

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Paddock Wood Primary School**  
Tonbridge

LEA area: Kent

Unique Reference Number: 118270

Headteacher: Mr J Keys

Reporting inspector: Mrs Helen Ranger

Dates of inspection: 20 – 23 September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707468

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

Type of control: County

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Old Kent Road  
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr R Parkes

Date of previous inspection: February 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Helen Ranger, Registered inspector	Art	Attainment and progress
	Design and technology	Teaching
Graeme Norval, Lay inspector		Attendance
		Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
		Partnership with parents and the community
		Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Terence Aldridge	Information technology	Efficiency
	Science	
Gill Crew	Children under five	Leadership and management
	Physical education	
	Special educational needs	
Maurice Leyland	Mathematics	The curriculum and assessment
	Music	
Abul Maula	Geography	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
	History	
	Religious education	
	Equal opportunities	
Stephen Parker	English	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
	French	

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# MAIN FINDINGS

## What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good overall and promotes pupils' progress well.
- Standards achieved by the oldest pupils in English, mathematics and science are high.
- The school is managed very well, led by a strong senior management team and an active governing body.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils show very good attitudes to school, behave very well and form very good relationships throughout the school.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.
- The quality of provision is particularly strong in Years 5 and 6, where teaching is best and pupils make the best progress.
- There are very good partnerships with parents and the wider community.
- The school plans very well for its continuing development and uses available resources very efficiently.

## Where the school has weaknesses

- I. In both key stages, pupils' progress in information technology is unsatisfactory.
- II. Staff roles and responsibilities are not well defined in all areas.
- III. There are weaknesses in aspects of planning and resourcing for the under fives.
- IV. Teachers do not have an agreed approach to the effective assessment of pupils' progress in some subjects.
- V. The school does not comply with National Curriculum requirements for swimming.

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

## How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made good progress on the majority of the weaknesses pointed out in its last inspection, including the key issues. It has also maintained the high standards that were identified in many areas. The process of development planning has been reviewed; it is now based on a systematic process of whole school review and evaluation. This has also been linked well to the arrangements for staff training and development which have enabled both teaching staff and support staff to be used more effectively. Appropriate policies and schemes of work have been adopted in most subjects and underpin teachers' planning well. Good progress has been made on developing testing and assessment procedures and on analysing the school's results but some aspects of assessment remain comparatively weak. Acts of collective worship comply with legal requirements and the programme for religious education has been improved to take its full place in the curriculum. The school shows a good capacity for continued improvement in future.

## Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools
English	C	C
Mathematics	B	B
Science	D	E

Key	
<i>well above average</i>	A
<i>above average</i>	B
<i>average</i>	C
<i>below average</i>	D
<i>well below average</i>	E

The table shows that the school's results a year and a half ago were in line with the national average in

English, above average in mathematics but below average in science. Compared to schools with similar intakes of pupils, results were average in English and above average in mathematics but were well below average in science. After the 1998 tests, the school took swift action to improve its performance in science in Key Stage 2 by spending more time on teaching, revision and checking pupils' progress. This was reflected in much improved results in 1999. Results in English and mathematics were also improved in 1999, both at the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5. Inspection evidence shows pupils in the current Year 6 maintaining above average standards in English, mathematics and science.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieve the nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science. Pupils in both key stages make unsatisfactory progress in information technology and reach standards below those expected. Standards in religious education are in line with expectations. In design and technology, geography and music, progress is satisfactory in both key stages and in art progress is good. In Key Stage 2, pupils also make good progress in history and physical education. Year 6 classes make good progress in French. The under fives in the reception classes make at least sound progress in all areas of learning and their progress is often good in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Overall, progress is particularly good for pupils in Years 5 and 6 and for pupils in all age groups who have special educational needs.

### Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Satisfactory	Good
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory	Good
Science		Satisfactory	Good
Information technology		Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Religious education		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Good	Satisfactory	Good

During the inspection, teaching was at least satisfactory in all the lessons observed. In over half the lessons seen, teaching was good and eight per cent of lessons were very good. Teaching is especially good at the upper end of Key Stage 2. Judgements about teaching in the table above include evidence from the lessons seen, from looking at pupils' work and from talking to pupils about their work and achievements. Because of the timing of the inspection very near the beginning of the school year, the work of all age groups from the previous school year was also considered.

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

### Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Pupils of all ages behave very well in lessons and around the school; they get on well with one another and have positive attitudes to their work.
Attendance	Good; levels are a little above the national average. Pupils are punctual and enjoy attending school.
Ethos*	Very good; there are very good relationships at all levels, an effective learning atmosphere and a commitment to high standards.
Leadership and management	Very good overall. The headteacher provides vision and leadership, supported well by an able senior management team, active governors and committed staff. There is very good planning for development. Teaching



	and the curriculum are monitored well. A few aspects of staff roles and responsibilities are unclear.
Curriculum	Generally broad and relevant for all age groups with a suitable emphasis on literacy and numeracy; enhanced well by additional activities. Not enough attention is given to information technology or to how assessment is used in planning. Swimming is not taught as required by the National Curriculum.
Special educational needs	Good provision promotes pupils' progress well. Good support from specialist staff.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good moral and social provision and good spiritual and cultural provision. Staff awareness of multi-cultural issues is weaker than other aspects.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	All staff are well qualified and well trained but classes are large. Arrangements for staff development are good. The buildings and site are very good quality but some classrooms are cramped. High levels of practical learning resources except in information technology.
Value for money	Good.

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

#### **The parents' views of the school**

<b>What most parents like about the school</b>	<b>What some parents are not happy about</b>
VI. Their children enjoy school.	XV. A few feel that complaints are not dealt with
VII. The headteacher and staff are approachable.	XVI. Special needs, especially dyslexia, are not
VIII. The school encourages parents to play an active part in their children's education.	XVII. There is not enough information about the
IX. The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on children.	
X. Complaints or problems are handled well.	
XI. Parents are given a clear understanding of what is taught and of their children's progress.	
XII. Good standards of work and behaviour are achieved.	
XIII. Homework levels are good.	
XIV. Children are encouraged to get involved in more than just lessons.	

Inspectors' judgements broadly support parents' positive views. The negative comments were made by a small minority of parents and were not considered by the inspection team to be issues for the school as a whole. The school documents complaints thoroughly and makes considerable attempts to address concerns. Overall, special needs provision is good within available resources. Levels of information about the curriculum have improved recently through useful bulletins to parents.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to build on the existing good practice and further improve the quality of education in the school, the headteacher, governing body and staff should:

XVIII. raise standards in information technology in both key stages by:

- ensuring that the recently designed scheme of work is implemented, monitored and evaluated across the school;
- improving levels of staff expertise and confidence;
- implementing a manageable and effective system for assessing pupils' progress;
- developing strategies for making the best use of available resources;
- using all available means to increase the levels of hardware and software in the school.

*paragraphs 18, 32, 45, 87, 143-150*

● enhance leadership and management by:

- ensuring that the delegation of areas of responsibility to teaching staff is equitable;
- enabling all staff to take advantage of professional development in their areas of responsibility;
- ensuring that each major subject and aspect of school life is covered by the management structure;
- developing procedures for co-ordinators to ensure consistent monitoring and effective communication with colleagues.

*paragraphs 80, 81, 88, 97, 123, 163, 168, 174*

● improve the quality of provision for children under five by:

- revising curriculum planning and linked assessment procedures to take full account of the recommended areas of learning for children of this age;
- developing outdoor provision to provide a stimulating and challenging environment, when resources are available.

*paragraphs 36, 44, 108-9*

● develop an agreed and coherent approach to the regular assessment of pupils' progress and how assessment is used to support planning, which will be monitored by relevant staff, with special attention to speaking and listening in English and to manageable procedures for the non-core subjects.

*paragraphs 50-1, 123, 141, 149*

● take all possible action to provide swimming teaching in line with National Curriculum requirements;

*paragraphs 43, 79, 199*

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs 33, 48, 54, 57, 79, 133, 134, 157, 168 and 173.

- The need for further staff awareness of the multi-cultural dimension in the curriculum.
- The lack of a full scheme of work for design and technology.
- Inconsistencies in provision for pupils of different abilities.
- Omissions from the governors' annual report to parents.

## · INTRODUCTION

### · Characteristics of the school

1. Paddock Wood Primary School is a very large primary school for pupils between the ages of four and eleven. There are currently 579 pupils and the number of boys and girls are broadly equal. All pupils normally attend on a full-time basis but, at the time of the inspection, the children in the reception classes had been in school for less than two weeks and most attended for mornings only as part of the induction programme. Twenty-eight children in the reception classes were still under five. The school's admission arrangements have not changed since its last inspection and there are two intakes, in September and January. The September intake is of those who will be five in the autumn term and in January all remaining under fives are admitted. Most children experience pre-school education in local playgroups or nurseries.
2. The school is situated in the small town of Paddock Wood and most pupils live locally. Since its last inspection, the local area has experienced a substantial amount of new house building and much of this has been by the local authority and housing associations who offer rented accommodation. The pupils represent a wide range of backgrounds which are, overall, average in social and economic terms. In the past few years, the school has recorded decreases in the language and social skills of its intake and increases in the levels of special educational needs. In response to this a nurture group was established for a number of pupils who need extra support in the early years. The levels of attainment on entry of children in the current reception classes are broadly average in some areas of their learning but, in many cases, are lower than this in the areas of language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. In recent years, children's scores in entry tests show results below the county average in these areas of learning.
3. Eighteen pupils (three per cent) come from ethnic minorities, a small proportion when compared with national average. Of these, half do not speak English as their first language. At the time of the inspection, all these pupils spoke fluent English and did not require specific language support in lessons. Fifty-six pupils (10 per cent) are entitled to free school meals which is below the national average. There are 140 pupils (24 per cent) on the register of special educational needs, including four with statements; the number on the register is above average.
4. The aims of the school are:
  - to promote a sense of excellence and to encourage children to take pride in their achievements;
  - for children to value and care for the school and its facilities;
  - to foster a sense of belonging to a wider community;
  - for children to reach their full potential and experience success.
1. The current priorities of the school are:
  - to meet (and then exceed) the national targets set for pupils' achievement in literacy and numeracy;
  - to maintain a broad and balanced curriculum;
  - to continue to strengthen pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.

· **Key indicators**

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

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	53	35	88

6. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	34	42	42
	Girls	30	31	29
	Total	64	73	71
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	72 (83)	83 (83)	81 (86)
	National	(80)	(81)	(85)

6. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	35	41	50
	Girls	29	29	32
	Total	64	70	82
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	72 (86)	80 (90)	93 (95)
	National	(81)	(85)	(86)

Results for 1999 not available

.....

1

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

## 2. Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>2</sup>

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	48	35	83

7. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	35	39	40
	Girls	29	30	32
	Total	64	69	72
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	77 (70)	83 (70)	87 (63)
	National	(65)	(59)	(69)

7. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	30	35	38
	Girls	26	28	30
	Total	56	63	68
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	67(72)	76(77)	82(76)
	National	(65)	(65)	(72)

Results for 1999 not available

.....

2

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

## 8. Attendance

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

		%
Authorised	School	4.2
Absence	National comparative data	5.7

Unauthorised	School	0.9
Absence	National comparative data	0.5

8.

9. **Exclusions**

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

	Number
Fixed period	6
Permanent	0

10. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	8
Satisfactory or better	92
Less than satisfactory	0

## 10. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

### 10. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

#### 10. Attainment and progress

3. The youngest children that are currently on the school roll will be five during the term that the inspection took place. The majority of this cohort has broadly average levels of attainment on entry to the school. However, levels of attainment for a significant number of these children and of recent intakes are below expectations in the areas of language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. This is reflected in the initial assessments that have been carried out by the school as part of the baseline assessment procedure. Evidence available during the inspection shows that by the time children are five, attainment is broadly in line with the nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes for this age group. However, language and social skills of a minority of children remain below expectations. Children make good progress in acquiring skills in many areas of learning and in recording their knowledge. They are well prepared to begin work on the National Curriculum. Children with special educational needs are given appropriate support and guidance in order that they can achieve the tasks set for them and make good progress.
4. In Key Stage 1, the results of National Curriculum tests for the school in 1998, the last year for which national comparisons are available, indicated that the performance of seven year olds was:
  - in line with the national average and with the average for similar schools in reading and writing;
  - below the national average and the average for similar schools in mathematics;
  - above the national average in teachers' assessments in science.
1. In 1999, while writing scores held steady, there was a marked drop in reading and a smaller drop in mathematics. Science results remained high. There are currently no national comparisons available for this group of pupils. The school has analysed recent test results for this age group and has targeted areas of reading and writing in particular for improvement. Inspection findings are that, for pupils who are now in Year 2, standards in all aspects of English, mathematics and science are broadly in line with national averages.
2. The school's results in the national tests for eleven year olds in 1998 were:
  - in line with the national average and with the average for similar schools in English;
  - above the national average and the average for similar schools in mathematics;
  - below the national average and well below the average for similar schools in science.
1. In 1999, the school improved its performance in all three subjects, with substantial improvements in mathematics and science. There was a marked improvement in the number of pupils who achieved the higher level (Level 5) in all subjects. Inspection findings are that, for pupils who are now beginning Year 6, standards are above average in all three subjects.
2. The school has exceeded the targets it set for its oldest pupils in 1999 in both English and mathematics at the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5. The disappointing science results for 1998 were analysed and action taken to improve aspects of teaching and learning; this was rewarded by the much higher scores achieved in 1999.
3. By the age of seven in English, pupils speak with appropriate confidence and clarity and listen effectively. They take an active part in discussions. They read at expected levels and start to develop research skills. They are starting to write independently for a range of purposes with sound spelling and punctuation. By eleven, they are confident speakers who explain their views fully and use technical vocabulary when appropriate. They continue to listen well and take part in more formal discussions.

They read lengthy texts, mostly fluently and accurately, both fiction and non-fiction. They write well and in good quantity for an increasing number of purposes and audiences with a lively vocabulary. Most have developed a fluent handwriting style. In mathematics, pupils of all ages use and apply their mathematics knowledge well. By seven, they handle small numbers fluently and begin to choose methods of calculation from a range available to them. By eleven, they can explain a range of calculation methods and use these well in problem solving. Their mental recall is rapid and most already use decimals, fractions and percentages correctly. Pupils in both key stages show an appropriate understanding of aspects such as shape, space, measure and data handling. In science, the younger pupils understand basic facts through discussion, observation and investigation. They begin to record their work in a variety of ways. The oldest pupils in Key Stage 2 have learned to plan and test ideas for themselves and present their results well. They use appropriate scientific language.

4. In information technology, standards at the end of both key stages are below national expectations. Attainment tends to vary according to whether pupils have access to a computer at home. Many do not have the range of knowledge, skill and understanding that are required by the National Curriculum. In religious education, standards in both key stages broadly meet the requirements of the local authority's agreed syllabus. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of facts and traditions from a range of faiths, especially Christianity, and are beginning to appreciate the significance of religion in many people's lives.
5. Since its last inspection, the school has at least maintained its standards in English, mathematics, science and religious education and there are indications of improvements, especially in Key Stage 2. Standards in information technology have not kept pace with national requirements and are below expected levels in both key stages.
6. As under fives in the reception classes, children make at least sound progress in all areas of learning and their progress is often good in their personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics and their knowledge and understanding of the world. In both key stages, progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and religious education is never less than sound. There is good progress in listening and writing skills in both key stages and in reading in Key Stage 1. In mathematics and science, the older pupils in Key Stage 2 make particularly good progress and are enabled to reach high standards in both subjects. This is promoted by high quality teaching. Progress is unsatisfactory overall in information technology for a significant proportion of pupils as a result of weaknesses in teaching and resourcing. In the non-core subjects, progress is sound for all age groups in design and technology, geography and music. Progress in Key Stage 1 is sound in history and physical education; in these two subjects pupils in Key Stage 2 make even better progress than this and this represents an improvement since the last inspection. Progress is good in art in both key stages. Limited evidence of initial lessons in French for pupils in Year 6 indicates that progress is good. Pupils' progress is supported well in most lessons by good teaching and improved planning. It is particularly rapid at the upper end of Key Stage 2 where teaching is consistently good.
7. Pupils with special educational needs generally make similar progress to other groups in relation to their prior attainment. They often make good progress against the targets set out in their individual education plans, particularly when supported by the special needs teacher or learning support assistants. This is an improvement since the last inspection when progress in learning was reported as being generally sound and only pupils with statements were reported as making good progress. The progress of higher attaining pupils is usually appropriate to their needs and the underachievement mentioned at the time of the previous inspection was not evident. There was no significant evidence of variation in the rates of progress and standards attained by boys compared with girls in lessons seen during the inspection. The small number of pupils from ethnic minorities make similar rates of progress to other pupils.

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

8. Pupils' attitudes to school and to learning are very good. The high standards noted in the last inspection have been maintained. The majority of parents agree that their children enjoy school and that its



policies and values have a positive impact on learning.

9. Children in the reception classes have positive attitudes to learning and most are confident. They pay good attention to adults and behave well; relationships are very good. Children are interested, involved and busy. They can settle to tasks independently, but work well in pairs and in small groups. At this early stage in their schooling, children are beginning to use the expected routines of the classroom and sit sensibly and take turns. They develop independence and this is demonstrated in the way that they respond to being special class helpers. In both key stages, attitudes in the lessons seen were never less than satisfactory and were generally good, particularly when teachers set clear targets for the quantity and quality of work expected. Attitudes are sometimes very good in Key Stage 2 lessons, when pupils have learned to take responsibility for their work through consistent encouragement. In a notable Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils' response was excellent when they were all keenly involved in an activity throughout a long session. In the majority of lessons in both key stages, pupils were well motivated, interested and responsive. They generally listen carefully to instruction, sustain concentration and try to do their best. As a result, the work of most pupils is consistently thorough and careful.
10. Pupils work independently to good effect, for instance in literacy hour and science investigations. They are confident in using the library for research and some produce excellent work in responding to homework challenges, such as the project on rivers set for Year 4. Pupils learn good study habits and take increasing responsibility for their learning as they move through the school. This has a positive effect on their attainment.
11. The attitudes of pupils with special educational needs are good. During supported group work, pupils work very hard and maintain concentration in intensive sessions. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Pupils are not placed under pressure and they are confident to tackle tasks. They help and encourage each other, offering praise for good achievement. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to discussion and this provides opportunities for personal development. In withdrawal sessions, pupils are keen to succeed and support each other. They are positive about each other's achievements. The school maintains the positive attitude towards pupils with special educational needs reported in the previous inspection.
12. Pupils' behaviour is very good in all age groups, though standards are not as high as at the last inspection when behaviour was judged excellent. However, the school's analysis of its special needs factors shows more pupils with behaviour problems entering the school. Last year the school took firm action by introducing a policy of zero tolerance of violence. The immediate effect was a rise in the number of fixed-term exclusions to six, but pupils have responded well and there have been no exclusions since that time. Levels of concentration are high in lessons because behaviour is consistently good. Most pupils co-operate well and are not easily distracted. They move about responsibly in classrooms, some of which are cramped, and in narrow corridors, so that the school has a calm and orderly atmosphere in spite of its size. Pupils are trustworthy. They respect books, equipment and their environment, helping to maintain the high standards of these resources. Playtimes are harmonious. Pupils play and talk together quietly. Their games are generally well controlled, showing respect for the different interests of others.
13. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good and have been sustained at this level since the last inspection. Pupils respond well to the school's 'I care' policy, which is very effective in encouraging their thoughtful concern for others. Pupils are well-mannered and respectful in dealing with adults and from Key Stage 1 they learn to act as hosts to visitors. Friendships between pupils are strong and they frequently show affection for each other and adults. There was no evidence of discrimination or bullying during the inspection. Pupils with special needs and the few pupils from minority ethnic groups are well integrated. Pupils help each other in lessons and work well together in group activities. In discussions, pupils show respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. In 'Circle Time' sessions which make up part of the programme of personal and social education, they reflect sensitively on their own life experiences and make supportive comments to others.
14. Pupils' personal development is good. They willingly accept the need to tidy up after themselves in

classrooms and playgrounds, so that the school is impressively clean and tidy. Many pupils are involved in the wide range of clubs for sports and other activities on offer. School teams compete successfully in the region, showing strong team spirit and respect for fair play. Pupils learn from Key Stage 1 to take initiative in meeting visitors, asking questions so that they learn about the responsibilities of citizenship. They are involved in a wide range of fund-raising activities for charity. They put on performances for the wider community, such as the Key Stage 1 concert for senior citizens.

15. There are monitors in each class for particular tasks and pupils are keen to be involved. Such experiences are carefully planned so that pupils in Year 6 are able to take on a wide range of responsibilities, confident of meeting the school's high expectations. For instance, they help to look after younger pupils in dining halls, corridors and playgrounds. They act as librarians and gardeners and captain sports teams. There is no opportunity for pupils to be more fully involved in debating school issues, for instance in a school council and there are no residential visits to extend their social experiences further. In meeting more frequent academic challenges, many pupils show considerable initiative in researching information. Pupils overall set themselves high standards and the work on display shows the strength of their commitment to the aims of the school.

## 29. Attendance

16. Attendance is good and makes a significant contribution to pupils' attainment and progress. It is marginally above the national average for similar schools. The school is aware of a slight increase in extended holidays during term time and ensures that parents gain authorisation before taking such holidays. Punctuality in the morning and throughout the day is also good. Parents and pupils recognise the value of both good attendance and punctuality.
17. Attendance has, however, fallen slightly since the last inspection. At that time, attendance was significantly above the national average. The school is aware of this trend and of the reasons for it, which include a prolonged period of unauthorised absence involving one pupil. Appropriate action has been taken.

## 31. QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

### 31. Teaching

18. The quality of teaching is good overall. Standards have improved since the last inspection with the strengths which were highlighted then maintained and several of the weaknesses overcome. The school has been mostly successful in its action to address the key issue in its last report - to disseminate the expertise of teaching staff and improve the effectiveness of support staff. Teaching was at least satisfactory in every lesson which was seen during the current inspection and, in over half of lessons, it was good. Eight per cent of lessons were very good. Teaching for the under fives is good. In Key Stage 1 and the lower end of Key Stage 2, teaching is sound with good features. Teaching is good in Key Stage 2 with much of the best teaching seen in Years 5 and 6. The quality of teaching enables pupils to make good progress as they move through the school. While there are many strengths in teaching, a significant weakness remains in information technology. Evidence from looking at pupils' work and talking to them about their previous experiences in this subject indicates that, in many classes, insufficient experiences are provided to allow pupils to make the necessary progress.
19. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of their subjects and of how children learn is good in all age groups. The only major exception to this is in information technology where teachers' confidence and knowledge vary considerably and there are some weaknesses. There is also a need to continue to raise awareness of the multi-cultural dimensions in the curriculum. Strengths in teachers' knowledge are in the key areas of literacy and numeracy. The specialist teacher and learning support assistants for pupils with special educational needs and for lower attaining pupils are well qualified and effective.

20. Teachers' expectations of pupils are high for the under fives and in Key Stage 2 and are sound in Key Stage 1. These are reflected in the appropriate levels of work in most lessons which cater for the needs of all attainment groups. Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high in all age groups and promote the high standards which are apparent in pupils. Staff demand a high standard of presentation in pupils' work which leads to attractive work, high self-esteem in pupils and contributes to a pleasant learning environment through high quality classroom displays.
21. The quality of teachers' planning is satisfactory for the under fives and in Key Stage 1 and is good in Key Stage 2. At this time of the school year, activities for the youngest children in the reception classes are not structured to cater for varying levels of attainment as teachers are still assessing children's capabilities. However, when baseline assessment is completed, teachers adjust their planning to include work that reflects broad ability groups. Strengths in all age groups are the planning of literacy and numeracy lessons. Lessons benefit from the consistency achieved by teachers working in teams, meeting regularly to plan activities and liaising with support staff. Teachers generally have clear objectives for their lessons and many lessons cater for the full range of attainments in the class, an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. The small number of pupils who have English as an additional language are given tasks appropriate to their stage of English learning. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well into all classes and appropriate work is planned. There is a level of targeted withdrawal focused on the needs of individuals or groups. Personal programmes, outlined in individual education plans, are provided in class and during short withdrawal sessions. The teaching support given to pupils with special educational needs is generally very good. Pupils learn effective strategies that they apply to their class work. This contributes to overall levels of attainment and helps pupils keep pace with their peers.
22. Written planning for the under fives is not based on the nationally agreed Areas of Learning or on the Desirable Learning Outcomes for young children, which is unusual. While the activities offered to this age group in practice cater for children's needs, the school has rightly identified the need for improvements in written planning to underpin good teaching. In both key stages cross-curricular work is planned which makes sensible links between subjects. This is effective in Key Stage 2. However, at times in Key Stage 1, the planning of activities such as information technology, design and technology and art is rather haphazard and too reliant on the availability of volunteer helpers to ensure that activities go ahead.
23. Methods and organisation are good. Particular strengths are the clear explanations given and the effective use of questioning to check and extend pupils' thinking and understanding. Both collaboration and independence are encouraged. Most lessons have a clear structure and often make effective use of an introductory discussion followed by group work and a useful plenary session to summarise learning. Overall, teachers deploy a good balance of whole-class, group and individual work to maintain pupils' interest, although occasionally lessons are too dominated by the teachers' contribution. Class sizes in the school are large and staff cope well with the organisation necessary to keep pupils productively employed in small classrooms. For the under fives, staff create a positive working atmosphere and expectations of routines and behaviour are frequently reinforced with a patient, yet firm, approach.
24. For pupils with special needs who are withdrawn for extra help, there is a good emphasis on the development of literacy skills. This helps pupils to make progress in their mainstream lessons. The special needs teacher uses good questioning techniques that help pupils to understand concepts and make good progress with their work. Interaction with pupils is good. They are encouraged to work hard and improve their individual levels of attainment. The teacher also encourages pupils to evaluate their achievements and recognise personal strengths and areas where they can improve. Pupils' self-esteem is valued and praise is used appropriately. The special educational needs co-ordinator maintains good liaison with class teachers. As a result of this, they are aware of the needs of pupils who require support for their special educational needs and English language development. During class sessions, teachers pay particular attention to pupils' individual targets. They take account of prior learning and ability when planning tasks. As a consequence, the curriculum is presented at an appropriate level of understanding.

25. The behaviour of pupils is managed well. Throughout the school, teachers establish very good relationships and a pleasant learning atmosphere. In most classes, praise and encouragement are given freely. Occasionally teachers are too negative in their comments and lack effective strategies to control over-lively behaviour. The school has clearly-established expectations of how children will behave, based on mutual respect and tolerance, and in general teachers set a very good example to their pupils.
26. The use of time and resources is good and is particularly strong in Key Stage 2. Teachers of the under fives use every opportunity to reinforce children's literacy, numeracy and social skills. Most lessons in both key stages move at a brisk pace but, at the same time, allow pupils time to consider and reflect on their learning. Support staff and volunteer helpers are used well and promote the progress of pupils, especially those with special educational needs and the under fives in the reception classes. The use of practical resources to aid learning is frequent and extensive. Book and worksheet resources are used appropriately and many artefacts and other visual aids enhance lessons. The relative shortage of equipment in information technology means that teachers struggle at times to provide sufficient practical experience for pupils, while in some classes the available computers are underused.
27. Teachers' use of day-to-day assessment is sound overall and some good practice is evident in Key Stage 2. In the reception classes, children working at structured free choice activities are monitored closely and support is given, when required, to promote progress. The quality of oral comments to pupils of all ages during lessons is good and gives accurate feedback. Introductory and plenary sessions are often used well to check knowledge and understanding. The use of evaluations of lessons to inform and modify subsequent planning varies between classes with good reflective practice seen in a few classes in both key stages. Almost all teachers mark pupils' work regularly but the quality of marking varies. In the best classes, written comments are encouraging and diagnostic and help pupils to identify the next target for their learning. In other classes, marking is more cursory and written comments do not encourage pupils to improve.
28. Homework levels are good and support pupils' school work well. Regular practice in reading, spelling and number work is set and pupils of all ages take part in research and topic work to supplement classroom activities. Pupils who have computers at home often use these well to access information or to present their work in a final draft for school; this benefits their progress but tends to widen the gap in skills between this group and their peers who do not have access to information technology at home.

#### 42. **The curriculum and assessment**

29. The school continues to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which meets all statutory requirements except for the lack of provision for the teaching of swimming. The governing body has made considerable and continuing efforts, so far without success, to secure local swimming facilities.
30. The activities provided for children under five in the reception classes cover all the areas of learning outlined in the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children of this age. However, teachers' written planning does not currently reflect this and is focused on the National Curriculum for Key Stage 1. Staff have recognised the need to review this and an action plan is in draft form. Use of the outdoor play space is used to promote physical development. However, the area provides insufficient opportunities for challenging children's physical skills and lacks stimulating visual resources to promote creativity. The curriculum for children under five is satisfactory overall and has a positive effect on children's attainment.
31. In Key Stages 1 and 2, all subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and the curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Coverage of religious education throughout the school has greatly improved since the last inspection. The provision for information technology is currently unsatisfactory but a promising scheme of work has recently been introduced. The school successfully promotes pupils' personal development through a good programme

of personal and social education, health and sex education and a drug awareness programme enhanced through help from the local police. Homework activities are provided regularly and successfully reinforce and extend what has been learned in school.

32. The development of literacy skills is firmly established, with the literacy hour successfully imbedded in the school curriculum. It is decided within each year group which two or three days of the week should be allocated to the literacy hour, with extended writing skills being taught on the other days. This is in direct response to the school's analysis of its results in national tests which highlighted weaknesses in writing skills. Implementation of the daily numeracy hour has commenced successfully. Staff have been prepared well through in-service training and trialing of appropriate methods in the previous school year. The inclusion in the clearly defined structure of daily mental mathematics is well-established and is having a positive impact on standards. Time allocations for literacy and numeracy have diminished the available time for history, geography and music, so far with no apparent negative effect on standards. The school accepts that the topic-based planning in Key Stage 1 has meant that science skills are not receiving enough prominence and that planned activities in art and design and technology are too often reliant on the use of classroom helpers. An action plan is in place to consider ways of improving this position.
33. The school curriculum is greatly enhanced by an extensive range of after-school activities which are well-supported by a very good number of pupils and staff. As well as keenly contested competitive fixtures against other schools in football, netball and other sports, there are clubs which provide non-competitive, very enjoyable sporting activities. There are valuable opportunities to learn a musical instrument individually or in small groups, led by peripatetic music teachers. Pupils have opportunities to extend their musical experience and vocal skills by attending a music festival with the school choir. Regular visits by visiting theatre groups and participation in such events as the National Year of Reading complement the curriculum for the pupils.
34. Curricular planning is sound overall. A greater cohesion and continuity has been achieved since the last inspection. This takes place through the provision of schemes of work for subject areas and a system of long, medium and short-term plans which, in most cases, give good guidance over contents, methods and the use of clear learning objectives. The scheme of work for design and technology is, however, rudimentary and does not give sufficient support in planning to teachers. Year groups plan usefully together and, on occasions, whole key stage groups meet to discuss planning issues. However, there is inconsistency in the provision of work for pupils of differing abilities. Although progress has been made on this front, it is less well developed at times than other aspects of planning which were defined as weak by the last inspection. Weekly plans for literacy and numeracy successfully follow the nationally recommended formats where appropriate.
35. The curriculum provided for those with special educational needs is appropriate. Pupils who receive extra help are supported well and their progress is promoted effectively. Curriculum planning and implementation take into account pupils' competencies and specific needs identified in education plans through the provision of appropriate teaching methods and resources. The special educational needs co-ordinator takes groups of pupils out of the class for some sessions and the times of withdrawal are carefully considered to ensure that pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The school is increasingly linking special educational needs work with the literacy strategy and the special educational needs co-ordinator supports pupils in some literacy sessions. The planned curriculum and the timetable for pupils are of a good quality.
36. Satisfactory systems assess pupils' attainment but the consistency required by the previous inspection is not yet secure. For the under fives, assessment of what the children know, understand and can do is carried out regularly. Staff undertake daily assessment as they work with groups or individuals and their observations contribute to building a profile of each child's achievements. More formalised testing is carried out during the year, beginning with the county baseline assessment. For both key stages, there is a very helpful policy on assessment but it is not monitored well enough to ensure that teachers have sufficient short-term assessment results for them to judge the progress of the pupils. The assessment co-ordinator is well aware that the school portfolio of assessed work is out-of-date and that agreement

trailing is required to achieve the accurate and consistent assessment suggested by the previous inspection report. In English, teachers monitor the pupils' coverage of the reading scheme and make comments on their achievements, but do not have a clear system for the ongoing assessment of individual pupils' reading skills or of their speaking and listening. Spelling skills are carefully monitored through testing of the National Literacy Strategy high frequency words. Suitable opportunities for assessment in mathematics occur regularly within the new published scheme. Science is said to be assessed at the end of each topic, but there is little evidence of this. Other subjects do not yet have fully operational assessment strategies, though the majority of schemes of work plan for regular assessment. New assessment folders are now in place in Key Stage 1 classes and Records of Achievement in Key Stage 2. These contain samples of pupils' work, some annotated with National Curriculum levels of attainment, but not consistently.

37. In the long term, the school uses assessment very well to inform curriculum planning. It records the results of a series of tests of the pupils' abilities in English, mathematics and science. These include the national tests at the end of both key stages and the national Qualifications and Curriculum Authority tests for reading and mathematics for Years 3, 4 and 5. The results of these tests, plus school-produced writing tests, are carefully analysed by the school and the results used to make appropriate modifications to the curriculum. In the short term, however, there is a lack of consistency in the teachers' evaluation of the outcomes of their carefully thought-out learning objectives. This is most noticeable in the non-core subjects. A minority of teachers show good practice in making regular written assessments of planned learning objectives, which they use in the design of subsequent lessons.
38. Systems of assessment, recording and reporting for those with special educational needs are good and procedures are implemented well. Pupils are placed on the register of special need following teacher assessment of their needs and reasons for under achievement, formal school testing and analysis of results. Further assessment may be undertaken by the school or support agencies if appropriate. The special education needs co-ordinator conscientiously keeps thorough and detailed records of relevant information that are constantly used for reference. Information is used to plan individual education plans, inform teachers' planning and the programmes of support for individual pupils.

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

39. The school makes very good provision overall for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The personal commitment made by the headteacher has helped create an ethos which promotes all these aspects well and which permeates the life of the school. The high standards defined at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.
40. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Pupils' spirituality is developed mainly through religious education, assemblies and collective worship. Topics such as 'specialness' provide opportunities to gain an insight into different values and beliefs as well as for reflection, sometimes communicating a sense of awe and wonder at the natural world. Pupils are enabled to learn about ancient gods and goddesses through history topics. They are encouraged to respond to religious teaching by relating it to their personal experiences. There is evidence that opportunities for pupils' experience in art, music and literature similarly heighten their spiritual awareness. Provision for daily collective worship makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spirituality, although links with multi-faith communities, which would further enrich the spiritual dimension of pupils' experience, are comparatively underdeveloped.
41. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good and a strength of the school. The school has a strong moral code which sets boundaries for acceptable behaviour. Its framework of values helps pupils to distinguish between right and wrong. Classroom activities and assembly themes often raise moral issues concerned with drugs and bullying, and good examples are set by adults. The school's expectations of behaviour are high. Most pupils respond positively to this and show respect for each other and property. Most parents are happy with the values and principles that the school promotes.

42. Provision for pupils' social development is also very good, highlighting another strength of the school. The school fosters good relationships. The excellent way pupils from diverse social backgrounds play and work together is particularly strong. A comprehensive range of visits and curricular activities, including Circle Time as part of the comprehensive personal, social and health education programme, contributes to this aspect of pupils' education. The school provides some good opportunities for pupils to take initiatives and responsibilities, such as the monitoring system in Year 6. Its strong local and international links have a positive impact on pupils' social skills. They are encouraged to become good citizens, contributing to the profile of the school in the community.
43. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils have opportunities to develop an understanding and appreciation of their own cultural heritage through art, music and literature. They also learn about festivals and, to some extent, different customs and traditions through history, geography and religious education. The school has made a good start in addressing the issue of multi-cultural education raised by the previous inspection report. Considerable improvement has since been made in the provision of this dimension in religious education and assemblies. However, the present level of staff awareness leaves room for further investment in this aspect.

**57. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

44. Overall, the school has good procedures for the support, guidance and welfare of the pupils. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress, personal development and for promoting their well-being, health and safety. The provision in these areas makes a positive contribution to the standards achieved in the school.
45. The school has maintained and expanded the standards of behaviour, the supportive ethos and the promotion of pupils' welfare which were noted in the previous inspection report. An example of this is its determination to allow every pupil to participate in team events. Thus the school does not always present its best team in competition but every pupil has the opportunity to be valued. The introduction of Circle Time as part of personal and social education is also making a significant contribution in developing these skills in all year groups.
46. The school has addressed the lack of procedures for monitoring and reporting pupils' progress and personal development. This was a key issue in the previous report. Considerable thought has gone into devising and implementing new procedures, which are regularly reviewed. The headteacher keeps very detailed records and an overview of Year 6 pupils in particular. Excellent use is made of these records to assist parents in making appropriate decisions for their children's secondary education.
47. Procedures for promoting personal development are satisfactory and provide opportunities for pupils to accept responsibility and display initiative. The majority of opportunities is limited to pupils in Year 6 but there is evidence that, when younger pupils are given the opportunity, they respond eagerly and maturely. The school has worked hard to promote the recognition of pupils' achievements in their academic work, social development, the arts and sport. Termly achievement assemblies are held. An excellence book is maintained and displayed in Key Stage 1, and weekly certificates are awarded to pupils in this age group. Displays of rewards and awards are frequent and are a significant feature of the school entrance hallway. They are located so that visitors, including parents, may easily recognise areas of achievement within the school or community.
48. The procedures for sex education and drug awareness involve both the school nurse and the community police officer. Knowledge of personal growth and development is part of the personal, health and social education policy. Parents of Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to preview the more advanced sex education appropriate to that age. They are aware of the right to withdraw their children from provision if they wish.

49. The welfare of pupils starting and leaving school is considered carefully. Children starting school attend the reception classes on a part-time basis. They are sensitively inducted into the routines of the school and are gradually introduced to attending for the whole day over a period of weeks. Transfer procedures to secondary education are also good.
50. The school's systems of support, guidance and welfare for pupils who have special educational needs are good. Liaison with support services is maintained regularly and support from external services is used very well. When pupils enter the reception classes the school ensures that any medical needs are addressed through the school health service. Liaison with parents and other services develops from here on. Review of pupils' needs is undertaken regularly and relevant information is recorded in class teachers' files and by the co-ordinator. Pupils are supported within the class group. They take full advantage of educational opportunities offered and have high expectations of themselves. Teachers' positive attitudes to promoting self-esteem contribute to this. The monitoring of progress and personal development for these pupils is good. Pupils' progress, confidence and ability to cope effectively with the everyday life of the school are enhanced by this. Support staff make a significant contribution to giving pupils planned support in teaching groups and informal support throughout the day during daily routines. Detailed records are kept and passed on to feeder schools when pupils transfer at Year 6.
51. The behaviour policy and the procedures for monitoring behaviour are good. The policy, which is contained in documents for parents, clearly conveys the zero tolerance of physical or verbal abuse. Teaching and non-teaching staff are given considerable freedom in the interpretation of the policy and all have a good understanding of the school's pastoral and welfare procedures. The school has funded training for a number of non-teaching assistants, who have become qualified learning support assistants. They give very good support to teaching staff and pupils in many areas. Teaching staff and experienced mid-day supervisors carry out supervision at break times and during lunchtime. Evidence from pupils and parents indicates that pupils know to whom they should turn if they are bullied or have other concerns.
52. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance. Registers are completed accurately in the morning and immediately after lunch and are monitored daily by administrative staff. There are good procedures for following up unexplained absence. Outside agencies such as the Educational Welfare Officer are involved where appropriate. The governing body and senior management team are concerned about an increase in families taking more than ten days holiday during term time each year. There are appropriate procedures to remind parents of their legal responsibilities. A very significant majority of parents support and understand the school's efforts to maintain good attendance. There are awards for pupils achieving one hundred per cent attendance, including a plate donated by a former pupil who herself achieved two consecutive years of unbroken attendance.
53. The provision for child protection is adequate and the majority of staff are aware of the actions to be taken. The designated responsible person is a member of the senior management team with training in special educational needs. The school has undertaken to rewrite its unsatisfactory policy for child protection which currently gives little guidance to staff in a number of significant areas.
54. The provision for the health and safety of pupils is satisfactory overall. There are a number of comfortable and relaxing medical areas where pupils may be treated and await collection by parents if necessary. The procedures for informing parents of any concern are satisfactory and there are trained first aiders to cover all areas of the premises. The school took swift action during the inspection period to arrange for fencing around the pond in the playing field to minimise this hazard.
68. **Partnership with parents and the community**
55. Relationships between the school, parents and the local community are very good and make a significant contribution to pupils' progress and personal development. The school appreciates the support of a significant number of parents, who have responded to the encouragement to be actively involved in their children's education. There is a high level of parental satisfaction with the content and level of



homework throughout the school.

56. A significant feature of the partnership with parents has been the initiative to provide formal training for a number of parents and others to qualify as learning support assistants. Their work is highly valued and their contribution to pupils' progress is recognised. The initiative has also responded well to a key issue from the last inspection – namely, to improve the quality of work of the support staff.
57. Partnerships with parents of children under five are good. In the past year, the Key Stage 1 deputy headteacher has developed a package that gives parents detailed information that will help them to help their child both before they start school and when they begin in the reception class. Staff feel this has already contributed to children being better prepared for learning. Links with pre-school groups have been strengthened and closer liaison has encouraged a more consistent approach in the cross-phase provision. The reception classes' staff and the deputy headteacher plan to extend this further in the coming year.
58. The school's information to parents is very good. There are regular newsletters and frequent letters about specific topics and school activities. The school prospectus is detailed and written in user-friendly language. The governors' report to parents which precedes the annual meeting is also extremely informative and well written. However it still fails to provide certain statutory information. The school has undertaken to include this information in the next publication. Parents are involved in the production of the school development plan, which has been awarded a Crystal Mark by the Plain English Campaign.
59. There are formal and informal consultation evenings, when parents are encouraged to discuss their children's work and progress. Parents recognise the school's open door policy and respect the need to make appointments for longer discussions. Evidence from discussions with parents indicates that a substantial majority is happy with the information they receive. Governors and staff have recently worked together to produce helpful curriculum booklets for each year group to be distributed to parents. A very small minority of parents raised concern about the school's reaction to parental concern over pupils with special educational needs. Inspection evidence shows that the partnership with these parents is generally good. Initial concerns about a child's needs are raised with parents quickly and they are invited into school to discuss school and home support. They are kept fully informed of pupils' progress. Parents are welcome to speak with the special needs co-ordinator or class teacher if they have concerns at any time. They have the opportunity to contribute to pupils' individual education plans and to the annual review process.
60. A very small number of parents expressed concern about the handling of complaints. Evidence from the inspection shows that the school maintains a detailed record of any concerns, however minor, and tries hard to deal with any problems. Subsequent action and meetings are recorded thoroughly. Overall the school is an orderly community, signified by the politeness and courtesy of pupils to each other, to staff and to visitors.
61. There is an active parents' association, which contributes significantly to school funds. The school respects their hard work. The parent' association plays a significant part in deciding where money they have raised will be spent for the benefit of the school and pupils.
62. There are very good links with the local community and business. These links make a contribution to pupils' cultural development. There is a list in the main entrance of 12 local companies, many of whom repeatedly make financial contributions to the school. The local branch of a national supermarket has sponsored the seats and timber gazebos in the playground. During the inspection week, pupils received a 'Britain in Bloom' commendation for their work in decorating the gazebos with shrubs and flowering plants. The school has been recognised nationally for its work by gaining Investors in People status and a Charter Mark.
63. These very good links with parents and the community continue the high quality of work in this area

identified during the last inspection.

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

### **77. Leadership and management**

64. The school is very well managed. The headteacher provides dynamic leadership and contributes great energy to any initiatives the school undertakes. He works very closely with the deputy headteachers who have clearly stated roles that include each of them managing a key stage. The senior management team includes an additional member of staff with designated responsibilities. Together, the headteacher and the senior team give clear educational direction for the school and place great emphasis on setting high standards and ensuring that pupils make good progress.
65. The governing body is well organised, through an effective committee structure and very ably led. The chair of governors has a clear understanding of the role and responsibilities of the governing body. Members of the governing body have equal commitment to the school and take an active part in its development. The governors have maintained the effective and close partnership with the headteacher and staff reported in the last inspection. They also remain sensitive to the concerns of the parents and the wider community. Governors' visits to the school have a clear focus. Reports produced following such visits demonstrate their understanding of their strategic role in monitoring. The governing body is suitably focused on the important issues of standards, pupils' progress and ensuring value for money. Statutory requirements are met in most respects. However, there is non-compliance with statutory requirements in swimming in physical education and the annual report to parents does not contain all the required information. It is acknowledged that the school is continuing its efforts to acquire local swimming facilities so that these may be used by its pupils.
66. The previous inspection report stated that responsibilities were appropriately delegated and that there was close consultation over policy and planning. Although there continues to be a shared sense of purpose among staff, the delegation of roles and responsibilities has become more fragmented. Not all of the teaching staff have a co-ordinating role while others have several additional responsibilities. As a result of this, some staff do not undertake the responsibility of managing an area of school development and there are subjects within the curriculum that are not co-ordinated. Designated co-ordinators undertake regular reviews of the school's work and practices through monitoring the implementation of schemes of work and policies that have been established in response to the last inspection. However, important areas such as early years education, geography, art and design and technology lack a permanent co-ordinator. This leads to an inequitable sharing of responsibilities among staff, to the lack of development opportunities for both staff and pupils in some of these areas and to uncertainty about who will spearhead and monitor initiatives.
67. The support and monitoring of teaching and curriculum development are generally good. Teaching is monitored regularly by the headteacher and his deputies. Feedback is given regarding strengths and areas for further development. Characteristics of good teaching are discussed regularly amongst senior management and teachers. This ensures that all teachers are aware of the requirements for their own teaching. Good systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching and the curriculum have been established and contribute towards the culture of self-evaluation. However, subjects or aspects that are not managed by a designated co-ordinator are not effectively monitored at present. Co-ordinators are delegated the responsibility of organising their monitoring schedule and this is good practice. However, this results in some inconsistency in the amount of monitoring undertaken and disparity in the depth of co-ordinators' knowledge and understanding of the area they lead.
68. The procedures for school development planning are very good. All aspects of the school are considered and the main drive of the plan is continuous improvement in the quality of education provided and the raising of standards. In response to a key issue of the previous inspection, development planning has been refined and is based on a systematic process of whole school review and evaluation. Staff,

governors, parents and pupils all contribute to an annual audit procedure. Responses are thoroughly and seriously analysed before the development plan is established. Priorities within the plan consider all areas of school development, but focus most intensely on raising levels of attainment. The plan sets clear targets with necessary resource implications, deadlines for completion and clearly defined success criteria. The plan is monitored regularly and progress towards the targets is tracked closely. The headteacher and the chair of governors take an active lead in monitoring progress towards targets identified in the school development plan. They have a clear understanding of how the current plan fits into long-term strategic planning.

69. The implementation of the school's aims, values and policies is very good. The headteacher and his deputies work hard to ensure a high degree of consistency and this has a very positive impact on the highly effective ethos established. There is a strong emphasis towards achieving high, yet realistic, standards academically and socially. The atmosphere for learning is purposeful and productive.
70. Management of special educational needs is good. The role of the special education needs co-ordinator has developed into a full-time position since the last inspection. The co-ordinator manages liaison, communication, recording and the deployment of support staff. Management of resources is also maintained. The co-ordinator provides specialist teaching to all pupils on the register of special educational need at some time. The policy has been reviewed and is in draft form pending an update of the child protection policy. It links appropriately to the national Code of Practice. The organisation of support for special educational needs is detailed and takes account of each child's personal need. Requirements for the annual review of statements of educational need are well managed. The co-ordinator has an important role in monitoring levels of attainment and rates of progress and this is contributing successfully to consistency of attention given to the needs of all pupils. The special educational needs governor is experienced and well qualified to undertake this role. He has the opportunity to liaise with the co-ordinator and is familiar with the working practices of the school.
71. Since the last inspection, the school has made systematic response to the all the key issues. Weaknesses identified in the last report have been generally been addressed, although procedures for assessment and the full dissemination of teacher expertise require further development. Strengths identified have been sustained successfully and many have been developed further. There has been good improvement since the last inspection that have resulted in rising standards, faster progress and a higher quality of teaching. The only exception to this is in the provision for information technology and this is the subject of a current major initiative. Governors have already targeted funding towards the subject and have made appointments of staff with expertise in this area.
72. The school's capacity for further improvement is good. The headteacher and staff are in a position to maintain the high standards achieved already and there is generally a collective determination to improve further. The deputy headteachers, staff and governors share the headteacher's vision for further developing the quality of education.

86. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

73. Overall, very good staffing, accommodation and learning resources support pupils' education. The exceptions to this positive picture are in teacher expertise and resource levels for information technology and several overcrowded classrooms. Apart from the weakness in information technology, the school is staffed by a sufficient number of suitably qualified and experienced staff to meet the needs of the National Curriculum. There is a full-time special needs co-ordinator with extensive experience and training in this field. The majority of subjects are covered by co-ordinators with appropriate qualifications and experience.
74. The training and professional development of all staff carried out since the last inspection have overcome many of the weaknesses that were then highlighted. The governing body deliberately allocates extra funds to provide supply teaching staff. This is to enable subject co-ordinators to monitor and

promote the professional development of their colleagues. In many areas this has been put to good use, although there is a need for senior management to maintain an overview of cover arrangements to ensure that the agreed procedure is working in all areas.

75. The provision of special needs support staff is very good. The previous inspection highlighted the need for greater precision in the guidance given to assistants and more rigorous monitoring of the outcomes of their work. The school has given careful and thorough thought to this, including a high level of training for learning support staff and the quality of work undertaken is very good. They are deployed most effectively and have clear guidance how to best support individuals or groups.
76. School administration is particularly successful in supporting the work of the senior management team and all other staff. The caretaker and contract cleaning staff are to be commended for the overall cleanliness and very good state of repair and maintenance apparent throughout the large buildings and grounds.
77. Overall the school enjoys very good accommodation. The well-decorated modern buildings encourage learning and progress and the school is fortunate to have extensive well-drained grass areas. There are also large playgrounds with marked areas to encourage constructive play. However, the sub-surface of these is breaking down and the playgrounds are subject to significant areas of lying water.
78. A limitation on the school is the cramped classrooms. The majority of the classrooms have fewer than 30 pupils, but the proximity of pupils and difficulty of movement inhibits learning, especially in practical activities. In those classrooms with more than 30 pupils the conditions place restrictions on activities. The school has a fairly high average class size and staff manage well to achieve a good quality of education in difficult circumstances at times.
79. Children under five and reception pupils are housed in a separate unit. It is spacious and has all the necessary indoor facilities for the relatively small number of pupils it contains. There is a covered play area and a fenced outside grass area but outdoor equipment is rather limited. Although there are some fixed large toys in the grassed area, they have been subjected to vandalism.
80. There are very good resources in most areas of the curriculum. There is, however, a significant weakness in resources for information technology and lesser weaknesses in mathematics equipment and small apparatus for physical education. There is a good range of instruments available for music and the library contains a satisfactory range of books. Pupils are taught to use the library from an early age and show evident enjoyment of its use. The school makes good use of external resources such as visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum and pupils' progress. High quality artefact collections and displays help to create a stimulating environment and to support learning. Since the last inspection, a specific room has been designated as a base for special educational needs. This provides a teaching and meeting area as well as storage for resources. A good bank of resources, including a computer and appropriate software, has been established and these are used effectively to meet the needs of individuals or groups of children.

#### 94. **The efficiency of the school**

81. The school manages its available resources very well. The school development plan and business plan are very useful documents and clearly show direction for the school and a guide to the prioritising of expenditure. Each item is accompanied by a realistic estimate of costing which effectively assists the budget process. Planning for the budget is very carefully carried out before the beginning of the financial year and there is full staff consultation. The finance committee of the governing body is actively and effectively involved in budget preparation and closely monitors monthly expenditure. The annual budget is approved by the full governing body which receives regular financial reports at its meetings from the finance committee.

82. The level of financial control and quality of school administration are excellent. The headteacher and finance assistant manage the day-to-day financial procedures of the school very efficiently. The systems in place ensure that the school runs very smoothly and that money is handled securely. Income and expenditure are carefully and thoroughly recorded in detail with very good use being made of available technology. There are very effective systems for monthly checks on expenditure and for secure cash processing which provide a high level of internal control. Separate and equally thorough accounts are kept for private funds which are audited annually and presented to the governing body. Other day-to-day administrative procedures are very effective; communication systems within the school are very good and parents kept well-informed about events and special activities. Office staff work in an efficient, calm and professional manner and support the school's work extremely well. The last external audit was some six years ago and the recommendations of that report have been fully implemented.
83. Good use is made of teaching staff in providing a supportive and productive atmosphere. Most teachers are deployed well although there is some inconsistency in the use of a minority of curriculum co-ordinators in effectively monitoring their subjects. Learning support assistants are used very effectively to support pupils with special needs and lower attaining pupils and they represent good value for money. Caretaking and cleaning staff conscientiously carry out their duties and are efficient.
84. Very good use is made of the building and the outdoor site, although there are limited facilities for adventurous outdoor play facilities for children under five. The premises are put to good use out of school hours and a considerable sum is raised from out-of-hours lettings. Good use is made of learning resources, except those for information technology, which are under used. Value for money is conscientiously pursued in all purchasing decisions. Incomes from the Standards Fund and for pupils with special educational needs are all used effectively and subject to the same rigorous accounting procedures.
85. Since the last inspection the school has made good progress in addressing issues identified in the report. This is reflected in achieving the prestigious 'Charter Mark' and 'Investors in People' awards. Income and expenditure levels are below average compared with most schools nationally. Taking into account pupils' average attainment on entry and good progress which is promoted for the majority, the very good relationships and behaviour, the very good links with the community and the strong leadership and management of funds, the school provides good value for money.

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

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

86. Children are admitted to the reception classes in two intakes. Those who have autumn birthdays start in the September of the term in which they are five and the rest start in the following January. All attend full-time after a short part-time induction period. Most have had some pre-school experience in local playgroups or nurseries. Their attainment on entry to the school of the current intake is broadly average but attainment is often lower than this in the key areas of language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. These attainment levels are confirmed by the results of the county's system of testing on entry to the school which show scores in language, mathematics and personal development to be below average overall. There are indications, for example from the school's special needs and child health records, that levels of attainment on entry to the school have fallen in recent years.
87. At the time of the inspection, children had been in the reception classes for less than two weeks and were still attending on a part-time basis. Only the oldest children in the year group had been admitted at the beginning of the autumn term. By the end of the inspection, eight of them had reached the age of five.

#### **101. Personal and social development**

88. The majority of children make good progress in learning to play and work co-operatively with others and reach what is expected nationally by the time that they are five. A small minority of children continue to need adult support. Children feel confident and secure within the well organised routines in the reception classes. They usually play happily alongside one another and begin to learn to share equipment and to take turns. Most children co-operate well in pairs when using outdoor equipment or in the role-play areas. Children form very good relationships with the staff. They enjoy adult attention, but many are also able to concentrate on activities independently. Behaviour is usually good. The teachers, learning support assistants and other adults have consistently high expectations of children's behaviour. They praise and reinforce good behaviour and deal calmly with individuals who find it difficult to share or to follow instructions. They reinforce routines and promote independence and self-esteem. Staff act as good role models for co-operative working. The quality of teaching is good and the staff provide many opportunities, especially during afternoon sessions, to nurture individual children and develop this area of learning through interaction with individual children while they play.

#### **102. Language and literacy**

89. By the time children are five, language and literacy skills are generally below expectations. The majority of children listen attentively and respond well to stories, songs, nursery rhymes and poems. However, a significant minority find it difficult to maintain their concentration for more than a short period of time and this restricts their ability to listen and absorb information. Children take part in imaginative play, for example role-play in the house or the shop, and are encouraged to talk about their own experiences. The language used by some children is inhibited as they have a limited range of vocabulary and speak in short, poorly structured, sentences. A significant minority of children have poor articulation and pronunciation of words. Progress in speaking and listening is satisfactory. Children handle books carefully and know how they are organised. Under fives regularly borrow books to take home and participate in reading with an adult at school. Pupils undertake a range of activities that promote the development of early reading and writing skills. A minority is developing the ability to recognise letters and sounds. This is taught through planned activities throughout the week that reinforce a letter as part of the target for improving literacy. Children make sound progress but, by the time they are five, attainment is still below that found nationally. All children take part in a daily story time and join in nursery rhymes and action songs. They learn to enjoy stories and books and become increasingly aware of repeated phrases and rhymes. Children begin to trace and copy their names and to make independent use of the writing table. They begin to identify a few letter shapes and sounds. By the time they are five, children have developed confidence in mark making and begin to use symbols for recording their work in literacy and numeracy. Progress in writing is good.

90. In the reception classes, children are given a suitable range of experiences to promote language and literacy. Teachers plan a daily literacy session in the format of the national strategy but activities currently planned restrict opportunities for the less able or less mature children to learn language through first-hand experience and experimentation. Staff involve children effectively in discussion when they work with individuals and small groups inside the classroom. Overall the quality of teaching in this area of learning is good.

#### **104. Mathematics**

91. Children make good progress in their mathematical skills. By the time they are five, attainment is broadly similar to that found nationally. Children have many opportunities to develop skills in counting in planned structured activities and in independent play. They compare, sort, match and count and learn to sequence number cards. They learn to count groups of children, for example the number in the class that day and to remember to include themselves. Children begin to acquire an early practical understanding of addition and subtraction. They use number language during play, for example, when building towers they compare bigger and smaller. By the time they are five most can count to ten and beyond. Children make good progress in the daily numeracy lesson. They solve simple number problems in practical contexts, for example, when finding different ways of making five. They learn to identify shapes and name those with or without corners. The quality of teaching is good. Staff make good use of the snack period to develop children's understanding of mathematics, for example by counting the number of drinks, as well as encouraging their social skills. Mathematical language is taught very effectively. Activities are matched well to the different needs of children and all children enjoy tasks and behave well. The teachers and learning support assistants use questioning skilfully to reinforce learning.

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

92. Children make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. They begin to develop their powers of observation through a variety of practical experiences. They explore the difference between sand and water and talk about the difference between hot and cold. Children begin to name animals and take turns to look after the plants. They take part in role-play in the shop and use the toy cash register and telephone. Children make good progress in learning early computer skills, developing mouse control. They talk about events in their own lives, such as birthdays. They identify and find different areas of the school, for example the library. Some can describe how they might walk from the school to home. By the age of five, attainment is in line with national expectations. During the inspection no direct teaching in this area was seen as children were exploring opportunities with teacher support and intervention. The quality of this is good. Learning is promoted by skilful questioning. Activities and displays are appropriate and allow children a sound range of practical experiences. Activities are interesting and matched well to the age and attainment level of the children.

#### **106. Creative development**

93. Progress in creative development is satisfactory. Children have a sound range of experiences. They paint, print and draw and make collages. They develop their awareness of colour by mixing paints and through colour themes. Children use a range of reclaimed materials to create models. They make choices about what are the best resources for the job and select from different fixings to hold their models together. They take part in imaginative play using a garage and roadway and with the play people. Children join in simple songs and nursery rhymes with a sense of tune. By the time they are five, attainment is broadly in line with expectations for children of this age. Teaching was observed in the context of small group work during the inspection. The organisation of resources is good and children are effectively encouraged to improve and refine their work. There is a high level of interaction between the teacher and children and this promotes language development. The quality of teaching is good.

## 107. **Physical development**

94. Children make satisfactory progress in physical development and by the time they are five their attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. Children have the opportunity to use the outdoor play area every day. They develop increasing control and balance as they ride tricycles and scooters around the area. They run confidently and learn to kick, throw and roll balls. However, opportunities to climb, explore movement at height and to practise jumping and landing are limited by the range of equipment available. Outdoor play experiences are complemented by formal lessons in the hall. Children gain increasing confidence travelling around the space. They explore pathways using different sized steps and varying the speed at which they move. Children develop manipulative skills through using a good range of tools and equipment. They increase their skills in cutting with scissors, although many have difficulty manipulating these and use tools, such as glue spreaders, competently. They develop skills in controlling pens and pencils as their writing develops. The direct teaching of skills in this area is sound. Staff have a good awareness of health and safety issues. Teachers encourage children to demonstrate skills and ideas and make effective teaching points.
95. The school's written plans for the under fives are, unusually, not based on the nationally agreed Areas of Learning or the Desirable Learning Outcomes for young children. In practice, the work planned caters for children's needs but the school has correctly decided that improvements to its written planning and assessment procedures could underpin good teaching more effectively.

## 109. **MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

## **ENGLISH,**

### 109. **English**

96. The attainment of eleven year olds has remained above the national average since the last inspection, with boys and girls performing at a similar level. In the 1998 national tests for eleven year olds, the number of pupils reaching the expected level (Level 4) or above was close to the national average and the average of schools whose pupils are from similar backgrounds. However, the number reaching the higher level (Level 5) was below the national average and that of similar schools. In the 1999 tests for eleven year olds, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level or above in English was significantly higher than in 1998, with almost one third of the year group reaching the higher level. However, this overall improvement was entirely due to high scores in reading; attainment in writing was lower. Teacher assessments underestimated the results for reading. It is not possible to compare these results with those of other schools because national figures are not yet available. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the present Year 6 is above average in reading and writing.
97. The attainment of seven year olds in reading and writing has remained close to the national average since the last inspection. In the 1998 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds, the number of pupils reaching the expected level (Level 2) or higher in reading and writing was close to the national average and the average of schools whose pupils are from similar backgrounds. The performance of girls was well above the national average. In the 1999 tests for seven year olds, the school's results in writing were similar to those of the previous year. In reading, more pupils reached the higher level than in 1998, but overall fewer pupils reached the expected Level 2 or above. It is not possible to compare these results with those of other schools because national figures are not yet available. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the present Year 2 is average in reading and writing.
98. Many pupils enter school with below average language skills. All pupils make good progress in listening in both key stages because teachers insist that they behave well in class and pay close attention. Attainment in listening at the end of both key stages is good. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority listen carefully and with enjoyment to stories and instruction in the literacy hour. By age eleven, pupils take an active part in formal discussions, listening carefully to others and taking turns politely.
99. Pupils make satisfactory progress in speaking and reach expected standards at the end of both key



stages. Many pupils in Year 2 speak quietly and briefly in answer to questions, but they express their ideas in Standard English. The majority take an active part in class discussions and give full answers to questions when prompted. Many read aloud with expression. Pupils in Key Stage 2 become more confident in speaking for a range of purposes in class. By age eleven, they explain their views fully in discussing the shared text, using evidence to justify their opinions. They use technical terms correctly. When teachers give them opportunity, those with higher attainment give clear extended reports on their progress in classwork. They have the occasional challenge of speaking to larger audiences in class assemblies and stage performances. Drama is not often used to extend pupils' experience, but they rise to challenges in other subjects. For instance, they negotiate with partners how to achieve best results in mathematics and science investigations and discuss personal issues in Circle Time. However, such opportunities are not organised into a structured programme to ensure pupils' progress through the levels expected in the National Curriculum. A similar criticism was made in the last report and it has not been addressed.

100. Pupils make good progress in reading in Key Stage 1 and reach expected standards by age seven. In the initial stage, they are systematically taught the relationship between letters and sounds so that the majority make good progress through a reading scheme supplemented by other graded reading books. At the beginning of Key Stage 2, the less proficient readers are given additional instruction in letter-sound relationships so they can work out words they do not know. By age eleven, the majority can read longer texts silently and with good concentration. They are confident in reading for a wide range of purposes. When they read aloud, most are both fluent and accurate. All have good understanding and most give full explanations of character and plot. Many have favourite authors and explain reasons for their choice with enthusiasm. Library skills develop well through the key stage and older pupils have a good understanding of how to use the library to find information for projects and interest.
101. Pupils make good progress in writing in Key Stage 1 and reach expected standards by age seven. They write for a good range of purposes, including poetry, stories, letters and personal accounts. The majority express their ideas accurately, using a good range of vocabulary. Many write at length confidently and standards of accuracy for spelling and punctuation are generally sound. Most pupils write with adequate control by the end of Key Stage 1 and form letters clearly. However, very few achieve a joined, legible style and as a result many pupils in Year 3 write slowly. Pupils are given spellings to learn for homework, but these words are not necessarily ones that they use in their work. They do not do corrections regularly enough to link the spelling programme with their extended writing.
102. Pupils make good progress in writing in Key Stage 2 and reach good standards by age eleven. They write for an increasingly wide range of purposes and audiences and produce a considerable amount of writing in each year. They make good progress in handwriting, so that the large majority of pupils in Year 6 write clearly in ink in a joined legible style. In each year group some pieces of work are word processed to a good standard. Much of the work that is drafted and proof-read for publication in displays and class anthologies is of a very high standard, with examples of excellent work in all years. Their poetry is perceptive. They use lively dialogue for dramatic effect in their stories. Factual accounts are well structured. A regular programme ensures that they have a sound knowledge of grammar. Most pupils are confident in using a dictionary to check their work. Nevertheless, test results suggest that their drafting and proof-reading skills are not secure when they are required to write at speed.
103. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Teachers plan lessons and organise their classrooms so that these pupils have appropriate work and well planned support whilst taking a full part in class activity. The small number of pupils who have English as an additional language make similar rates of progress to others in their age groups. At the time of the inspection, none of these needed external support in their language learning and all were catered for appropriately by their class teachers.
104. Consistently sound standards of literacy across the school have a positive effect on pupils' progress in other subjects. Pupils are confident in using information books for independent study. They make good progress in using formal written language to explore ideas logically and summarise their learning. Information technology is used in redrafting and presenting written work but the extent of its use is inconsistent between and within classes.

105. Pupils' attitudes to English are good. Most are enthusiastic about books and make good use of private reading time. They co-operate well in discussions of the shared text. They settle quickly to set tasks and take care over the standard of their work. In some classes in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2, some pupils work too slowly when teachers do not insist on the quantity and quality of work expected. The standard of behaviour in lessons is generally good, which enables pupils to concentrate in independent tasks. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a reliably high level of independence. Pupils are proud of their work and respond well to the stimulus given by attractive displays and class anthologies.
106. In Key Stage 1, teaching was satisfactory in over half the lessons seen and good in a third. There was one very good lesson observed and no unsatisfactory teaching. In the very good lesson, pupils' attention was held by a brisk pace and an imaginative variety of tasks that reinforced the language target. The teacher questioned pupils closely, with very high expectations that they should understand and remember correctly. In otherwise satisfactory lessons, pupils make less progress when language targets are not defined precisely and, as a result, expectations for learning are less demanding. In Key Stage 2, almost two thirds of the teaching seen was good. It was satisfactory in the remainder and one very good lesson was seen. In this lesson, the teacher was particularly effective in building on pupils' previous knowledge and taking them further in a way that excited their interest. Pupils were given detailed guidance in an aspect of story writing, which led to clear improvements in their work.
107. Overall, teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding of the national literacy framework. As a result, most lessons are well structured and resourced. Teachers offer good models of speech and writing, though more could be done to model joined writing for younger pupils. Many teachers dramatise their reading aloud, so deepening pupils' understanding and raising their interest in books. Teachers plan tasks that are broadly appropriate for groups of different attainment, but, in many cases in both key stages, tasks for independent work do not match pupils' needs closely enough. Activities are well managed and time is used efficiently, particularly in lessons that follow the literacy hour format. Classroom assistants are used very effectively and give well-targeted support to individuals and groups because they understand their needs. Most teachers make good use of the final whole-class review to reinforce the lesson target but not all give pupils sufficient opportunity to speak at length. In marking pupils' work, teachers usually identify errors in the present target, but often miss more basic patterns of weakness, which are therefore reinforced. Pupils do not have enough opportunity to correct the weaknesses that teachers identify through marking. Homework is effectively used in all age groups to develop reading and spelling and writing skills are practised in research projects at home.
108. Management of the subject is good. The school has developed effective strategies to implement the National Literacy Strategy, while at the same time maintaining time for extended writing practice. The two co-ordinators are well placed to advise colleagues in each key stage, with regular opportunities to support and monitor teaching. Resources have been reviewed effectively to ensure they meet the new requirements. The scheme of work is based on the national framework and gives teachers detailed guidance.
109. The results of standardised tests are analysed to identify where improvements can be made. However, this analysis is limited because the school's assessment procedures do not provide sufficient information on pupils' strengths and weaknesses. The procedures are satisfactory in giving a broad outline of pupils' attainment, particularly at end of year. Nevertheless, they are not detailed enough to identify, for instance, why pupils' attainment at age eleven is much lower in writing than in reading. The school has recognised this in part and a new procedures are being used for assessing story writing. The head of Key Stage 1 has developed an appropriate action plan to remedy shortcomings in the attainment of younger pupils. The reading of older pupils is not monitored closely enough for its quality and range to ensure that all pupils are challenged. Assessment of speaking is informal and not linked to a scheme of work. Overall, teachers do not have enough precise information on a regular basis to target literacy tasks to the needs of individual pupils.
110. The ethos of the subject is very good. Staff show considerable skill and dedication by celebrating pupils' best work in attractive displays and anthologies. Teachers and pupils show commitment to high

standards, with an appreciation of language and enjoyment of its power. The school has maintained the strengths in English that were defined in its previous inspection.

124.

**124. Mathematics**

111. The results of the 1998 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 show that the percentage of pupils gaining the expected Level 4 or above was above the national average and the percentage reaching the higher Level 5 was well above average. Compared with similar schools, the results are above average. Although it is not yet possible to compare the most recent 1999 results with national averages, results at both Level 4 and 5 show a very good improvement. These standards are reflected in the inspection findings which show that the majority of pupils attain above average standards. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when standards were generally in line with national expectations.
112. There is also some recent improvement in standards by the end of Key Stage 1 where underachievement was reported in the last inspection. The 1998 national test results for this age group were below the national average and below the standards of pupils at similar schools. However, the 1999 test results show an improvement in the number of pupils gaining the higher level (Level 3) with a slight decline in the number of those attaining Level 2 or above. In the inspection it was judged that a majority of pupils are attaining average standards. At the same time there has been an increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs and this may be why standards overall have not improved even more.
113. The most significant improvement in both key stages is in the pupils' ability to use and apply their mathematical skills in practical situations. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress and attain satisfactory standards. By the end of the key stage, pupils are beginning to choose their own methods of calculation for some activities with the appropriate mathematical equipment. Year 6 pupils take pride in explaining their methods of problem solving and the reasoning behind it and attain above average standards. Pupils of higher ability check if their results are sensible. There is good progress in Key Stage 2 in this aspect of mathematics. This is no small way attributable to strategies introduced over the last year, following careful analysis of test results by the school and observations of teaching and learning by the headteacher and deputy headteachers. The school introduced methods recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy well before the September starting date. Pupils receive regular teaching of mental mathematics and are constantly challenged, by open-ended questions from their teachers, to think for themselves. Staff are beginning to use various aids to help pupils gain expertise. There is some inconsistency in the expertise of teachers, however, and sometimes insufficient use of practical apparatus, particularly in Key Stage 1.
114. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are attaining average standards in number. They make satisfactory progress in addition and subtraction and building up the 2s and 3s multiplication tables. Pupils of higher ability have a good understanding of odd and even numbers and are beginning to calculate successfully, using hundreds, tens and units. The younger pupils make good progress in counting and recognition of numbers up to 20. In Key Stage 2 there is a growing strength in mental mathematics. Pupils in Year 3 are not all confident in their ability to recall quickly the addition and subtraction facts up to 20 and in their knowledge of the early multiplication tables. However, there is good progress as the pupils pass up the school and as teachers develop the use of quick mental mathematics sessions each day. By the end of Key Stage 2, good standards of mental calculations enable pupils to attain above average levels in number. A majority of pupils use decimals in calculations involving the four rules of number, while pupils of lower ability are successful with addition and subtraction calculations. There is a good general ability in the use of fractions and percentages and confidence in the understanding of negative numbers.
115. There is satisfactory progress in shape, space and measures with standards in line with expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. Younger pupils know the days of the week and the seasons and measure successfully length and weight, using non-standard units. Year 2 pupils have a good knowledge of the properties of the common two-dimensional shapes and measure accurately using centimetres, grammes

and litres. There is good progress in Key Stage 2 with above average standards. Year 6 pupils calculate the area of triangles and circles and measure angles successfully using protractors. Standards are also above average in data handling. By the end of the key stage, pupils interpret graphs and pie charts and create them from their own collected information, using manual or information technology methods to produce tables and graphs.

116. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls in both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils who have English as an additional language make similar rates of progress to others.
117. Pupils respond very positively in mathematics lessons. They enjoy the quick mental mathematics sessions as well as work involving calculations or practical measuring. Behaviour is good, especially when the class teacher ensures that oral questions and other activities provide a challenge for a range of abilities. Pupils listen very carefully to instructions generally and are very willing to answer questions. They settle down to work quickly and conscientiously try to complete tasks in the time set. This is more noticeable when the teacher reminds pupils of time elapsed and ensures a brisk pace throughout the lesson. Pupils ask for help when required and are helpful to other pupils. They show great respect for the answers of others and for books and school resources. They collaborate well in group work, for example in a Year 6 class when required to provide a mathematics problem for the rest of the class. Personal responsibility is displayed when pupils volunteer to distribute books or tidy apparatus.
118. Numeracy is not particularly strong in other subjects of the curriculum. Work on symmetry can be seen in some Key Stage 1 physical education lessons and some art lessons. Graphs are produced in science, geography and information technology lessons. Key Stage 1 music lessons are used for simple counting activities.
119. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 1, two thirds of the lessons seen were satisfactory with one third being good or occasionally better. In Key Stage 2, one third of lessons seen were satisfactory while two thirds were good or occasionally better. Over half of the lessons seen altogether were good or sometimes very good. A general strength is the use of planning where learning objectives are set out clearly and detailed activities shown. However, not all teachers prepare work for a range of abilities. An improvement since the last inspection is the organisation of learning support assistants who are fully briefed and very helpful. Another significant improvement is the control over the pupils' rate of work. Direct teaching rather than pupils progressing at their own individual pace has ensured that continuity through the curriculum is closely monitored. In the best lessons, the teacher has good subject knowledge and understanding and builds on skills previously acquired. Strengths of the school are the teachers' promotion of efficient and speedy strategies for mental mathematics and the increasing provision and use of resources for teacher demonstrations and pupils' practical work. However, the school is not yet fully stocked with these resources.
120. The school has made a positive start to the adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy. Staff are working very hard to establish the new ways of working which were tried out in the previous year. Some good monitoring of teaching and learning has taken place and further evidence is to be gathered in this way to ensure that standards improve, particularly in Key Stage 1. Much work has gone into ensuring continuity through planning in year groups using a common format, but inconsistencies still occur when some year groups do not include work for pupils of differing abilities. Several useful forms of assessment take place to enable judgements to be made on standards across the school and class teachers keep mark books in which to note the results of multiplication and number bond tests. Some teachers make notes of daily or weekly evaluations to help plan for continuity and progress, but this type of assessment is not consistent throughout the school

#### 134. Science

121. At the end of Key Stage 2, national test results show that, in recent years, attainment was close to the

national average but fell in 1998 when it was below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. Results for 1999 show a significant improvement. This is confirmed by inspection findings, which are that Year 6 pupils attain standards that are above average. The school's improved results in science at Key Stage 2 are partly due to a different cohort of pupils and partly to an increased focus on science by the school. The school acknowledged after the 1998 tests that its results could be improved and took action which was rewarded by the better scores in 1999. The performance of girls is, overall, better than that of boys.

122. Teachers' assessments of seven year olds in recent years indicate that, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attained standards which were above the national average and above that attained by schools with a similar intake. The results for 1999, for which there are currently no national comparisons available, suggest that this trend has continued. Inspection findings for the oldest pupils in this key stage who are now beginning Year 2 show standards which are broadly average.
123. Pupils in Year 2 understand basic scientific facts across the range of the science curriculum. They gain understanding by discussions, observations and investigations. They record their findings in an appropriate variety of ways. Progress through Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, including that of pupils with special needs. Recorded work at the beginning of the stage is mostly pictorial and not always well presented. As pupils progress through the key stage, the quality and quantity of written work improves. There is an increasing knowledge of scientific fact and developing investigational skills. Year 1 pupils recognise differences and similarities between themselves and other living things. In Year 2, pupils investigate the properties of building materials and relate this to their use in their own homes. They make suggestions as to why materials are used for certain purposes and use simple equipment. They record their findings in a variety of ways.
124. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' knowledge of scientific facts is good overall in all major areas required by the National Curriculum. Pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop investigational and experimental skills and understanding. All pupils made good progress in relation to their prior attainment through Key Stage 2 with most strands of science. They learn to hypothesise, plan and test out ideas choosing appropriate apparatus. Most understand the need for fair testing and present results well in a clear and organised way using text and charts with neat presentation and drawing skills. By the end of the key stage, for example, pupils understand the properties of solids, liquids and gases. They use appropriate scientific language such as 'volume', 'condensation', 'vapour' and 'molecule'. They know that, when substances are heated, changes may be reversible or irreversible. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress with appropriate support.
125. In both key stages, most pupils show very positive attitudes to their work. They listen and behave well and show an eagerness to learn and undertake activities. They work well individually and in small groups and, at Key Stage 2, take responsibility for their own learning, often in cramped conditions. They relate well to other pupils and their teachers. Pupils sustain their interest and concentration very well and show clear enjoyment of their lessons. They handle equipment carefully, understand the need for safety and show respect for each other's views when discussing and planning science topics. Most pupils present their work neatly in written work, diagrams and charts.
126. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. In the best lessons, planning has clear objectives, pace is brisk, questioning is good and activities are clearly matched to the needs of the pupils and build on their prior learning. Teachers' subject knowledge and expectations are sound at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2 and activities are usually well-planned and structured. At both key stages, the management of pupils is good. Sound use is made of time, resources and questioning and assessment procedures in Key Stage 1 and these are all good at Key Stage 2. There is a good balance of activities with a developing emphasis on using and applying scientific knowledge especially at Key Stage 2 and this shows improvement since the last inspection .
127. The science curriculum, based on a commercial scheme, is broad and balanced and provides good coverage of the National Curriculum requirements. A sound policy and comprehensive scheme of work provides clear guidance, ensures progression and that skills build systematically. Science is taught

through science topics and also embraces other subjects where this is possible. Planning is thorough and provides good structure. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and provides good support to colleagues. Some successful monitoring of planning is evident but monitoring of pupils' work or the quality of teaching and learning to further raise standards and share good practice by the co-ordinator does not occur and this is a weakness. Marking is sometimes good and sets targets for further development. There are good learning resources, which include videos, worksheets and equipment and these are effectively organised and accessible. The subject contributes soundly to literacy in written activities with good use of scientific language. It contributes to numeracy through the use of measurements and the recording of data. Accommodation is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 overall but in some Key Stage 2 classes the cramped conditions inhibit independent learning. There are some stimulating science displays around the school which further enhance the subject.

128. Since the last inspection, pupils' attainment, resources and teachers' knowledge have improved. The policy and scheme of work have been successfully updated and some monitoring of planning in the subject has been introduced. The school has made good progress in the introduction of investigative science especially at Key Stage 2, although the management and organisation of this is less well developed at Key Stage 1.

**SUBJECTS OR COURSES****Information technology**

129. Attainment in information technology is below expectations at the end of both key stages and provision has deteriorated since the last inspection. However, at the end of Key Stage 2, there is a significant number of pupils who regularly have access to a computer at home and whose attainment is good in specific areas such as word processing and in accessing and interrogating information using CD-ROMs. Only a few observations were made of pupils using computers during the inspection, as they were not always switched on or being used. This, combined with the provision of only one computer per class, inhibits attainment and progress.
130. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use computers for word processing stories and poems and to learn techniques such as changing font and size. Most have limited knowledge of the keyboard and position of the letters. With assistance, pupils understand how to enter information, to sort and classify data and print out the results as line, bar or pie charts. They investigate aspects of real or imagined situations when using simulation and decision making programs. Pupils work with a robot and develop procedures to control it to move and turn. An art program is used to draw pictures. Most have limited awareness of the benefits of using information technology and applications in the home and wider world.
131. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is variable with those pupils who have regular access to a computer at home being more knowledgeable than their classmates. Many pupils use word processing to edit and redraft their written work. However, examples of previous work show a very limited amount of examples of activities such as designing questionnaires and using these to construct histograms and pie charts. There is little evidence of information technology being used widely in art or music or of data handling in subjects such as mathematics and science. Pupils have little recollection of previous work which has involved the control of machines or sensors by computers. Not all are yet competent in turning the computer on or can confidently log on and off independently. Although many change font, colour and size of text successfully, few can add to and find stored information independently. A few more able pupils confidently use CD-ROMs, such as an encyclopaedia, to search for information to support history and geography topics. Most pupils have a limited awareness of the use of information technology and control in the wider world such as in libraries, supermarkets, banking, industry and in home appliances.
132. Pupils in all age groups, including those with special needs, make insufficient progress in most aspects of their general skill development through the school. In both key stages, progress is unsatisfactory, although this varies between classes and year groups. It is largely dependent on teacher knowledge and expertise and on pupils' access to regular use of the computer. In the reception classes, pupils use the mouse and function keys to assist in literacy and numeracy activities and this is extended in Year 1. Pupils in Year 2 learn to save, retrieve and print out their work with adult help. In Year 4, some pupils begin to use a CD-ROM effectively to discover information in support of a history topic on the Romans. In a Year 5 class, pupils successfully produce a poster using a photo from a digital camera. Year 6 pupils use a scanner to print out repeating William Morris designs as part of an art topic and are introduced to control technology by writing a short program to turn a light on and off. There is no significant difference in the progress of pupils of different gender, race or background. Pupils with special educational needs make limited progress because, although they receive the necessary support, there is limited access to the one computer in each class.
133. Pupils' response is good in both key stages when given the opportunity. They work well individually or in small groups sustaining interest and enthusiasm and show respect for each other and the equipment. They show good concentration and perseverance and have positive attitudes. Those pupils who have access to computers at home often assist those whose knowledge is not so advanced. These more able pupils often use home computers effectively to search for information and support work undertaken in the classroom.

134. Very few instances of specific teaching were observed during the inspection and none at Key Stage 1. In the three short lessons seen the quality of teaching was good. Teachers in these lessons showed good subject knowledge, chose appropriate software and activities and intervened well to give specific help when needed. During the inspection, at both key stages, computers were often switched on but not in use and opportunities for the teaching of information technology to support the curriculum were missed. In the small number of lessons when computers were being used, teachers managed pupils well, encouraging them to work independently, although on occasions pupils were left to get on with their work on their own. At times adult help was needed but it was not forthcoming. Discussions with pupils about their previous work showed that in the past they had not been offered a sufficient range of experiences and that overall teaching in some classes has been unsatisfactory. Some teachers lack knowledge and understanding and have yet to grasp the opportunity to use information technology effectively to support other areas of the curriculum.
135. The co-ordinator shows commitment and enthusiasm and gives good support to colleagues. There is clear direction for the subject in the development plan, which includes purchase of more machines and essential staff training. Governors have allocated funds to development and made appointments which include teachers with appropriate expertise. A thorough audit of resources has been undertaken. There is a sound policy and a very recently introduced scheme of work, which clearly details software to be used and activities to be undertaken. However, while some teachers assess pupils' attainment and progress, comprehensive assessment procedures are not yet fully in place and this affects pupils' progress, as tasks do not appropriately build on pupils' prior knowledge. Whilst all teachers include brief plans for their classes in their medium-term summaries, they do not sufficiently define how the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding will be organised and managed to promote progression as pupils move through the school. The school has identified this and plans to remedy the situation. The school has set broad targets for improving pupils' attainment but these are not linked to measurable criteria by which success may be judged.
136. The school is poorly equipped with computers; there is only one in most classrooms and two classrooms have to share a single unit. This is well below the national average and is insufficient for the demands of the curriculum. Not all computers have working printers attached, limiting their effectiveness. The computer in the library has Internet access and is used occasionally by older pupils for independent research. Other resources, for example, tape recorders, televisions with video recorders, keyboards and calculators, are satisfactory and used well to support learning. The suitability and range of software resources for supporting other areas of the curriculum, including CD-ROMs, is sound and currently under review.
137. Since the last inspection, standards in the subject have dropped as the demands of the subject have increased.

#### **151. Religious education**

138. Pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus in both key stages. By the age of seven, pupils demonstrate an understanding of Bible stories such as 'Moses and the Burning Bush'. They have started to relate stories to real life. This was observed in a lesson when a discussion based on 'Moses and Pharaoh's Daughter' was focused on having trust in God and others such as friends and the police. Most pupils can talk about major family celebrations, such as christenings, and community festivals relating to Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism.
139. By the age of eleven, pupils demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding of important principles and practices relating to Christianity and other major religions. The majority know the importance of sacred books to followers of different religions, and can explore concepts of similarities and differences between faith communities. They show the ability to appreciate the religious conviction of famous people as was observed in a Year 6 class where pupils were working on a biography of the



founder of The Salvation Army.

140. Pupils make satisfactory, and, occasionally, good progress in both key stages. There have been improvements in pupils' progress as a result of the attention which religious education has received in both policy and practice following the last inspection when its unsatisfactory provision was a key issue. In Years 1 and 2, pupils talk about the meaning of friendship and why and how friends should be kind to each other. Year 3 pupils reinforce their understanding of right and wrong while reminding themselves of school rules. In Year 4, pupils explore a sense of belonging and mutual loyalty as members of a community such as their school. Pupils' progress in religious education in Year 5 is reflected in their appreciation of the need for rules in everyday life and in different environments (for example, the safety of self and others). Year 6 pupils consolidate and extend their knowledge and understanding by studying the content and structure of Holy Books such the Bible and the lives of people who have strong religious conviction.
141. Pupils across both key stages are enthusiastic about their religious education work. They contribute to discussion, showing respect for the opinion of others. They are well behaved and co-operative. Many can work independently but, occasionally, some pupils show limited capacity for initiative.
142. Teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. Teachers' plans take full account of the agreed syllabus and are based on a scheme of work that has clear learning objectives. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The best lessons are planned to cater for the full range of attainments and show progression in learning. Teachers' knowledge of religious education is often good and many use effective strategies like questioning that promote pupil participation and purposeful discussion. Most lessons are well-resourced. Weak features of some lessons observed included lack of sufficient challenge, limited opportunity for pupil initiative and the absence of a consistent assessment, recording and monitoring strategy.
143. The religious education provision has been enhanced since the last inspection, making the curriculum broad and balanced. There has been considerable improvement in policy and resources. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have recently started to record their religious education activities in separate exercise books. The religious education programme, supplemented by a comprehensive personal, social and health education curriculum, makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. It is well co-ordinated, showing the school's capacity for further improvement, although this is not fully reflected in the professional development of staff and in links with multi-faith communities.

#### 157. **Art**

144. It was possible to see only a few lessons during the inspection and these were all in Key Stage 2. Additional evidence was obtained from examining pupils' previous work, from looking at teachers' planning and from talking to pupils about their work. This evidence indicates that pupils in both key stages, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. The school has maintained standards well since its last inspection.
145. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have frequent opportunities to draw and paint; they produce, for example, portraits of their friends from close observation. They experience work in both two and three dimensions and use a widening range of media, making a large-scale rainforest collage and high quality clay houses. They try out techniques such as splatter painting and silhouette and use art to enhance topics, when working on autumn for example. They begin to look at the work of famous artists like Picasso and Rousseau and experiment with the styles used by them.
146. In Key Stage 2 pupils build progressively and rapidly on their knowledge and skills. They continue to use a wide range of media with increasing refinement and develop their own style and imagination in their work. Pupils in Year 3 learn collage techniques when producing work in the style of Matisse. A Year 4 class was seen studying how to represent the effects of light in their work by shading when

drawing three-dimensional objects. In Year 5, pupils' observational skills were used to good effect when creating designs for Tudor pictures as part of a history topic. Year 6 pupils show well developed drawing skills when working in fine detail on designs for tiles and wall coverings on a Victorian theme. In this key stage, pupils continue to increase their knowledge of artists as different as Holbein and Escher. Effective cross-curricular links are made, for example by studying William Morris as part of a history topic and in a study of Indian art which promoted pupils' cultural development well. During the inspection, information technology was used well in Year 6 when pupils scanned, copied and printed repeating designs for tiles using the class computer. However, in general computers are underused in pupils' work, a criticism that remains since the last inspection.

147. Pupils show positive attitudes to their work. They listen carefully and most behave well in lessons. They enjoy the practical nature of tasks and handle materials sensibly in the small, crowded classrooms. They work confidently, both as individuals and in groups. Their work is presented very well and high quality books of a class topic or of an individual's best work often celebrate pupils' achievements.
148. Teaching is good. Most teachers have a secure understanding of the subject and plan interesting and varied activities. They support pupils well by giving help with techniques and by appropriate interventions to improve pupils' thinking. Resources are plentiful and of good quality. All teachers use stimulating displays and visual resources such as books, posters and artefacts to motivate pupils. Art retains a high profile in the school in most classes but, especially in Key Stage 1, planned activities are too often dependent on volunteer helpers and do not take place if this help is not forthcoming. Good use is made of the pottery resources available, including the kiln, and a local potter visits to teach classes.
149. There is an appropriate scheme of work for art but this is not linked to any structured assessment procedures and the assessment arrangements used by teachers are informal. The school effectively gives a high priority to the creation of a stimulating and exciting visual environment and this is achieved through good quality displays and the use of interesting artefacts, such as those from the school's own museum collection. The previous inspection criticised the lack of a named co-ordinator for the subject. This is still the case but the combined leadership of the headteacher and several interested staff ensures that the subject thrives in many ways. However, the present management of the subject does create an extra area of responsibility for the busy headteacher.

### 163. **Design and technology**

150. It was not possible to observe lessons in design and technology during the inspection. Evidence of pupils' progress was obtained from examining previous work, from looking at teachers' planning and from talking to pupils about their work. This evidence indicates that pupils in both key stages, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The school has broadly maintained the standards reported in the last inspection.
151. In Key Stage 1, pupils design and make a range of products using different materials, including wheeled vehicles and animal cages. They cut and manipulate card, plastic and wood and experiment with construction sets to interpret their designs. They begin to handle fabrics and learn to simple stitches to join and decorate textiles. Food technology projects include making Indian sweets and jam tarts; pupils observe and comment on what happens when ingredients are combined and the changes between raw and cooked food.
152. Pupils in Key Stage 2 build systematically on these early skills. At the lower end of the key stage, Year 3 pupils, for example, make models incorporating levers and Year 4 refine their embroidery and textile skills. Pupils in Year 5 accurately design, make and evaluate land yachts, rockets with parachutes and a burglar alarm with a pressure release switch. The oldest pupils in Year 6 progress to making very careful and detailed designs for pencil boxes with accurate measurements, listing the materials and tools they will require. They produce the finished product to a high standard. Pupils also make games to be used at the school's summer fair, which are then evaluated against factors such as popularity, sturdiness

and profitability.

153. Pupils are interested in their work and speak enthusiastically about completed projects. Work from the previous school year shows that they are able to work accurately and carefully, both independently and in groups.
154. Evidence from the work produced indicates that teaching is sound. Teachers have refined the scope of projects undertaken by each year group to fit in with the 'slimmed down' National Curriculum but retain meaningful experiences in both key stages. Good quality training is occasionally provided, such as a workshop on book making. Teachers make appropriate use of the good levels and quality of practical resources and benefit from facilities such as the well equipped food technology areas. They also make effective use of volunteer help for activities such as cooking, but the planning of these is reliant on extra adults being available which cannot be guaranteed. The previous report criticised the lack of a named co-ordinator for the subject and this is still the case. The senior management team retains an overview but no teacher provides clear leadership for the subject. There is a rudimentary scheme of work but no clear guidance for staff on aspects such as a structured progression of skills or arrangements for assessment. The school has tried, without success, to recruit a teacher with a specialist interest in this subject.

#### 168. **Geography**

155. Judgements are based on limited classroom observation but a substantial amount of other evidence, including work sampling, display and discussion with staff and pupils. The majority of pupils in all attainment groups throughout the school make sound progress in developing their geographical knowledge, understanding and skills. In the limited number of lessons seen during the inspection, there was evidence of some good progress in Key Stage 1. This indicates improvement since the last inspection when there was underachievement in Key Stage 1. No significant difference was observed in the progress made by boys and girls and pupils having special education needs or coming from different ethnic backgrounds.
156. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn about their locality and other familiar places such as holiday resorts by answering and asking questions. They engage in activities enabling them to recognise, from photographs and maps, the natural features of a place such as lakes and mountains. They develop elementary planning and map skills by drawing, for example, a map of an imaginary island and showing features such as houses, trees and paths. There is evidence of pupils studying themes such as weather and the rainforest.
157. In Key Stage 2, pupils consolidate and extend their geographical skills by using keys and symbols to identify and locate places and their features on a map. Year 3 pupils learn about river systems, acquiring relevant vocabulary such as 'source', 'stream' and 'tributary'. They reinforce their knowledge by watching a video about the River Severn. There is evidence of older pupils consolidating and extending their geographical skills, though often in the context of history. Year 6 pupils, for example, use maps and atlases to locate specific countries which were part of the British Empire and to discover changes of names such as the Victoria Falls. Their map reading skills are thus enhanced to include grid referencing and the use of coordinates. By the time they leave school, pupils will have studied various modes of travel and how the landscape changed during Victorian times.
158. Pupils in both key stages show interest in activities involving places and maps. They talk about their locality and other places they have visited for a holiday with enthusiasm. They co-operate and share resources without fuss. In the main, they show good behaviour in the classroom, relating well to each other and adults.
159. Teaching observed was satisfactory in both key stages with occasional good features in Key Stage 1. Teachers generally demonstrate secure subject knowledge and expertise. Comprehensive schemes of

work, an improvement since the last inspection, ensure that lessons are planned carefully and learning objectives defined. Lessons are well resourced. In the best lesson observed, the effective use of a range of resources enabled pupils to understand and carry out their task successfully. Tasks do not, however, always match the full range of attainments and there is limited evidence of the use of information technology to promote pupils' geographical skills.

160. The geography curriculum is now based on a scheme of work which ensures a broad coverage of National Curriculum programmes of study, though not yet evenly. Planning is effective overall and resources are good. Activities are often focused on oral work and also encourage pupils' literacy skills. Teachers enable pupils to consolidate and extend their vocabulary by encouraging them to use appropriate terminology. The subject offers good opportunities for trips and visits but not for a residential stay. Cross-curricular links are effective. The subject does not currently benefit from a full-time co-ordinator.

## 174. **History**

161. Pupils' progress in knowledge, understanding and skills relating to history is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and often good in Key Stage 2. This reflects a significant improvement since the last inspection when some underachievement was noted in Key Stage 2. Pupils of all attainment levels, including those with special needs, broaden their understanding of historical concepts including that of chronology as they move through the key stages.
162. In Key Stage 1, for example, pupils learn about some of the people who help them and about those who lived in the past through studying old artefacts. This gives them an understanding of changes over time. In Key Stage 2, pupils start looking at the reasons for the Roman invasion of Britain and show a growing understanding of details of disorganised British troops and of Roman opinions of Celts. Year 5 pupils show a great deal of confidence in discussing life in Tudor times. The majority can recognise features and characteristics from historical portraits such as that of King Henry V111. This progress is sustained well in Year 6 where pupils experience extensive work on the British Empire. They can identify and discuss the reasons why Britain had such a large empire, highlighting its advantages and disadvantages. They demonstrate a good sense of chronology and well-developed research skills. Most show a steady progress in their appreciation that history can be interpreted in different ways.
163. Pupils' attitude to history is generally good and occasionally very good. They take a keen interest in activities relating to the past and show initiative when engaged in research. Older pupils show a mature approach to collaboration, interaction and the use of resources.
164. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory, with some good and occasionally very good features in Key Stage 2. This is another area of improvement, as is the current scheme of work which has had a positive impact on the quality of planning. The majority of teachers show good knowledge and expertise, plan lessons well and employ effective strategies such as purposeful questioning and the use of a wide range of practical resources. Lessons are often related usefully to homework tasks. The teaching of history benefits greatly from the wide ranging resources available in the school's museum. Pupils are managed well, particularly when tasks require them to engage in discussion as was observed in many Key Stage 2 lessons. Activities are, however, occasionally too structured to encourage individual initiative and research.
165. The history curriculum is broadly based, and the provision is now more even, ensuring the necessary balance. It is appropriately linked to other curricular areas, notably geography and art, and makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and personal development. Resources - particularly artefacts - are good in range, quality and quantity as is evident in the school's own museum. The high quality of display around the school enhances pupils' learning. The subject now has a clear direction and the co-ordinator provides effective leadership, though this direction is not fully reflected in assessment procedures and staff development plans.

## 179. **Modern foreign languages - French**

166. The study of a foreign language is not a requirement of the National Curriculum until Key Stage 3, but the school has made a commitment to teach French. Pupils in Year 6 have a half-hour lesson a week taught by their class teacher. The work is entirely oral and so there was no written work available to allow standards over time to be judged.
167. Pupils in the present Year 6 had attended only two lessons at the time of the inspection which was at the beginning of the school year. They have made good progress. They confidently recite numbers up to eleven and up to twelve in one class. They take part in a dialogue with the teacher, answering in full sentences. They know a common greeting and reply. They say how old they are and give their name and address. In two classes, pupils take turns in pairs, so that one leads with the questions and the

partner gives the responses. The majority recall the sentences accurately without prompting. Pupils in all three classes speak clearly and in a good accent because they imitate the example set by their teachers. Pupils with special needs make good progress and some who have difficulties in reading and writing respond particularly well to the oral focus of the course.

168. Their progress suggests that pupils are on target to complete the scheme of work by the end of the year and they will be well placed to begin the National Curriculum for the subject in Key Stage 3. It is anticipated that, by the end of the year, their knowledge of interactions will include asking directions, purchasing items and expressing likes and dislikes. Their vocabulary will include numbers to 100, parts of the body, localities and facilities in a town.
169. Pupils are very keen to learn and pay close attention throughout lessons. They try hard to repeat accurately what they hear and accept correction in good heart. Some are shy in performing, but all take part when asked. They respond successfully to strong individual encouragement. All show pleasure when they give a correct answer. Although the lesson is taught at the end of the day, pupils are willing to go on beyond the usual finishing time because they are so involved. They are proud to demonstrate what they have learned.
170. Teaching is good overall, though the teachers have different strengths. In one lesson, pupils were given very many opportunities to speak, taking both roles in the conversation so that the learning of participants and listeners was reinforced by repetition. The pace was so vigorous that all had to think very hard, with no time for embarrassment. In another lesson, the teacher gave praise and simple instructions in French, adding a further dimension to the context. In a third lesson, the teacher gave sustained practice in counting forwards and backwards to twelve, followed by calculations in French using these numbers. Teaching in all cases is well planned and organised. Pupils are fully involved in challenging activities, which move at a good pace. Lessons have a clear sense of direction.
171. The subject is well managed. Teaching is guided by an appropriate scheme of work developed by the local authority. Targets for learning are well designed to build up skill and knowledge in a smooth progression. Teachers plan lessons together to ensure all pupils cover the same work. Nevertheless, the considerable differences noted in the lessons observed suggest that practice should be reviewed so that teachers' different strengths are made available to all.
172. The targets of the scheme are supported by high interest resources, including games and videos. The assessment procedure is good in that it is simple to apply and highlights the key elements of the scheme of work. It requires pupils to check for themselves what they know and can do, so encouraging them to take responsibility for their own progress.
173. The ethos of the subject is very good. Pupils appreciate the new challenge at the end of their primary schooling and the insight it gives them into another culture whilst they develop a useful skill as citizens of Europe.

187. **Music**

174. The quality of the pupils' work continues to be satisfactory in both key stages. This matches the judgements of the previous inspection.
175. In Key Stage 1, there is satisfactory progress in the pupils' ability to sing songs from memory and in their performance of short rhythmical patterns. They learn new words and tunes quickly, particularly in singing assemblies when the teacher uses repetition appropriately and sings and plays the piano confidently. Younger pupils clap appropriate beats to match the syllables in their names and accompany tunes successfully using untuned percussion instruments. Year 2 pupils listen carefully to recorded music and clap the beat accurately.

176. There is satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2 in the accuracy of rhythm and pitch in singing but a disappointing volume when performing in assemblies. Pupils use voice or body to produce interesting rhythmic patterns and compose imaginatively in groups using untuned percussion instruments. Listening skills are good with pupils identifying common percussion instruments successfully. They also identify rhythmic patterns of three or four beats in the bar in recorded music. Pupils learning musical instruments make good progress over the long term, many of them being successful in examinations to a high standard. They also make good progress in lessons taught by specialist staff where they receive helpful instructions and encouragement.
177. There is very good behaviour generally in music lessons. Pupils are keen to participate both in singing and instrumental activities. They enjoy listening to recorded music and are very willing to answer questions. Pupils try hard to follow a common rhythm whether clapping or using an instrument and collaborate well in group compositions. There is a mutual regard for one another's answers or work and instruments are treated with respect. Younger pupils enjoy singing familiar rhymes and number games. Pupils who attend instrumental lessons enjoy them and work hard to improve their standards. They practise regularly and in some cases make a note in their music diaries. Those who have played in the end of term concerts with teachers and others enjoy the occasion very much.
178. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Of the lessons seen, none were unsatisfactory and half were good or very good. The quality of specialist instrumental teaching in the lessons observed was very good. The best teaching is seen when the teacher is enthusiastic and confident. Pupils are encouraged to take an active part through positive, constructive praise. In successful lessons the teacher has a good rapport with the pupils and holds their interest well. The lesson moves at a brisk pace with a variety of activities. There is good use of questioning generally to assess the pupils' knowledge, followed by helpful feedback. Teachers try hard to follow the scheme of work but have not had a great deal of in-service training to boost their confidence and expertise.
179. The co-ordinators provide the teachers with helpful schemes of work and advice when required. They are successful in ensuring that assemblies have regular singing and a supply of appropriate recorded music. Music does not receive a large amount of time and teachers have to be very well-organised to ensure the pupils move around the school quickly and that lessons are precisely timed. Co-ordinators have adjusted schemes of work suitably to fit in with the present timetable arrangements. Because of the assemblies, concerts, peripatetic lessons and regular timetabling, the profile of music remains quite high at present. The temporary classroom and the instrumental music room provide good quality accommodation.

### 193. **Physical education**

180. During the inspection week, pupils in both key stages were observed in dance, gymnastics and games lessons. Athletics and outdoor and adventurous activities are taught later in the school year. Judgements are based on lessons seen, photographic evidence, written work and records of achievement. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress in all aspects of the taught curriculum. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to practise and develop skills and competencies they have learnt. Pupils make good progress and, by the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is high in the areas taught. Pupils with special educational needs make at least sound progress and their progress is sometimes good. They are supported by learning support assistants if appropriate. There has been an improvement in standards since the last inspection when they were judged to be sound overall.
181. Pupils in Year 1 show a good sense of spatial awareness as they move about the hall. They demonstrate good control of movement when they travel and of balance when stationary. In Year 2, pupils listen to rhythm and follow this with movement. They respond to changes in tempo. They build up sequences of movement to create a dance individually and in pairs. Pupils begin to learn how to control a ball by

rolling, balancing and throwing balls of differing size in Year 1. They practise striking the ball with their hands and with bats. In Year 2, pupils throw and catch with improving accuracy and higher attaining pupils are confident to do this one-handed. All pupils make satisfactory progress in improving their skills.

182. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop throwing skills. They throw balls with increasing accuracy and distance. Pupils incorporate throwing skills into games they have designed and know that varying the size of the ball will make the activity easier or more difficult. They demonstrate the knowledge that body position is vital to control accuracy. By Year 6, hand and eye co-ordination is good and pupils strike and pass during hockey sessions with good direction. They learn how to attack and defend in team games. During gymnastic lessons, early skills are developed and refined. Pupils learn different ways of turning, rolling and balancing. They emphasise changes of shape, speed and direction through their actions. In all physical education lessons in Key Stage 2, pupils have the opportunity to evaluate and refine their performance.
183. Pupils enjoy physical education lessons. Key Stage 2 pupils particularly enjoy the elements of competition built into their lessons. Behaviour is good in both key stages. Pupils show a quick response to commands and instructions. When they work in pairs or in small groups pupils share ideas and resources sensibly. They have a good regard for safety.
184. The quality of teaching is good or sometimes very good in over half of lessons. Teaching in the lessons observed was never less than satisfactory and this is an improvement since the last inspection when some unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teachers plan suitable warm up and cool down activities and emphasise health and safety factors. Activities are generally well managed to allow pupils to take part in sustained energetic activities. The previous inspection report stated that there was some over-direction and that pupils were not given enough opportunity to explore and extend their skills. This was not observed during this inspection. A significant feature of good lessons is that teachers allow sufficient time for pupils to practise, perform and refine their skills. All teachers give pupils suitable guidance to improve performance. They are careful to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to participate.
185. The curriculum for physical education has been reviewed by the co-ordinator. He manages the subject effectively and has been successful in raising the profile of physical education throughout the school. There is a clear policy that includes safety and dress recommendations. The scheme of work followed by the school is based on two published schemes and staff use these appropriately to inform their planning. However, the planned curriculum does not comply with statutory requirements, as the school does not provide the opportunity for pupils to swim. This is an issue raised in the last inspection report that has not been resolved. The school has considered many ways to provide the opportunity for swimming in the physical education programme. However, this continues to be impossible for reasons of time, distance, cost and pool availability. At the time of the last inspection the school planned to build a pool and this remains a priority on the school development plan. The completion of this facility would enable the school to deliver the required curriculum. The co-ordinator has prepared procedures for assessment linked to the scheme of work, but these have yet to be implemented.
186. The school offers a very good range of sporting opportunities within the planned curriculum and through extra-curricular activities. There is a clear policy of inclusion of all pupils in lessons, clubs and representation and participation at events and there is open access to all these activities. The number of staff involved in sporting activities is high and this has been maintained since the last inspection. Standards of performance are also similar to the last inspection, ranging from sound to very good. The whole school celebrates pupils' achievements and this makes an exceptional contribution to raising confidence and self-esteem.
187. The school halls are equipped with an appropriate range of large apparatus. In general, the range of equipment available is satisfactory, but the quality is variable and much small apparatus needs replacing. Facilities for hard surface and field games are good, as reported in the previous inspection report, and allow teachers to plan a good range of games and athletic activities. Some consideration has been given



to developing the site for orienteering as the previous inspection considered the site to be underdeveloped.

201.  
**INSPECTION DATA**

**PART C:**

201.  
**INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

**SUMMARY OF**

188. The inspection was carried out over four days by a team of seven inspectors, who spent a combined total of 28 days in school. A total of approximately 107 hours was spent in lessons, in talking to pupils and looking at their work. The following sources of evidence were considered:

- observations of 119 lessons or parts of lessons and of assemblies;
- a sample of pupils' reading, representing all year groups;
- informal discussions with pupils;
- a scrutiny of registration sessions, registers and other attendance records;
- samples of pupils' work covering all subjects and all age groups and including work from the previous school year;
- interviews with teaching staff, ancillary staff and governors;
- the views of 23 parents who attended the parents' meeting, alongside 128 returned questionnaires (30 per cent) and some accompanying written notes;
- teachers' planning, records and reports on pupils;
- the school's written policies, schemes of work and development plans;
- budget figures and other financial data;
- the range, quality and use of practical resources for learning;
- the accommodation available.

**INDICATORS**

**DATA AND**

203. **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	579	4	140	56

203.

204. **Teachers and classes**

204. **Qualified teachers (YR- Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):

22.4

Number of pupils per qualified teacher:

26

204. **Education support staff (YR – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:

15

Total aggregate hours worked each week:

255

Average class size:

29
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204.

205. **Financial data**

Financial year:

1998/9
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	£
Total Income	906,982
Total Expenditure	896,634
Expenditure per pupil	1,453
Balance brought forward from previous year	525
Balance carried forward to next year	10,873

205.

206. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:

427
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Number of questionnaires returned:

128
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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	38	55	5	2	1
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	45	49	3	2	1
The school handles complaints from parents well	18	45	30	5	2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	18	63	14	4	2
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	26	50	15	7	2
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	33	53	11	2	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	25	60	13	1	1
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	17	70	8	2	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	30	60	9	1	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	25	60	12	2	1
My child(ren) like(s) school	47	47	4	2	1

(Figures may not total 100% due to rounding)

207. **Other issues raised by parents**

A small number of parents feel that special needs, especially dyslexia, are not always handled effectively.