older pupils attend an after school club at a local secondary school, where they begin to experience a wider education. These pupils organise themselves well, for example travelling independently.

The school has made good progress since the previous report. The school has maintained the pupils= interest in their work while improving the behaviour of all pupils, which is now very good. Work done to developing social skills is now consistent through the school and there is an appropriate behaviour and discipline policy.

### **Attendance**

Attendance at the school remains good. It is above the national average for primary schools. Registration is done quickly and efficiently and allows the day to start smoothly.

As noted in the previous report, the staggered start time causes problems with punctuality, particularly where brothers or sisters start at different times. This has not been resolved, and consequently it continues to hinder the school in making a brisk start to the working day and creating a purposeful atmosphere.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

Throughout the school, the quality of teaching seen during the inspection was consistently sound or better. Approximately three quarters was good or better, and about a third very good or excellent. This consistently high standard makes a significant contribution to pupils= good progress and is a strength of the school.

Teaching of children under five is very good overall and ranges from sound to outstanding. Teaching fully meets the particular needs of each individual child, enabling each to make good progress. Relationships are good. Staff work closely together and recognise when children need support and when they need a few moments to reach their own conclusions. Assessment is used well to provide challenging tasks which cover the full range of the areas of learning.

Teachers= knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is good. It is particularly effective in Years 5 and 6, where the teachers= good knowledge enables the pupils to understand more deeply. They are taught, for example, how the jive they learn in dance reflected the mood of the historical period which



they study. They recognise that the mood differs greatly from that of the more somber preceding period, which in itself is also reflected in dances of the period. This level of insight is beneficial to pupils' understanding.

Teachers' expectations of their pupils are high. From the earliest age, questioning is challenging and there is a clear expectation that pupils will think carefully about their work.

Teachers' planning is good. What pupils are expected to learn, and how this will be taught, are very clear. This is particularly important where classes have more than one age group. Within the class, careful planning also means that the needs of pupils of different attainment levels are catered for successfully.

The methods and organisation used by teachers are good. The youngest pupils are given good opportunities to develop their ideas. Elsewhere, teachers build upon this good start. The structure of the new national initiatives is used well, both in literacy and numeracy and in other appropriate lessons. Teachers use class activities, particularly plenaries, to good effect. Much is done in these times to check, consolidate and extend the lessons' objectives.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Tasks are well matched to pupils' differing attainment levels and careful use of skilled support staff enables progress to be good.

The management of pupils is good. In all classes there is a good rapport. The need for rules, as well as the rules themselves, are clearly explained and understood. Teachers rarely have to punish pupils. Consequently, time spent upon teaching and learning is maximised.

The use of time and resources is sound overall. Generally, no time is wasted. Pupils know clearly what they are expected to do, and by when. Where activities take longer, pupils are given regular time reminders to ensure they stay on task and finish in the time allotted. Resources are carefully chosen to fit the lessons' intention. When exploring nets, for example, Years 3 and 4 use a construction kit that enables the pupils to open up the shape in each net. They consequently have greater understanding of the relationship between the net and the shape. Where time is used less effectively, it is because occasional lessons are extended to fill the time available, rather than additional or more appropriate activities planned for these short periods.

The quality and use of day-to-day assessment varies but is good overall. It is very good in Year 2, where work is carefully marked and pupils are given clear guidance on how to make the next steps in their learning. It is excellent in Years 5 and 6, where it is also precise to each pupil's needs.

The use of homework is good. Activities are closely related to pupils' work in class and support their learning well. All are useful to pupils' learning. Tasks are as carefully assessed as pupils' work in school.

Parents feel strongly that their children receive good quality teaching. They particularly praise the inspirational teaching of topic work. Several relate examples of how the staff have enabled their children, struggling in other schools, to enjoy school and make better progress.

Concerns raised in the previous inspection report have largely been addressed, although this is probably as much to do with staffing changes as effective management. Poor management, poor use of assessment and insufficient challenge have all been successfully resolved.

## **The curriculum and assessment**

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, except in one strand of the programmes of study for physical education. The locally agreed syllabus for religious education is covered fully. All pupils enjoy equal access to the curriculum and related activities.

The curriculum for children who are under five is very good. Careful planning enables them to experience a good range of activities in each of the recommended areas of learning. By the time they are five, most have moved smoothly into the programmes of study of the National Curriculum.

The curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 is good overall, although the provision for handwriting and spelling is a relative weakness. The majority of the physical education curriculum is well provided for in weekly visits to a leisure centre and in games and sports. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities in gymnastics for them to cover this strand of the subject adequately.

Planning structures are good. Each term's plans are founded on a comprehensive curricular framework which links all the subjects well. Where planning is not as effective, such as in handwriting and spelling, progress is insufficient. Teachers plan closely together, sharing expertise effectively. The school has good procedures to enable the curriculum co-ordinators to monitor planning in their own subjects. Evaluation of lessons is generally effective, on the rare occasion it is not this is usually because the learning objectives, against which such evaluations are made, were not clear. Cross curricular work is generally, but not always, planned effectively with clear links so that new learning in one subject reinforces previously learning in another. This is beneficial to pupils' progress.

The curriculum meets the needs of the pupils on the register of special educational needs very well. These pupils have full access to the curriculum. Suitable work is planned and provided, and they receive good support. These factors all contribute to the good progress they make towards the targets identified in their individual education plans.

The curriculum fully prepares all pupils for the next stage of their education. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been fully and effectively implemented. Health, sex and drugs education form part of the science syllabus and are covered adequately.

Good provision is made for the arts, although it is predominantly focused on western culture. Provision for the personal development of the pupils is good. They are given good opportunities to be independent and to take responsibility for themselves. In response to the concerns of the parents, teachers now set suitable homework which is carefully structured and relevant to class lessons.

A very good range of extra curricular activities enhances the curriculum. The school has close links with other local schools, and these are beneficial to pupils' progress. This association provides many opportunities that enhance and enrich the curriculum. For example, pupils take part in a wide range of sporting fixtures, musical events and other activities. They also participate in good number and variety of educational visits. These include a residential visit for the eldest, again linking with other schools.

The governing body is very supportive and closely involved. Each governor is linked to a subject and visits occur regularly. These visits are seen as useful by both the school, which welcomes their comments and views, and the governors, who feel more fully informed.

Assessment procedures are very good overall. The school has very good procedures for assessing numeracy, literacy and science. Teachers and pupils agree individual targets and these are monitored regularly. A good number of tests is used to good effect. All statutory requirements are fulfilled, and other tests used regularly to check pupils' progress. In addition the school keeps a portfolio of assessed work for each pupil which is also used to monitor progress. The school is currently extending this good practice to

include foundation subjects.

Assessment of the progress of pupils with special educational needs is good. Their work is closely monitored and changed appropriately when assessment suggests this is necessary. Parents are regularly informed of their children's progress.

Parents generally speak highly of their children's curriculum. They feel well informed about the use of tests, and the scores their children achieve. They value the good range of extra curricular activities their children enjoy.

The previous report highlighted the school's need for a whole school curriculum framework and schemes of work for each subject to ensure coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study. These are now in place. There is a resulting improvement in the breadth and balance of the whole curriculum, which is now good.

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

The overall provision for pupils= spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The opportunities provided by the school enrich pupils= lives. Spiritual and social development are particularly strong. Moral development is good. Cultural development is more varied but overall sound. The provision for learning about the pupils= own culture is good. The provision for learning about other cultures, a weakness at the time of the previous inspection, remains unsatisfactory.

Provision for spiritual development is very good. It contributes very strongly to the school ethos: a strength of the school. During assembly, pupils are regularly encouraged to reflect on the beauty of the world, for example by noticing the colours of the flowers in the tubs outside the church. They are skillfully led to consider the beauties of the wider world, and the contrast between God's work and man's work. The prayer used, composed by one of the pupils= grandfathers, re-focused attention on the wonder of the natural world. The spirituality encouraged in all assemblies is reflected in all aspects of the school's work: the uplifting nature of assembly and its obvious importance to staff sets the tone for the whole of the school day. Reverence, awe and the enjoyment of life in all its rich variety are found in all subjects: in science, when the younger children looked at fish, and speculated about what might be inside; in history, when the oldest pupils learnt about the social and cultural gulf between evacuees and their host families.

Provision for pupils= moral development is good. Pupils= generally very good behaviour stems in part from this provision. Pupils understand the need for rules in a community such as a school, and are encouraged to consider their own responsibility for making sound moral choices. Staff consistently encourage moral values, and regularly ask pupils to consider the reason for, and consequences of, their own decisions. The youngest pupils quickly understand the school's code of behaviour. Testament to the school's success is that pupils who move to this school from other schools, some because they were unhappy, settle in very quickly and are readily absorbed into the existing moral climate. All pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong.

The provision for pupils= social development is very good. Adults in the school provide good role models for pupils by their co-operation and respect. The close and harmonious relationships throughout the school play a key role in producing the happy and productive atmosphere. There is a strong sense that the school is a community, where everyone helps each other: the oldest pupils naturally help and support the youngest pupils, and are always aware when someone is unhappy. They very effectively help the youngest pupils to settle in, and to negotiate the difficulties of school life. Pupils are encouraged to relate positively to each other. They have numerous opportunities to mix with pupils from other

schools, and this is an important factor in their social development. Parents state their children generally settle quickly to secondary education, and offer these links, built over time, as one reason. The residential visits also contribute to their growing maturity. Good foundations are laid in the youngest class, where high levels of independence are encouraged. Other teachers build on these good foundations effectively as pupils move through the school.

Provision for pupils= cultural education is sound overall. It is good in relation to pupils= own culture, but unsatisfactory in relation to other cultures. The school curriculum provides a rich diet of art, music and literature: but examples are from a limited range, largely European. The good range of visits and visitors contribute to enrich the curriculum, broaden pupils= cultural horizons, the range of their interests and to promote their appreciation of their own cultural traditions. Links with other local schools extend and enhance this further. However, work in history, geography, art and music does not raise pupils= awareness of life in other countries beyond Europe, although awareness of life in other times is enhanced in history. Appreciation of other cultures within the United Kingdom is not promoted sufficiently through the curriculum and pupils are not prepared for life in a society that contains a wide range of customs and beliefs.

Parents believe that the attitudes and values that the school promotes have a beneficial effect on their children. They speak highly of the school=s provision, and many state it is an important factor in their choice of this school.

The previous inspection raised one concern: the limited provision for cultural education. The school has worked hard to develop ways of teaching pupils to appreciate their own culture, but it does not yet prepare them to understand other cultures.

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

The provision made for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils is very good. It is a strength of the school. Pupils are confident in the advice of their teachers. Behaviour is well managed throughout the school, as is attendance. Parents find it easy to approach teachers with matters concerning their children=s personal progress and welfare.

Procedures for monitoring pupils= academic progress and personal development are very good. The procedures for introducing the children and their parents to school are well planned and effectively ensure that new children settle quickly into the routines of school life. This smooth transition is greatly helped as the majority of the children attend pre-school provision situated adjacent to the school. This is beneficial to children as they adjust to their new surroundings. Teachers know their pupils well. Time is given to the consideration of each and every individual, particularly those who are thought to be making less progress than expected. Parents of these pupils are involved immediately. Progress through this programme is closely monitored to ensure its effectiveness.

The school has begun to set targets for each pupil and these are beneficial to the rate of progress each makes. Targets may relate to improving work, attitude or behaviour. Pupils find this very helpful and enjoy having clear objectives to work towards. They take pleasure in achieving their goals. Pupils particularly enjoy the opportunity to talk individually to their teacher about their progress, strengths and areas for improvement. The information gathered by teachers also provides the basis for discussion with parents.

Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good. The school's behaviour policy is closely linked to the partnership agreement with parents. The guidelines encourage staff to foster good manners and a sense of self-discipline amongst pupils, and to give them increased responsibility as they grow older. Teachers' high expectations of behaviour and pupils' positive attitudes ensure lessons proceed with purpose and at a good pace. Pupils are clear what to do if they believe someone is being unkind to them. In the relatively few occasions when behaviour is not of this high standard, staff act quickly and effectively.

Procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance are good. With the co-operation of parents, almost all absence is accounted for. Where this is not the case, staff are vigilant and take prompt action. The Education Welfare Officer visits the school regularly, but currently there are no pupils causing concern. The staggered start to the day still accounts for lapses in punctuality, some of which are regular.

Procedures for child protection and promoting pupils' well-being and health and safety are good. The health and safety policy of the school is thorough. Staff and governors carry out routine checks of premises and equipment and defects are dealt with swiftly. All staff, including those new to the school, are fully aware of child protection procedures. Accidents and injuries are treated promptly, records kept and parents informed.

Pupils= personal and health education is covered in a well devised programme which includes sex education and drugs awareness. Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to discuss issues concerning their health, safety and for the older pupils, life after primary school. The school ensures no child misses any school-organised event through a family=s financial circumstances. By their fund-raising and valuable help in school, governors, parents and volunteers help widen the educational opportunities offered to pupils.

The school has made a good response to concerns expressed in the previous inspection report. A good personal and social education programme has been introduced and methods of monitoring pupils= progress are much improved. The school has also responded to parents= requests to be involved at an earlier stage if there are any concerns about their children.

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

The school=s partnership with parents is good. Parents are very supportive of the school and appreciate the efforts made to involve them in their children= education. There is a strong sense of community locally and a commitment to see the school thrive at its centre.

The quality of information for parents is good. The governors= annual report is interesting and informative and parents find the general newsletters excellent. Parents coming into school are well informed of children=s progress by the quality of displays and frequent examples of good work. The school has responded well to parents= concerns about the school=s homework policy, which have been met.

Pupils= annual reports are personal and give details of what pupils know and can do. They include targets for improvement which parents find very helpful. Parents state that the teachers know their children very well. Regular meetings with teachers enable parents to support their children well. Pupils reading diaries provide a good home and school link. They are well used by parents and teachers, particularly in the younger classes, to communicate more generally.

An active parents= association raises substantial amounts of money which are generally used for particular projects that are very beneficial to the quality of education provided by the school. Parents and other volunteers regularly help in classrooms and around the school, for example by hearing individual pupils read or by organising after school clubs. This is much appreciated by the school.

The school has close links with the local community and their involvement in various aspects of school is actively encouraged and clearly demonstrated. A local garden centre has given advice freely to pupils engaged in a project to improve the school surrounds. This, and the good range of visits from members of the community, enhance the curriculum.

The previous inspection report was favourable and raised no concerns, and this remains true.

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

### **Leadership and management**

Overall, the leadership and management of the school are good.

The school has a clear educational direction. The management team of headteacher and deputy headteacher complement one another well. The headteacher embodies the values of the school well, setting a good example of commitment and caring for all. These qualities contribute significantly to pupils' good attitudes and personal development. The deputy headteacher has a very good understanding of curricular issues and leads developments well. The collegial management style secures commitment and good teamwork from the hard-working staff. New staff are quickly made to feel part of the team and encouraged to contribute.

Support and monitoring of teaching are good. Through discussion, areas are identified and monitored. Feedback is given, good practice shared.

Support and monitoring of curriculum development are also good. All staff are fully involved in the process of monitoring the subjects for which they are responsible. There is much evidence of the benefits of this, largely because good practice is shared, or difficulties identified and appropriate training provided.

Governors are fully involved, too. The annual cycle ensures that monitoring is regular and never burdensome. This is beneficial, both to the school and the governors themselves, who become more knowledgeable and consequently better able to make more informed decisions.

Implementation of the school's aims, values and policies is good. The school community has been involved in redefining the aims of the school, and they are clearly at the centre of all it does.

Development planning, monitoring and evaluation are good. The governing body is appropriately involved and the expertise of individual governors is used well.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed well and these pupils make good progress.

The school's ethos is very good. A very good climate for learning exists throughout the school. Pupils' attitudes to learning, and relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst pupils, are positive. All pupils enjoy equal opportunities. These strengths have a positive effect upon pupils' learning and their personal and social development.

Parents speak highly of the quality of leadership of the school. They feel the Headteacher gives a good lead, particularly in areas such as moral values and attitudes to others. They feel governors are effective and staff highly committed.

The school has generally responded well to the previous inspection. The majority of the issues raised in the report were addressed effectively in the action plan that followed.

Except for appraisal, statutory requirements are fully met.

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

The school has sufficient teachers who are appropriately qualified and experienced and well able to meet the demands of the curriculum. They form a well-balanced team with a range of strengths which complement each other.

Sufficient classroom assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' progress, particularly the young and those with special educational needs. This is largely because they are well trained, deployed carefully to best meet pupils' needs, well prepared and informed by teachers, and confident in their roles. Ancillary staff are also effective.

The professional development of all staff is carefully balanced and effectively organised. The needs of the curriculum currently, the future plans outlined in the school improvement plan, and the needs of each individual member of staff are carefully balanced. Good use is made of the local schools' association to provide training for staff whenever possible. If plans do not meet the needs of the school, however, training is done separately.

Arrangements for the induction of new members of staff are good. They are well supported and quickly become effective members of the whole staff team.

Whilst staff have informal discussions with the headteacher, particularly to consider future training needs, there is no appraisal process in place. Although staff work effectively and understand their roles, they have no current job descriptions that clearly outline what is expected of them.

A major building programme since the previous inspection means the accommodation is much improved and provides a stimulating learning environment. The building is bright, well cared for and clean. Displays of work are used well. However, accommodation is still unsatisfactory. One classroom is very small and the school still lacks a hall. This has a significant impact. There is no provision for indoor physical education. School assemblies take place in the nearby church, which requires the whole school moving from one building to another. There is no dedicated play area for children under five. Lunches have to be eaten in a classroom. The school copes well with these disadvantages and does much to overcome them. Even so, the steps it takes use considerable amounts of curriculum time.

Resources are generally sufficient, well-chosen and of good quality. Significant recent improvements in information technology have been particularly important in raising pupils' standards. Subject co-ordinators review resources to ensure they meet the needs of the curriculum. Resources are well organised and easily accessible.

Since the previous inspection there have been several improvements. A new library has been provided with some well-chosen literature and reference books. Provision for information technology is much improved. There is now a good structure for deciding on priorities for buying new resources and provision is much improved. There is, however, still no formal appraisal system.

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

The overall efficiency of the school is good.

Financial planning is good and clearly linked to the school improvement plan. The expertise of individual governors is efficiently used. The work of the governing body is well supported by a committee structure.

The use of teaching staff is good. Monitoring is thorough and methodically organised. It is effective in raising standards. The implementation of both literacy and numeracy lessons is monitored and, where necessary, improvements made.

The use of support staff is also good. Each individual is encouraged to develop their skills and expertise, and the latter is used very effectively. They are encouraged to be fully involved in the school.



The use of learning resources is good. All resources, such as those for literacy, are carefully chosen. Their use and effectiveness are both checked.

Whilst lesson time is well used in literacy and numeracy, this is not always the case. Occasional very short sessions are used with varying effectiveness. Whilst some teachers have a clear plan for their use, others tend to allow the previous lesson to carry on and fill the void. On these occasions, the pace drops and less is achieved.

Funds allocated for special educational needs are used effectively and support for these pupils is of good quality. The efficiency with which these funds are used is apparent as a relatively high proportion move down or off the register.

The use of accommodation is good. Extensions and improvements, for example to computer work stations, are carefully considered. All are of benefit to the quality of education provided for pupils. The school does all it can to overcome the shortcomings effectively. Good use is made of the church for assemblies and small group work. Good use is also made of a local facility for many aspects of physical education.

The efficiency of financial control is good. The governors and headteacher receive good information. Governors have a good understanding of how spending decisions impact upon the budget, and a strong commitment to maximise the use to which money is put. The recommendations of the most recent audit report have been put in place.

School administration is good and does much to support the smooth running of the school. Good systems and appropriate information are used for all procedures.

The school provides good value for money. Pupils join the school with broadly average academic standards. At school they make good progress generally and achieve above average standards. Their behaviour and attitudes are very good. The school provides its pupils with a supportive start within a very caring environment. The level of expenditure is similar to other schools of this size.

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

### **Areas of learning for children under five**

Children who have not yet reached their fifth birthday are taught in the reception class. At the time of the inspection, fifteen children in this class were under five. Children begin to attend full-time in the term in which they become five. The remainder attend mornings only. None of the children under five are on the school's register of special educational needs. Great care is taken to see that these children make a smooth and positive transition to school life.

Children under five are provided for well. All children make good progress, even if they find learning difficult. They respond to very good teaching and very high expectations by working as hard as they can. The quality of teaching they receive is a major factor in the good progress they make. By the time they are five more than half of them have exceeded the nationally agreed targets for five year olds: the Desirable Learning Outcomes. Children are prepared well to begin work in the programmes of study of the National Curriculum.

When they start school, children's attainment varies very significantly from year to year. The present reception class contains a range of ability that is within that expected nationally. Some children find it easy to adjust to school life, others need a great deal of support and encouragement so that they can make friends, talk to other children and master early skills vital to their later progress.

The resources for work and play indoors are well-chosen, plentiful, accessible and stimulating. There is no dedicated play area, either hard or soft, for reception children, and no equipment such as tricycles or scooters to encourage skills such as balance. The lack of a school hall limits access to physical activities indoors. There are no self-contained toilets for reception. Good use is made of all available space.

Since the previous inspection, the strengths in the reception class have been maintained and standards have improved. This is particularly noticeable in information technology, where the enormous improvements in hardware and software have been seamlessly incorporated into the learning of these young children. There is a comprehensive Early Years policy. The school is well-placed to continue to offer good quality provision for children of this age. The high standards and the very good teaching make the reception class a strength of the school.

### **Personal and social development**

Children make very good progress in their personal and social development. They enjoy coming to school, look forward to the stimulating activities they are given, and to seeing their friends. They settle down to registration and listen to instructions very sensibly. The children have good relationships with one another and staff, readily sharing their experiences, and demonstrating positive attitudes to learning. They concentrate well for their age. They are learning to complete their tasks to a good standard and to tidy away the things they have used, so that the work area is ready for the next task. Invariably, they are enthusiastic, eager and interested in what they do. These children are learning to behave well in class and group activities and have developed a clear idea of right and wrong. They happily take turns in the role play area, and on the computer. The importance of personal hygiene is understood. For example, they know they should throw away the straw they have used to make bubbles for their fish scale painting after its use. Their spiritual and cultural development is enhanced by activities in science, art and music, when they look at still life paintings by Cezanne, and carry out research for their own work. They take part in school assemblies in the nearby church and respond well to hymns and prayers.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff know their children very well, so each individual is given the right level of support and encouragement. Whilst some children may be challenged to think for themselves therefore, others who may find the task too demanding are given sensitive support to enable them to succeed. A very good range of activities is provided to foster children=s personal and social development.

### **Language and literacy**

Children make good progress in language and literacy and by the time they are five, their attainment exceeds national expectations. They listen carefully to adults and to each other and follow instructions. This has a positive effect on their progress and was particularly noticeable in science and art lessons. They talk about their own lives with varying degrees of confidence, and hold sensible conversations with each other about their work. For example, they discuss whether they need an HB, 4B or 6B pencil for their drawing, and decide that they need HB because they are drawing an outline, not shading. These higher attaining children use complex sentences for their age. Their attainment in writing is good: they use a range of pencils and crayons confidently and with discrimination. They happily draw pictures of themselves, some quite detailed, and many write their own name underneath. Those who are still learning this, copy from cards, or the teacher writes their name correctly, after they have made an attempt to write it. Children know some simple spelling patterns, and have learnt sections of text from the *Abig@* book which they easily identify. The higher attainers identify *AG@* and *Ag@*, know they represent the same sound and explain that *AG@* is for names. All the children have a lively interest in books, words and reading. Many of them know most of the letter sounds, but do not always use this knowledge when reading; they still depend on recognising words by sight.

The quality of teaching is very good. The rate of children=s progress is largely due to good provision and skilful teaching. Planning diligently takes account of children=s previous successes and areas for development. Activities are equally carefully chosen and designed to ensure that each child receives the teaching necessary to make the progress that might be expected of them. Staff listen to children patiently and help them to express their ideas. Children=s writing and art are very skillfully incorporated into displays.

### **Mathematics**

Children make good progress in mathematics. The vast majority recognise, write and understand numbers to ten and count different quantities accurately. They count aloud in twos and work out *More than@* or *Less than@* on a number line. They use size vocabulary, such as *Bigger than@* or *Smaller than@*, correctly, for example when describing what they are doing or when using building blocks to make different sized beds, tables or chairs. They compare the mass of two objects by holding them in their hands and use vocabulary associated with weighing appropriately, the youngest with some encouragement from staff. Children are familiar with every day number rhymes. By the time they are five, the attainment of most children exceeds national expectations.

The quality of teaching is good. Careful planning ensures that the provision for children=s mathematical development is good. The staff are skilful at including mathematical activities in all areas of the curriculum. Key vocabulary is taught and reinforced regularly. The adults work well together and form an effective team. The classroom assistant skillfully uses the teacher=s good planning, for example to develop children=s knowledge of weighing. She subsequently uses good questioning techniques to check their understanding.

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

Children make good, and often very good, progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are curious and fascinated by the natural world and have a mature appreciation of its beauty and potential dangers. They are keen to find things out, often making their own simple suggestions for how this might be done. They describe simple features of objects and living things, and explain what they have found out clearly to one another. During the inspection the children were comparing a fish with dolls they had made. They knew that the fish had once been a living creature, and that the dolls had been made. They checked for breathing with a stethoscope from the role play area. They predicted what might be inside the dolls and were very curious about what might be inside the fish. Children use the computer skillfully, for example to practise writing their names in a literacy lesson or to use the Internet for research. They work independently to create pictures using a graphics program, and enjoy explaining how they changed the shape and colours on the screen. In all these activities, their use of mouse, keyboard and tool bar is generally quick and accurate.

The quality of teaching is often excellent or very good. Particularly important is the care with which activities are planned. Children=s natural curiosity is carefully channelled towards scientific investigation. Careful questioning enables them to decide how to investigate. Tasks given support children=s personal, social, and language development very effectively. No opportunity is wasted. When comparing fish and dolls, the children raised questions and the teacher led a sensitive discussion about how they might safely and respectfully find out. The activity promoted awareness of living and once-living creatures and non-living objects, and fostered a healthy respect for safety and the sanctity of life. The very good organisational skills of the teacher, and the very good management of the children, allow information technology skills to be taught effectively.

## **Creative development**

Children make very good progress in their creative development. By the time they are five, they can name a range of percussion instruments and know the difference between a tambour and a tambourine. They use a wide range of media accurately and sensitively. They select the correct type of pencil for shading, they use pastels well and know how to blend and shade. They independently make their own bubbles with a straw, and predict what kind of effect the medium chosen will have when applied to paper. Most reach standards well above those expected nationally.

The quality of teaching is very good. Good knowledge and understanding enables music to be skillfully taught, allowing children to achieve levels above those expected nationally. Excellent opportunities are provided for children to research in the library or to use information technology, for example to prepare for an art lesson. The good range of resources provided and the careful teaching of how and when to use each one, enables the children to make very good progress.

## **Physical development**

Progress in children=s physical development is generally good. They cut, paint, glue and draw accurately. Children throw and catch, run and chase with a good awareness of one another=s space. They are generally happy in the water and most float with an aid. Most enjoy having the water over their heads. A few can swim several strokes. Children throw and catch balls with some success and some have learnt to skip. Through practice, they are beginning to refine and improve these skills. They use a parachute to practise co-ordination skills; work co-operatively, and take care to control their section of the parachute so that the group can enjoy the activity. The lack of a hall and a reception activity area restrict overall progress in the development of these skills.

The quality of teaching is good. Within the restrictions imposed by the accommodation, a good range of

opportunities are provided. Skills are well taught.

## ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

### English

The equivalent of nine in every ten eleven year old pupils achieved the expected level in English in the 1999 national tests, a proportion well above the national average. The proportion who achieved a higher level was very high in comparison with the national average. When attainment is compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, it remains well above average. Largely because of the relatively small number of pupils in each year group, and the relatively high proportion of pupils moving in and out of the school after Year 2, attainment fluctuates from year to year. Nevertheless, in three of the last four years it has been above the national average. In this time, the performance of boys has been below the national average in two years, while the performance of girls has been consistently well above the national average.

All seven year old pupils achieved the expected level in reading and writing in the 1999 national tests, a proportion very high in comparison with both the national average and the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. However, the proportion of pupils achieving a higher level was much smaller. Whilst it exceeded the national average in writing, it was below the national average in reading and the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds in both areas. These results also fluctuate from year to year, although there is much less movement of pupils during this key stage. Over three of the last four years the performance of seven year olds was above the national average in reading and writing. Results over the last three years indicate that the performance of boys in reading is close to the national average while in writing it is well below the national average. Over the same period, the performance of girls in reading has been very high and in writing it was well above the national average. Inspection evidence confirms that standards of attainment are above average at the end of both key stages.

Overall, pupils make good progress from entering the reception class until the time that they leave school at eleven. The rate of progress is similar throughout the school. This reflects the good standard of teaching and the effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. One class contains a single year group, the other classes are all mixed-age classes, but the good level of planning and organisation ensures that there is no disadvantage attached to being in a mixed-age class. Significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls were found during the inspection. The school has recognised this and much is being done to raise boys' attainment, both through staff training and the creation of a learning environment more favourable to boys. Assessment indicates that this imbalance in attainment levels exists from when the pupils first enter the school. Inspection evidence indicates that both girls and boys currently make similar progress.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their literacy targets, because the school provides well for them. Pupils receive good support and teaching, often from classroom assistants. These pupils benefit both from intensive individual work and from work in small groups.

Standards in speaking and listening are good at the end of both key stages. Pupils listen carefully to the teacher and to each other. Most are articulate and use a wide vocabulary to express themselves clearly.

Overall, pupils make sound progress in speaking and listening. They make good progress when questioning is challenging and develops their thinking; they learn to explain their views and decisions cogently. At other times, pupils are not given sufficient time to develop their understanding through structured discussion or debate, although the majority are quite capable of doing so.

Standards in reading are good overall by the end of both key stages, although the individual levels of pupils vary greatly. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils read aloud correctly with an appropriate degree of expression. They recognise many words on sight, and understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. The youngest pupils use the library regularly for research and explain correctly how to find a book, for example on tropical fish. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils with higher attainment levels read with good levels of fluency and expression. Pupils with lower attainment levels read more slowly and with little expression. Most pupils accurately answer questions about what has happened in the book they are reading, and speculate thoughtfully about what might happen next using their knowledge of the characters to determine what they might do. Few of these older pupils use public libraries for research or pleasure. Whilst many explain how to use a library, some are not aware that there is a classification system for books.

Much is done to develop pupils' reading skills and they make good progress overall. Higher attaining pupils make very good progress, as do pupils with special educational needs. Boys generally make sound progress, although there is no specific plan to raise their attainment. Younger pupils are heard reading regularly by the teacher or an assistant. Pupils make good progress in guided reading activities during the literacy hour. Parents are actively involved in helping with reading. In the younger classes particularly, they are given useful guidance by the teachers. Pupils read well in the literacy hour. They practise their phonic and grammar skills and discuss the content, meaning and ideas in the text they are studying. The work at the end of Year 2 on 'The House Cat' and at the end of Year 6 on 'Friend or Foe?' was particularly supportive for boys' learning about reading: teachers were careful to choose ideas and examples accessible to the boys in their class, and worked hard to extend their learning. The school has chosen its literacy hour resources wisely and they are used well to further pupils' progress. Appropriate targets are set for different reading groups.

Standards of writing in relation to content, length, grammar and punctuation are good at the end of both key stages. In Key Stage 2, for example, pupils write moving and imaginative diary extracts based on their reading about the Second World War. They adroitly use a range of writing styles, voice over for example, and write persuasively when creating their travel brochures. Standards of spelling and handwriting, whilst still sound, are a relative weakness.

Progress in writing through the school is generally good. Many opportunities are presented for pupils to write imaginatively in a range of styles. Vocabulary is generally chosen carefully to explain clearly, or adventurously to interest the reader. The effective use of different forms of sentence construction is carefully fostered and honed. There is no effective whole school approach to the teaching of spelling. Consequently, although a small number of pupils have individual targets related to spelling, the needs of the majority are not as closely identified nor addressed. Progress in handwriting varies from year-to-year, largely depending upon the expectations of the teacher. Handwriting is often neat and work on display is attractive and well-presented. In work books, and in writing in other subjects, expectations throughout the school are inconsistent. In Year 1, pupils learn a joined style of script and take care in the presentation of their work, but this good start is not built upon sufficiently as the pupils pass into other classes.

Staff have implemented the National Literacy Strategy well. Effective literacy hours were observed in every class. All elements of the literacy hour are successfully incorporated, and the monitoring of lessons has ensured that good practice is shared throughout the school. At Key Stage 1, pupils have sufficient opportunity for personal writing and for writing in other subjects. At Key Stage 2, careful planning ensures that the lesson's aims are met and that tasks are completed on time.

Pupils have positive attitudes to English in general, although a small proportion of boys do not enjoy reading or writing. This is largely because they have little success in these areas, or because their areas of interest are not covered. Throughout the school, pupils like sharing books with their teacher. All pupils behave

very well, listen attentively and concentrate well. They have good levels of independence for their age, readily using the Internet or their classroom books for research. Pupils share equipment, take turns equably and tidy up after themselves.

The quality of teaching is good overall. In more than three-quarters of the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was good or better. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In the most effective lessons teachers plan their lessons well, have clear learning objectives and set work to match pupils' different levels of attainment. Teachers use questioning effectively to discover what pupils know and understand. They have good relationships with pupils and high expectations of both standards of work and behaviour. Marking is often evaluative, and generally explains clearly what is good about a piece of work, and what needs improving. Teachers usually check that their advice is followed and specific examples of marking, linked to personal targets and resulting in noticeable progress for individual boys, was seen during the inspection. Assessment of one activity is used well in planning the next. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well: staff have high expectations of what these pupils can do and use praise well to motivate them.

Co-ordination is good. Teaching and learning are monitored by the head teacher and the implementation of the literacy hour is monitored by the co-ordinator. Detailed records indicate that action during staff meetings as a result of monitoring is raising standards. Statutory tests are carried out appropriately, and the school has begun to analyse the information.

Since the previous inspection the school has improved the curriculum by the effective adoption of the literacy hour; it has improved the standard of teaching through training and monitoring; assessment has been adopted effectively across the whole school; and a good range of appropriate fiction is available to all year groups.

## **Mathematics**

The equivalent of nine in every ten eleven year old pupils achieved the expected level in mathematics in the 1999 national tests, a proportion well above the national average. The proportion who achieved a higher level was also above the national average. When attainment is compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, it is above average. Largely because of the relatively small number of pupils in each year group, and the relatively high proportion of pupils moving in and out of the school after Year 2, attainment fluctuates from year to year. Nevertheless, in three of the last four years it has been above the national average. During this period, girls achieved higher results than boys.

All seven year old pupils achieved the expected level in the 1999 national tests, a proportion above both the national average and the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. However, whilst the proportion of pupils achieving a higher level was a little above the national average, it was below the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. These results also fluctuate from year to year, although there is much less movement of pupils during this key stage.

The inspection findings generally show that all pupils are achieving high standards for their age. Lesson observations and scrutiny of work indicates that both boys and girls were working at an appropriate standard for their current attainment level. The attainment level of each pupil, including all boys and girls, has been carefully and accurately assessed by the school, and this information used to produce challenging, but realistic, targets for each pupils' achievement. These assessments show good progress by the vast majority of individuals, judged against their attainment on entry and in the regular and periodic tests undertaken.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils add and subtract tens and units to 100. Most find numerous ways to make ten. They find the missing number in a sequence, and use two numerals to make the smallest and largest number possible. They know that you can put two numbers in either order to add them up, but



that it is generally easier to put the largest first. When working mentally, they use their existing knowledge well to solve new or more complex problems. They produce an extensive list of items smaller or larger than one metre, and measure equally accurately using centimetres or hand spans. The vast majority clearly understand the need for standard units of measurement.

By the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils know a range of strategies to solve number problems appropriate to their individual attainment levels. Most give a sensible estimate of an answer, and use this to check the likelihood that they are correct. They use two places of decimals successfully, some beyond this. With support, those of lower attainment levels use fractions to make some calculations. Most pupils are familiar with equivalent and improper fractions and mixed numbers, and use them quickly and accurately. They place various fractions in order of size. Most pupils produce accurate block graphs, for example of temperatures in various capital cities, although few make comparisons or draw conclusions. Pupils have a good understanding of averages.

Throughout the school, progress is generally good. In Year 1, pupils can order numbers to 20. They count on and back in twos and tens, most know ten is double five, and some know all four sides of a square are of equal length. Most can make sensible guesses of the amount of water needed to fill one jar from another. In Year 2, pupils can count in tens to and back from 100. Most know how many must be added to numbers such as 50 to make 80, and a few can add numbers greater than 100. They know the names of regular shapes such as a circle and octagon, and a few can describe their properties accurately. In Year 3, pupils use a good range of strategies to solve problems. For example, they add eleven by adding ten and one, and subtract eleven by the inverse operation. In Year 4, pupils know and can explain the meanings of words such as *Vertex* and *Right angle*. They identify simple nets of three dimensional shapes, and many visualise and describe accurately such a shape from a two dimensional drawing. In Year 5, pupils go on to extend their choice and use of mental strategies well, for example to add two large numbers. Most add to one decimal place. They begin to understand *Mode* and *Mean*. In Year 6, pupils go on to use these and other similar terms in their work, knowing for example that the *Mode* is the number that comes up most often. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. Tasks are carefully modified, for example so that younger pupils work more pictorially, so that these pupils can understand. Classroom assistants are carefully deployed to maximise their effectiveness. The very clear marking of each piece of work, for example in Year 2, is beneficial to pupils' progress in the next.

An important factor in pupils' progress is the good links with other schools. Pupils have the opportunity to work with others from local schools on challenges such as a *Mathematics* trail. Staff have the opportunity to train and plan with others who share similar problems, such as the challenge of teaching mixed-age classes.

Pupils generally concentrate well and are very responsive, particularly to their teachers' questions. The vast majority clearly enjoy the mental warm ups and the imaginative ways in which staff present different activities. Pupils show great patience with those who need longer to answer questions.

Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is good. Tasks planned are very stimulating and most whole class activities move at a good pace, covering much work. Throughout the lesson, regular reference is made to the lesson's objectives, encouraging pupils to focus more clearly. Key vocabulary is used regularly, and teachers have high expectations that their pupils will also use it. During group work, pace is maintained by the use of time references. Plenaries give pupils a good sense of achievement, often because the teacher exploits pupils' answers and explores their questions, skillfully.

A good beginning has been made in the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Planning is clear, particularly how the needs of two different age groups in one class will be met. Monitoring has already

begun and the outcomes used to determine future plans. Pupils are generally working at the appropriate level.

The school has made very good progress in implementing the action plan written in response to the previous inspection report. Using and applying mathematics, and an investigative approach, have been implemented successfully. Management and co-ordination of the subject are very good.

## **Science**

The equivalent of nine out of every ten eleven year old pupils achieved the expected level in science in the 1999 national tests, a proportion above the national average. The proportion who achieved a higher level was also above the national average. When attainment is compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, it is average. Attainment fluctuates from year to year, largely because of the relatively small numbers of pupils in each year group, and the movement of pupils in and out of the school after Year 2. Nevertheless, in three of the last four years it has been above average. During this period, girls have done a little better than boys.

All seven year old pupils achieved the expected level in science in the 1999 assessments completed by the school. Nearly four in every ten went achieved a higher level. Both results are well above both the national average and the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds.

The inspection findings show that pupils are achieving high and occasionally very high standards for their age. This good level of attainment is consistent through all programmes of study of the National Curriculum.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand the requirements for making a fair test and have a good grasp of scientific method. They explain their work both verbally and with a range of recording methods including using the computer. Most pupils know what plants and animals need on order to sustain life. They have a basic knowledge of adaptations for environment and understand something of the interdependence of plants and animals. They know the properties of a good range of materials and understand basic forces including magnetism and electricity.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils sort and classify materials, suggesting some uses that they may be put to. The vast majority have a sound understanding of a fair test. They frame questions with appropriate care, and make sensible suggestions for how they might go about an investigation of the properties of ice. They also suggest criteria by which they might gauge the success of their work.

Progress throughout the school is good. In Year 1, pupils list the similarities and differences between themselves and a doll. They are beginning to develop a notion of a fair test. This develops well through the other year groups and, by Years 3 and 4, pupils have a good understanding of the principles that determine if a test is fair or not. When outcomes are not as they expect, they give well-reasoned views, based upon their scientific knowledge, to explain the discrepancy. In practical or investigative work, however, there is little distinction between the levels the two year groups are working at. In Year 5, pupils have a good understanding of the uses and dangers of electricity. Good progress continues in investigative work, with pupils choosing how to present their findings and using a good variety of methods, including tables and bar charts.

Literacy skills are well used. Note-taking is used regularly, and some older pupils use methods such as bullet-points to explain more clearly. Mathematical skills are also well used, particularly in practical work. Length, time and temperature are examples of areas where measuring is practised and honed. Particularly in the older classes, pupils calculate differences quickly and accurately. These pupils calculate the mean and mode of data they collect.

The pupils enjoy their lessons. They work well together and share working space and equipment well. They work independently when required, making decisions about their own experiments and reporting outcomes clearly. They are not afraid to express opinions or to test ideas which might prove wrong.

Throughout the school, the quality of teaching seen during the inspection was at least satisfactory, generally good, and occasionally very good. An important factor in the success of teaching is the good planning with clear learning intentions firmly based on key objectives. Work is progressive, one lesson building well on good revision of earlier work. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, enabling them to fully participate in whole class discussions.

The curriculum is well balanced and there are good cross-curricular links, for example when Year 6 used their knowledge of electrical circuits when designing and making powered vehicles. Clear curricular planning enables teachers to meet the needs of both year groups in mixed-age classes. Staff monitor coverage effectively by checking regularly against the key objectives they have set. Assessment procedures are very good, particularly enabling progress to be carefully monitored so that each individual pupil is enabled to do as well as might be expected.

Co-ordination is good and effective in recognising and resolving comparative weaknesses. For example, teaching plans were adjusted because work in the physical sciences appeared to be weak. Investigative work has been extended effectively to encourage the development of these skills.

Since the previous report a good scheme of work has been introduced. The curriculum is now well balanced and is no longer dominated by worksheets. Assessment procedures are good and standards of work across the science curriculum are consistently high.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **Information technology**

Attainment in information technology is generally very high at the end of both key stages. Because of the provision made, particularly how well the subject is co-ordinated and taught, it is a strength of the school.

Whilst pupils make very good progress overall, there are some variations. Progress is consistently very good in Key Stage 1. Tasks given, often connected to other subjects, enable the pupils to experience all strands of the subject fully. Although current standards in Years 3 and 4 are similar, when compared with expectations for their age, to those found elsewhere in the school, there is evidence of more limited opportunities and consequently slower progress in these years in the recent past. Progress is particularly noteworthy in Years 5 and 6, where pupils are regularly working at an advanced level for their age.

Pupils make particularly good progress in their understanding of the uses and limitations of information technology. They have been taught how to make good choices of when it is appropriate to use information technology and which software is best for a specific purpose.

In Year 1, pupils use computers to support their work about themselves, writing simple sentences on screen to explain a picture of themselves they have created. They draw themselves carefully; good levels of detail in the face, arms and legs clearly demonstrating good mouse control. They use the tool bar well to choose and change from one effect to another.

Another important factor in pupils' very good progress are the close links with other local schools. Equipment that is expensive or used occasionally is shared. Throughout the school, pupils regularly communicate with particular friends by electronic mail. As well as encouraging friendship, they are given tasks to

perform. For example, the eldest pupils learn how to attached a questionnaire they have written to one letter.

In Year 2, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils collect and enter information, sort it and produce graphs that are useful to them. They extract information from the internet to help with their other work, for example their Easter card designs. With support, all can load and save files. They use a drawing program independently with very good control, for example to put patterns onto jumpers, or fingers onto hands. They correctly program a Aroamer@ with a series of instructions to achieve particular results.

In Years 3 and 4, pupils load, enter, save and print text, for example to record information about a book they are reading. They confidently use programs in their other work, for example to practise and improve their spelling. Although they are currently making good progress, in conversation they clearly do not have the level of understanding of the other year groups. Furthermore, whilst pupils in mixed-age classes elsewhere in the school follow different and appropriate curriculums, there is only very recent evidence of that in this age group.

In Year 5 progress quickens markedly. Pupils cut and paste or scan pictures and illustrations into their work, using the marking facility to allow a variety of sizes, styles and layouts. They use this to good effect in many pieces of work, for example when writing a letter of thanks about their Isle of Wight visit. They create repeating patterns, again using the cut and paste method. They use spreadsheets for a number of purposes, such as calculating the cost of a party, and to a high standard. They instruct the computer to draw regular and often intricate shapes on the screen, also programming it to colour their work. With Year 6 pupils, they test the accuracy of their sound scales using datalogging equipment. Some have begun to produce their own newspaper. They have evaluated ways publications incorporate text and images for a particular effect, and have begun to apply what they have learnt to their own work.

In Year 6, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils create multimedia presentations successfully. They continue to develop and hone their skills, particularly using types and styles of text, or introducing illustrations or photographs, to a more advanced level. They carefully choose from a variety of layouts when writing a letter, for example using bullet points to explain their argument more clearly. They use spreadsheets to cost their design and technology plans, interrogate the computer to analyse information they have previously stored, and use the tiling feature of an art package to create imaginative designs. They make a series of instructions, using multiple procedures, with precision.

Boys and girls all enjoy using the equipment. They are highly motivated to do well, largely because the activities they are given to do are relevant and interesting. Almost always they work well alone or in pairs or small groups.

The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers= good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and age group they teach enables them to explain clearly to their pupils, and to guide those who struggle.

An important element in the rapid progress the school is making is the quality of co-ordination. Curricular planning, purchase of equipment and staff training are all organised to maximise the efficient and effective use of each. Particular expertise of governors and parents is also well used. Relatively minor details are carefully considered. For example, benching has been chosen and designed to give pupils easy and comfortable access to equipment. Consequently no time is wasted and nothing hinders their progress.

Very good progress has been made since the previous inspection report. Teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is much better. Detailed planning now ensures that all strands of the subject are taught and there is good balance between them.

## **Art**

Little teaching of art was seen during the inspection. Scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, coupled with discussions with pupils and staff, show that pupils' progress throughout the school is sound. The school has an effective scheme of work against which the plans are appropriately monitored. The curriculum is well balanced and includes observational, imaginative and design work.

The good range of experiences pupils enjoy enables them to paint in a variety of styles including portraits, illustrations and still life. Good links are made to other subjects, for example when Years 3 and 4 produce colourful collages depicting the fires started during the Roman invasion. On these occasions, work in one subject reinforces knowledge and understanding in the other.

Good progress is made in using graphics programs to produce art. In Year 1, portraits show sound proportion and important characteristics are included. By Year 2, pupils are adding much greater detail such as the pattern on a jumper. Throughout the school pupils experiment with different icons on the tool bar to produce interesting effects to produce atmospheric pictures depicting an autumn day or firework display.

Pupils quickly learn to recognise the approach or method used by an artist, and incorporate it into their own work. For example, in Year 1 pupils use the style of Cezanne to produce interesting prints. The pupils also see a good collection of work by living local artists, which is attractively displayed in school. This, too, influences their own work. However, there is little evidence that work other than that of Western European artists is studied.

Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is sound overall. When teachers assess the pupils' work informally, progress is sound. However, when helpful annotations are added this is more useful to pupils and enables them to approach the next piece of work with greater clarity of what is expected.

A number of improvements have been made since the previous inspection. There is now a well used scheme of work which forms part of the whole curricular framework. Pupils experience a broad programme and learn to use a good variety of materials and equipment. Their work is assessed and well displayed. There is clear progress from year to year. There is no longer evidence of older pupils' underachievement. The resources are good quality and the co-ordinator organises them well.

### **Design and technology**

Little teaching of design and technology was seen during the inspection. Scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, coupled with discussions with pupils and staff, show that pupils' progress throughout the school is good.

In Year 1, pupils make simple stuffed rag dolls using tools and techniques well. They use pictures effectively to show what they intend doing. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make wheeled bases demonstrating precision in measuring and cutting. They design suitable wooden horses. In Years 5 and 6, pupils use their scientific knowledge well to design and make electrically powered vehicles. The level of finish is good. In the older classes, there are good examples of well thought out designs which are costed and which consider fitness for purpose. These designs also show how skills learned in other subjects are applied in design and technology, for example measuring, calculating relative costs or comparing size and shape. These pupils also make their own careful evaluations.

The pupils enjoy their work and discuss it with enthusiasm. They work with care and good attention to detail, persevering to complete the tasks they are given. Evaluative comments are thoughtful and generous in their praise of each other.

In the limited number of lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was good. Particularly useful to pupils' progress are the aids they are given, such as the 'Ideas board' for techniques that can be used to close an electrical circuit. This enables pupils to engage in the design process quickly, understand the purpose of the lesson and make good progress. Teachers mark the pupils' design work with helpful

comments.

There have been many improvements since the previous inspection which reported that there was no policy or scheme of work. Both are now in place. The design process is taught and practised effectively and the curriculum is wide ranging. There is no longer evidence of older pupils= under-achievement. Mechanical and electrical devices are both used well.

## **Geography**

No teaching of geography was seen during the inspection. Scrutiny of pupils= work and teachers= planning, coupled with discussions with pupils and staff, show that pupils= progress throughout the school is sound.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils explain how they investigate the physical and human features of their environment and surroundings using appropriate geographical terms and vocabulary. They consider how places are the same and in what ways they are different. They are aware of other localities beyond their own.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils explain how to follow directions on a map and describe accurately how to get to local places of interest. They know that maps are made to different scales and are aware of the purpose of four-figure grid references. Pupils understand symbols may represent different types of terrain or landmarks. They study different areas within the United Kingdom, and describe some of their differences and similarities. In work using travel brochures, they develop some understanding of different parts of the world.

Young pupils develop a good understanding of their own area when they take imaginary bus trips with their teacher: they understand the relative distances and positions of local villages and the seaside, and enjoy using their knowledge to make sure they get Aon@ and Aoff@ the bus appropriately. In Years 1 and 2 pupils begin to identify similarities and differences between places they know: the countryside where they live, the seaside and a nearby town. Discussions with pupils and work from previous years indicate that progress is supported by discussion and drawing upon the wide range of experiences they have through the links between local schools. Older pupils make sound progress through map work and a residential visit. Some good links are made to literacy: reference books from the class bases are used; pupils make notes and use them for later work. Even so, the library is rarely used.

When discussing work in geography, pupils were keen and enthusiastic; they clearly enjoy these lessons and described what they have learnt with enjoyment. They showed confidence, interest and curiosity.

The standard of work produced in the past indicates that teaching is at least satisfactory throughout the school.

Since the previous inspection the school has planned what it intends to cover in geography and has an effective assessment system in place. There is no evidence of the underachievement reported then in Key Stage 2. Overall, standards have risen slightly, because of these improvements.

## **History**

Throughout the school, progress in history is good.

Year 2 pupils have a good sense of chronology: they use the information in photographs from the last century well, particularly the clothes children were wearing, to put the photographs in order. They look for evidence carefully and analytically: deciding, for example, that in one picture the skirt worn by a little

girl has a hoop in it, and although the skirt is not ankle length, this is likely to be the oldest picture. This work is built on well in Years 3 and 4. Pupils interrogate a variety of databases to collect information about towns in Roman Britain. They use the Internet and printed materials for this. They use techniques from the literacy hour to skim read text and highlight the parts they need for their research. By the time they reach Years 5 and 6, pupils are proficient in interrogating evidence. They use a very wide range of types of sources to collect and collate data about the experience of being an evacuee. Throughout the school, the regular use of a wide range of artifacts from relevant historical periods brings history to life and is beneficial to pupils' progress.

Good links are made with literacy and geography, for example field work may link the types of dwelling and layout of a settlement with the geographical reasons why it was built at that location. Pupils use the Internet regularly for research and are familiar with their class library and how to use it. However, only the eldest and youngest use the library regularly. The different writing styles from the National Literacy Strategy are used most effectively in the Years 5 and 6 to develop work in history.

Pupils collaborate and co-operate well, and this often has a beneficial effect upon their progress. For example, when year 2 pupils were asked to place photographs in order, they discussed the available evidence carefully. At first they decided that a 1920s picture of children in bathing suits is 'modern' because the suits resemble surfing 'baggies'. Then one of them noticed that the people in the photograph are holding big paper parasols, this started a discussion about materials. They listened to one another carefully, and responded to each other's views thoughtfully. Eventually they decided that the costumes must be knitted because they look rough, and deduced that their grannies probably wore this type of swimming costume.

During lessons pupils generally showed high levels of concentration. In very rare incidents where boys lost attention and became absorbed in other things, teachers acted quickly to re-ignite interest and application. Pupils responded immediately.

The quality of teaching seen throughout the school is good. Teachers' knowledge and expertise in history, and other areas of the curriculum which may be used to support it, are good. Questioning is carefully thought out to deepen pupil understanding and get pupils to think for themselves. More time could usefully be spent in discussion to develop pupils' oral skills. Teachers often intervened to promote positive stereotypes of boys during history lessons: this is of particular importance given the relative under-performance of boys indicated in national test results in the core subjects.

Since the previous inspection, the school has reviewed the scheme of work and adopted an effective system of assessment. Standards have improved in these two areas and in teaching.

## **Music**

Throughout the school, progress in music is sound.

In Year 1, pupils make simple sound patterns using tambourines or hollow boxes. They echo one another's pattern satisfactorily. In Year 2, pupils know the names of most untuned percussion instruments and some possible ways of using them to make a variety of sounds. In Years 5 and 6, many pupils read simple standard notation effectively and sustain a steady beat. They know tonic solfa and simple time signatures. Most learning individual instruments can read music to an appropriate level and perform well on their instruments, including as keyboards.

Good use is made of the opportunities for pupils to work with those from other schools. For example, pupils in Year 2 perform with those from other schools in an annual music workshop. In Years 5 and 6, pupils



perform in a concert with massed choirs. Instrumental lessons taught by visiting teachers also extend the opportunities available. Pupils learn to practise and refine their techniques and skills well.

The pupils are attentive. They listen to one another with interest and make helpful and constructive comments. The opportunities to perform as part of a large group, and in a larger arena, are particularly beneficial to their personal development.

The quality of teaching is sound. Lessons are well planned and prepared. The activities are appropriate although sometimes too few pupils are active participants. In the lessons observed there were not enough opportunities for pupils to evaluate and improve their work.

Resources for teaching music are satisfactory but the accommodation is poor. Some of the classrooms are small for activities such as group composition. However, the teachers make the best of the situation and cover the curriculum effectively. The school compensates by arranging to work with other schools.

The school has maintained the quality of teaching reported in the previous inspection. Furthermore, the curriculum is now more structured and better planned.

### **Physical education**

Progress in physical education varies greatly but is sound overall. Although the school does as much as it can to overcome them, shortcomings in the accommodation hinder progress in certain elements such as gymnastics. In other elements such as swimming, where there are not these problems, progress is good. Even so, significant amounts of time during the school day have to be spent travelling to and from the facility. Furthermore, pupils who are unable to participate also have to travel. These pupils generally sit and read quietly. They make little progress.

In Year 1, pupils are confident in the water. Largely because of the good teaching and skilful use of equipment, reluctant or hesitant pupils make good progress and most quickly learn to float. The majority swim, unaided, competently and safely for several metres.

In Year 2, pupils continue to make good progress in swimming. They swim further, improve their skills and techniques well, so that most swim using effective front strokes. Some also swim backstroke with good style. The latter pupils already swim beyond 25 metres, the expectation when they are eleven.

Older pupils make sound progress in gymnastics in floorwork and activities using small or low-level equipment such as benches. They find imaginative ways of travelling, often using changes of speed, direction or level. They usually perform tasks with good technique. However, their progress is restricted by the lack of opportunities to use apparatus that is suitably challenging, especially for the eldest. At these ages, pupils' progress is insufficient.

Progress in dance is very good, largely because of the high quality teaching. Pupils work in unison or canon to produce their own versions of the 'A hand jive'. They produce dance sequences involving them performing back-to-back, face-to-face or alongside one another. They vary the levels on which they compose very imaginative and often intricate dances. They know and understand how the dance mirrors the time in which it originated. Evaluations are both thoughtful and helpful.

Pupils enjoy the opportunities they are given; to use specialist facilities, play in the school grounds or compete with other schools. They co-operate well. When older pupils are creating dance sequences, they collaborate very well, carefully listening to, discussing and considering one another's views.

Throughout the school, teaching is of good quality. Techniques, such as breathing in the water or introducing a moment of stillness and balance in a movement sequence, are well taught. Dance teaching is particularly good. Pupils receive very precise guidance, enabling them to make rapid progress. Activities are very carefully planned with good links to other subjects, so that the contrasting dances of the war and post-war years help pupils to understand the different moods of the people at the time.

The school makes good provision for the subject, given the limitations imposed by the accommodation. Good use is made of expertise, such as swimming instruction, to develop the strands of physical education that are taught to good levels.

The previous inspection report also noted the accommodation difficulties. Otherwise the report was generally favourable, except about the management and organisation of the subject. Since then, this is much clearer. There are, for example, good plans for how the subject will be taught and precisely what will be covered.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspection was undertaken by a team of four inspectors who spent the equivalent of ten days in the school. The evidence in the report is based upon a total of 23 hours and 05 minutes spent observing a total of 40 lessons or parts of lessons. These lessons were spread over all classes.

The evidence also includes:

- inspection of a range of other school activities, including registration;
- listening to the reading of a total of 24 pupils selected from each age group to represent the full range of ability and attainment. Other pupils were also heard reading in lessons such as the literacy hour;
- inspection of books and other work of pupils from each age group, in each class, selected by teachers to represent the full range of attainment;
- samples of written reports to parents;
- discussions with pupils about their work;
- discussions with the headteacher, teaching and non-teaching staff, and governors;
- discussions with parents at a meeting held prior to the inspection, attended by 23 parents, and other parents informally during the inspection;
- scrutiny of policy documents, schemes of work, attendance registers, minutes of the meetings of the governing body, teachers= planning and other documents;
- analysis of the School Development Plan and budget figures;
- analysis of the 50 responses returned to a questionnaire sent to all parents of pupils at the school;
- analysis of the previous inspection report.

## 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 B Y06	89	0	21	1

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers (YR B Y06)

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

5
19:1

#### Education support staff (YR B Y06)

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

3
42

Average class size:

23.8
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### Financial data

Financial year:

1999
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	,
Total Income	187056
Total Expenditure	185056
Expenditure per pupil	1888
Balance brought forward from previous year	10000
Balance carried forward to next year	12000

**PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	69
Number of questionnaires returned:	50

**Responses (percentage of answers in each category):**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	44	50	4	2	-
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	66	30	-	2	2
The school handles complaints from parents well	21	52	17	8	2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	28	54	6	8	4
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	26	51	13	8	2
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	28	58	10	2	2
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	31	51	10	4	-
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	23	47	10	6	14
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	62	36	2	-	-
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	52	38	6	4	-
My child(ren) like(s) school	64	32	-	2	2

**Other issues raised by parents**

A number of parents were dissatisfied with the school's provision for homework. This has since been resolved by the school.

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