

INSPECTION REPORT

Reporting
inspector: Mr
Stephen Dennett,
RgI

Hallam Fields Junior School

Ilkeston

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique Reference Number: 112572

Headteacher: Mr M Walters

Dates of inspection: 22 – 25 November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707163

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Telephone number:	0115 9322568
Fax number:	n/a
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Jones
Date of previous inspection:	6 February 1996

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Miss Val Cain, Lay Inspector		Pupils' Attitudes, Behaviour and Personal Development Attendance Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare Partnership with Parents and the Community
Mr George Brown, Team Inspector	Mathematics Religious Education History Physical Education	Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources Efficiency
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MAIN FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Standards in art and physical education are above those expected of pupils of this age. Pupils make good progress in physical education and very good progress in art.
- The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their work and this has a positive impact on the progress they make.
- The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment, monitoring their progress and ensuring their health, safety and well-being.
- The day-to-day administration and management of the school is good and there are effective systems for financial planning.
- The school has very good systems for monitoring and promoting good attendance and as a consequence attendance is above the national average.

WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES

- Standards in information technology are below average.
- There are weaknesses in some teachers' behaviour management and they have limited strategies for dealing with excessive noise levels in lessons. Not all teachers implement the school's current behaviour policy consistently.
- Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour throughout the school are unsatisfactory.
- Some aspects of the monitoring of teaching and the curriculum are unsatisfactory, notably the coverage of the programme of study for information technology and the way science is taught in the middle years of the key stage.
- Some staff have not been given sufficient additional professional training to improve their basic teaching skills.
- There is insufficient funding for additional support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum.

The school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses. However, the weaknesses identified will form the basis of an action plan which will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils attending the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE PREVIOUS INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the issues raised by the previous inspection. In 1996, the standard of pupils' writing was found to be unsatisfactory. It has now improved both in range and quality and is a strength of their work in English. Appropriate use is now made of information technology to support the development of writing, which was another aspect criticised by the previous inspection. There has been an improvement in the level of challenge given to all pupils, which represents a better position than was found by the previous inspection. Work is generally appropriately challenging for older pupils. Weaknesses in the curriculum planning process and the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress have been addressed effectively and in the case of assessment, procedures are now good. With the exception of aspects of information technology, planning now covers all of the programmes of study of the National Curriculum and effectively identifies appropriate learning objectives. As required by the previous report, the school has reviewed the arrangements for the teaching of the curriculum in mixed age classes. Although this has been generally successful, the present system for teaching science in these classes is unsatisfactory and does not meet the needs of pupils effectively.

The school has been less successful in enhancing the role of subject co-ordinators. They have not been given sufficient opportunities to monitor teaching and learning as required by the previous report. There has also been little progress in developing effective systems for the evaluation of spending decisions or the effectiveness of the schools' policies. Insufficient progress has been made in raising standards in

information technology.

In addition to the key issues raised by the previous inspection, there were other matters which were raised by the report, which the school has addressed appropriately. Standards in art and physical education have improved since 1996 and are now above those expected from pupils of this age. Also, aspects of both English and mathematics have improved largely due to the positive impact of the national strategies for these subjects. Standards of writing are now considerably better than previously and pupils' numerical skills are a strength of their work in mathematics. Standards in all other subjects are similar to those found at the time of the previous inspection. In the light of the satisfactory leadership of the school, the effective administrative systems, generally satisfactory teaching and broadly balanced curriculum, the school has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS

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

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

The above table shows that in the National Curriculum tests the proportion of pupils gaining the expected Level 4 and above was well below average in English and mathematics and very low in science. In comparison with schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals, the proportion of pupils gaining Level 4 was very low.

The school has produced detailed figures to show that the cohort taking the test in 1999 contained a substantially higher group of pupils with special education needs than is usual. The results of their Key Stage 1 tests showed similar low attainment. Inspection indicates that the school is correct in its analysis of the 1999 cohort, as National Curriculum results for years prior to 1999 show a steady climb and pupils' results in 1998 were above average overall. Inspection findings show that standards in English, mathematics and science are currently at least similar to the national average, with a significant proportion of pupils attaining standards above this.

Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. In design and technology, geography, history and music standards are similar to those expected from pupils of this age. Standards in information technology are below average. In art and physical education standards are above those expected from pupils of this age. Standards in swimming are average.

QUALITY OF TEACHING

Teaching in:	7 – 11 years
English	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Satisfactory
Science	Satisfactory
Information Technology	Unsatisfactory
Religious education	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Satisfactory

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In 18 per cent of lessons, teaching was very good and in 31 per cent it was good. Although the teaching seen in 93 per cent of lessons was satisfactory or above, in 7 per cent it was unsatisfactory.

Where teaching is good, which is mainly in the classes for older pupils, teachers have clear learning objectives, lessons are well planned and good use is made of time and resources. Unsatisfactory lessons occur in the classes for younger pupils and here insecure behavioural management means the level of noise is often excessive. As a consequence the pace of lessons is slow and pupils do not make sufficient progress. With the exception of information technology, teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and generally good use is made of questioning to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. All teachers plan well and the majority of tasks are appropriate to the needs of individual pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well.

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	Standards of behaviour are variable, but satisfactory overall. In classes for older pupils, there are good standards of behaviour. However, younger pupils find it difficult to remain attentive in lessons and standards of behaviour are sometimes unsatisfactory.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are above the national average. Pupils arrive to school promptly and lessons begin on time.
Ethos*	The school has a satisfactory ethos for learning. Older pupils are keen to work and enjoy their studies. However, younger pupils are sometimes disinterested and lack motivation.
Leadership and management	Systems for day-to-day administration are effective. The deputy headteacher has provided good leadership whilst the headteacher is away on sick leave.
Curriculum	The curriculum is generally broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of pupils. However the curriculum for information technology is unsatisfactory and does not meet statutory requirements.
Pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements and provide useful opportunities for prayer and quiet reflection.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Arrangements for staffing, accommodation and learning resources are unsatisfactory overall. There are insufficient support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum for younger pupils and arrangements for the professional development of staff are insufficiently focused. As a result, a

	number of teachers lack some behaviour management skills.
Value for money	The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

THE PARENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are happy with the progress their children make at school. • Teachers try to do the best for their pupils and are supportive. • Parents are positive about the sporting activities of the school. • Parents are positive about the incentive system used to improve standards. • Most parents are satisfied with the amount of information provided by the school for parents. • Parents think arrangements for transfer to secondary school are good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils take too long to complete homework. • The school does not keep parents sufficiently • Quieter pupils are ignored. • Pupils are not given sufficient reading to do at • Some parents feel that uniform standards should • Several parents were concerned about poor • A number of parents feel class sizes are too • A few parents were unhappy with the provision of co-ordinator's long-term sick leave.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments. They also agree that standards of behaviour are variable and that in some classes the level of noise created by pupils is having a detrimental effect on their progress. However, no incidents of bullying were observed during the inspection and evidence indicates that incidents are handled effectively. For example, a pupil was recently excluded for a serious incident, which is being carefully investigated by the school.

Evidence presented by the school shows that parents are kept well informed and they are actively encouraged to make their concerns known to staff. There is no evidence that quieter pupils are ignored and generally teachers take appropriate steps to ensure that all participate in class discussions. Most pupils come to school in appropriate clothing and the majority wear the approved school uniform, which is not compulsory.

The level of work expected of pupils at home is appropriate, but inspectors agree that some pupils could be given additional practice in reading, as standards are not as high as could be expected in some classes. Although there is some evidence that provision for pupils with special educational needs suffered slightly during the co-ordinators' absence, provision is now good and pupils are making good progress. Class sizes are large and this has some marginal effect on standards, but teachers plan well to overcome the difficulties.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to raise standards and continue the improvements made by the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- As required by the previous report, improve the quality of provision for information technology as planned by;
 - improving staff subject knowledge and expertise;
 - increasing the amount of time spent teaching the subject to at least the nationally recommended minimum;
 - improving teachers' planning for information technology to ensure complete and balanced coverage of the programme of study;
 - ensuring that information and communications technology is used effectively and consistently to support learning in other subjects of the curriculum;
 - improving the number and quality of computers and the quality software so that there are sufficient resources to meet the demands of the curriculum for the subject;
 - providing appropriate opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor quality and standards in all classes.

[Paragraphs: 7, 17, 20, 24, 44, 45, 46, 52, 54, 59, 81, 85, 87, 88-96, 104]

- Improve the management of behaviour, especially in classes for younger pupils, by;
 - improving the arrangements for teachers' professional development so that they all have appropriate training in handling challenging behaviour;
 - ensuring that the school's behaviour policy is applied consistently in all classes;
 - introducing effective strategies to reduce the excessive noise levels created by pupils where necessary.

[Paragraphs: 12, 16, 36, 44, 45, 52, 68, 78, 85, 102, 110, 118]

- Improve the monitoring of teaching and the curriculum as planned by:
 - ensuring that co-ordinators have sufficient opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in their subjects;
 - correcting the present inequalities in the teaching of the science curriculum in the middle years of the key stage;
 - ensuring that governors have appropriate opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in all classes.

[Paragraphs: 17, 24, 44, 46, 59, 71, 81, 86, 87, 88]

There are a number of other minor issues which the governors should consider for inclusion in their action plan.

- The provision of support staff is inadequate, especially in the largest classes and those with younger pupils.

[Paragraphs: 50, 87]

- Not all statutory requirements are met.

[Paragraphs: 20, 42, 46, 94]

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

- 1 Hallam Fields Junior School provides education for 233 pupils aged seven to eleven. This represents a slight increase in roll since the previous inspection. The school is located at the edge of Ilkeston in an area of mixed privately owned and local authority housing. A significant minority of pupils come from single parent families and there is some degree of social deprivation within the area. There has been an increase in the school roll recently and a new housing estate is being built within the school's catchment area. Pupils enter the school in their seventh year from a number of local infants' schools. Their attainment on entry is broadly average, but a significant number of pupils attain standards which are below average when they first come to school. Thirty-two pupils (14 per cent) are entitled to free school meals, which is a slight increase since the previous inspection and this figure is now close to the national average.
- 2 There are currently seven classes, housed in two buildings on a dramatically sloping site. There is a reasonable sized hard play area and ample grassed playing fields. The lower junior building was completed in February 1999 and houses four classes. The upper junior building is around 35 years old and contains the good sized hall, administration areas, a library and three classrooms. The average class size is 33, which is well above the national average and an increase since the previous inspection. There are 27 pupils (11 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs, two with statements (9 per cent). The number of pupils on the register is below the national average and there has been little change since the previous inspection. There are no pupils from ethnic minorities or for whom English is an additional language.
- 3 The school's aim, as stated in its brochure for parents, is 'to allow each child his/her true potential. To do this, we endeavour to create an atmosphere of industry and purposefulness in the school, and to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which gives children the basic skills needed for work and life. We wish to enhance basic skills with activities which are imaginative, creative, stimulating, varied and enjoyable.'
- 4 The main focus of the school development plan over the past two years has been literacy and numeracy. Currently, the school's main targets are:
 - increasing the proportion of pupils reaching Level 4 or above in English to 74 per cent;
 - increasing the proportion of pupils reaching Level 4 or above in mathematics to 71 per cent;
 - raising the profile of religious education throughout the school;
 - improving the quality of provision for information and communications technology. The school has recently joined the Internet and the National Grid for Learning.

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 2¹

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	22	25	47

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	13	14	13
	Girls	14	12	15
	Total	27	26	28
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	57(85)	55(67)	60(80)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	13	14	13
	Girls	14	12	17
	Total	27	26	30
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	57(88)	55(70)	64(80)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(71)

Attendance

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	6.1
	National comparative data	5.4
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.3
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

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

	Number
Fixed period	1
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	18
Satisfactory or better	93
Less than satisfactory	7

1

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

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

- 5 Pupils enter the school in their seventh year with levels of attainment which are broadly similar to those found nationally. However, there are considerable variations in the overall ability range in the school's intake and in some years, the proportion of lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs is large. For example, the Year 6 cohort which took the 1999 national tests contained many lower attaining pupils, which had an adverse effect on the test results obtained in that year. Another factor which effects attainment on entry is the variation in attainment in some subjects. For example, overall attainment in information technology and art is below that expected of seven year olds. Standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average on entry and in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education they are similar to those expected of seven year olds. In religious education, standards are similar to those expected by the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Key Stage 1.
- 6 The standards attained in the 1999 National Curriculum tests for English were well below the national average. In comparison with schools with a similar number of pupils entitled to free school meals, standards were very low. The standards attained in mathematics were well below the national average and very low in comparison with those achieved by pupils in similar schools. The standards attained by pupils in science were very low both compared to the national average and pupils from similar schools. These poor results can be largely attributed to the composition of the 1999 cohort, which contained a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils. The school has presented evidence which shows that these pupils produced similar low results when they took the Key Stage 1 national tests in 1995. Although many had increased their performance by two levels, the majority were coming from a very low starting point. Trends in attainment over the previous three years and since the last inspection, indicate a generally improving picture. Standards had risen significantly between 1996 and 1998 and were above average in the latter year. Inspection findings show that pupils make satisfactory progress in English and attain standards which are similar to the national average by the end of Year 6. In mathematics, pupils make satisfactory progress and generally attain standards which are close to the national average by the end of the key stage. Pupils make satisfactory progress in science and by the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards which are similar to the national average. Teachers' assessments generally confirm test results.
- 7 Pupils make unsatisfactory progress in information technology throughout the school and generally attain standards which are below those expected by the end of the key stage. However, standards in text processing are generally satisfactory in Years 5 and 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education and attain standards which are similar to those expected by the locally agreed syllabus by the time they leave the school. Throughout the school pupils make very good progress in art and good progress in physical education. In history, geography and music pupils make satisfactory progress.
- 8 Pupils' use of literacy skills in other subjects is satisfactory. Standards of writing are generally good and cover a good range, including poetry, letter writing and fiction. Pupils make satisfactory use of their numeracy skills in other subjects throughout the school. Pupils' use of information and communications technology in most subjects is generally unsatisfactory, although in English appropriate use is made of text processing to support writing. There appears to have been little

progress in addressing the key issue raised by the previous inspection, where standards in information technology were found to be below those expected.

- 9 Pupils make satisfactory progress overall, regardless of their prior attainment, gender and social background. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for, attain the standards of which they are capable and make good progress towards the targets set for them. Pupils benefit considerably from the effective support of class teachers and the special education care officers and a good range of well-targeted activities. This represents a similar picture to that found by the previous inspection.
- 10 Standards in writing, numeracy, art and physical education have improved since the previous inspection and the progress made in these aspects of the curriculum has improved. Overall standards in English, mathematics, science and religious education are generally similar to those found by the previous inspection. The progress made by pupils in design and technology, geography, history and music is similar to that made by pupils on the occasion of the previous inspection.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

- 11 The majority of pupils enjoy coming to school, want to learn and are enthusiastic. Most display interest and good levels of concentration keenly answering questions and participating. For example, pupils displayed great interest in a science lesson in Year 6, when they observed a demonstration of how oxygen is used up when a candle burns. They concentrated very well and asked several perceptive questions about what they had seen. Pupils concentrate well in literacy and numeracy sessions, and this contributes to the generally good progress seen in these lessons.
- 12 Behaviour both in and around school is satisfactory. However, in some classes and in some lessons, behaviour is unsatisfactory. This occurs where teachers' behaviour management is clearly insecure and strategies limited. Behaviour is not so good in younger classes where many pupils engage in low level chat, fidget and are off task. This adversely affects their own and others' progress and enjoyment. No bullying or harassment was observed during the inspection although, some inappropriate behaviour was seen. For example, in one science lesson in Year 4, pupils made so much noise during the investigative section that many lost concentration and missed the main point of the exercise. There have been two fixed-term exclusions within the last twelve months for serious incidents. One pupil was excluded recently for assaulting a pupil physically and the school was in the process of investigating the incident thoroughly.
- 13 Relationships between staff and pupils and pupils themselves are satisfactory overall. However, some friction was observed between boys and girls. When given the opportunity, pupils work well in groups and pairs, assisting each other to good effect. Good examples of pupils working in pairs were observed in literacy, maths and physical education. Pupils are courteous, trustworthy and relate well to adults. They share equipment and show respect for the fabric of the building. Pupils willingly listened to the views of others and are comfortable in voicing their opinions, for example in religious education and English lessons. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Some pupils are immature and some lack self control. There are presently too few opportunities for pupils to exercise responsibility by performing given tasks.

Attendance

- 14 Levels of attendance are good and remain above the national average. This has a positive impact on learning. The main reasons for absence are illness and holidays taken within term time. Parents notify the school of absences and unauthorised absence is very rare. Pupils are punctual to school and lessons start on time. High standards of attendance and punctuality, identified in the previous inspection, still prevail.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

- 15 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It was judged to be satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of the lessons seen. In 31 per cent of lessons, teaching was good and in 18 per cent, teaching was very good. However, in 7 per cent of lessons, teaching was unsatisfactory. Overall, this is a very similar picture to that found by the previous inspection. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally secure, except in information technology, where most staff lack the expertise to use computers and appropriate technology effectively to support learning. Most teachers have appropriate expectations of achievement and in the classes for older pupils, expectations are high. Lesson planning is generally good and clearly identifies what pupils should learn. Teachers know their pupils well and activities are appropriately matched to the needs of individuals. Teachers plan as year group 'teams' and there is generally good consistency between parallel classes. However, in mixed age classes, the planning for science means that pupils in the same class are covering different aspects of the programme of study at the same time. This leads to inconsistent learning experiences for pupils in the same year group. Classroom management is generally satisfactory otherwise and provides an appropriate range of learning experiences for pupils. Teachers have worked hard and with considerable success, to introduce the National Literacy Strategy. They have made a good start with the National Numeracy Strategy.
- 16 There is considerable variation in teachers' ability to manage behaviour and discipline. Although pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall and there is no general disruption of lessons, some teachers have insecure behaviour management strategies. The lack of appropriate strategies leads to excessive levels of noise and a consequent lack of progress by pupils in these lessons. The amount of noise made by pupils and their high incidence of 'off task' conversation were the main features of unsatisfactory lessons. In these lessons, which occur in classes for younger pupils, staff appeared to have very limited strategies for reducing noise levels and for providing pupils with clear guidelines for acceptable conversations during working time. In the classes for older pupils, teachers have effective strategies for behaviour management and this is reflected in the better progress made towards the end of the key stage. In these classes, pupils work quietly and teachers use a good range of rewards and sanctions to keep them well motivated.
- 17 Teachers make appropriate use of time and resources, but in many lessons insufficient use is made of computers to support learning. Teachers take time to train pupils effectively to look after equipment well and to use materials economically. All teachers are dedicated, professional and hard working, and this is appreciated by parents. The quality of marking is generally satisfactory and sometimes contains useful comments which enable pupils to improve their work. The use of day-to-day assessment information by teachers is satisfactory and plans are adjusted appropriately where necessary. Appropriate use is made of homework to support pupils' learning and to prepare them for the next phase of their education. Teaching is good in art and physical education. In other subjects of the curriculum, teaching is satisfactory overall, with the exception of information technology, where teaching is generally unsatisfactory.
- 18 In the very good lessons observed, teachers had detailed lesson plans, maintained a brisk pace and demonstrated very effective class management and organisational skills. In these lessons, teachers

have secure subject knowledge, which they use well to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. They make good use of questioning. For example, in a good science lesson, effective use of a question and answer session ensured that pupils consolidated their understanding of how a burning candle uses oxygen from the air. Planning is good and teachers manage pupils very well. On the few occasions when behaviour is challenging, teachers employ good strategies to maintain control. Teachers are good role models for pupils and give clear guidelines for acceptable behaviour. Pupils are treated with respect, courtesy and kindness which engenders good behaviour, attitudes and personal development.

- 19 Teachers are very aware of their responsibilities and successfully promote learning for pupils with special educational needs. They provide appropriately matched work for the lower attaining pupils and support these pupils effectively with additional input or one-to-one assistance during the activity. In addition, in most lessons for older pupils, teachers provide sufficiently challenging work for the higher attainers. There are good relationships and the teacher involves pupils effectively. Instructions are clear and work is well matched to the needs of the pupils in the group. There is good use of well targeted praise which maintains pupil impetus and self-esteem. In planning work to meet the range of pupils' prior attainment teachers are mindful of the special needs identified for some pupils. Many of these needs relate to difficulties in literacy. These needs are addressed particularly well through the Additional Literacy Support programme in Years 3 and 4. Here a member of the support staff is often involved in effectively intensive, well-focused development of basic skills with small groups of pupils within literacy lessons. Where pupils have needs relating to maintaining concentration and application in their work they are sometimes poorly served in lessons where teachers have a general difficulty holding pupils' attention to tasks.

The curriculum and assessment

- 20 Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, receive a broad and balanced curriculum. A suitable amount of time is spent on each subject with an appropriate emphasis on numeracy and literacy. Statutory requirements to teach the National Curriculum are met except in the case of information and communication technology where the use of equipment for monitoring is not tackled. Religious education follows the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils are effectively prepared to move on to the next stage of their education, except in information technology
- 21 There is satisfactory provision for pupils' intellectual development and good provision for their physical development both through physical education lessons and the extensive extra-curricular activity in sport. Provision through the curriculum for pupils' personal development is unsatisfactory. There is no formal policy or programme for personal development and lessons generally provide too few opportunities for this aspect of their education. Too little attention is paid to encouraging pupils to take responsibility for, or show initiative in, their learning. Pupils are rarely required, for example, to make choices, assemble resources, select materials or equipment, solve problems, research information or collaborate in group discussions. Rare exceptions were seen in the opportunity for pupils to use initiative in a design and technology lesson in Year 6, and in an English lesson in Year 5, when pupils were asked to evaluate their own progress at the end of the lesson.
- 22 Pupils throughout the school have equal opportunity within, and access to, all the curriculum activities, except in the case of science for some Year 5 pupils. The planning of the science curriculum for mixed-age classes provides Year 5 pupils with experiences of differing quality depending on their class membership.

- 23 The curriculum provided for pupils with special education needs is good. Individual educational plans, including those pupils with statements, clearly identify targets for pupils' progress and the strategies teachers should follow to bring about improvement. These are supported by appropriate processes for assessing and defining needs and the progress made toward targets. The programme of Additional Literacy Support provides very detailed schemes of work which are being followed by pupils in Years 3 and 4 with special needs in relation to literacy.
- 24 School policies and schemes of work for subjects, often based on national guidelines, give staff satisfactory support in planning lessons that give good coverage of the National Curriculum in all subjects except information and communication technology. Effective implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies results in mostly well-focused planning in these areas. An appropriate format for medium-term planning is used consistently across the curriculum and the school. With the exception of the planning of science for mixed-age classes, planning procedures take pupils smoothly through the succession of necessary steps in their learning. Planning builds well on what pupils already know and can do, with lessons tailored to the needs related to pupils' different ages and stages of progress. Teachers collaborate satisfactorily in planning, so that parallel classes in each year-group follow similar programmes, except in science.
- 25 The good range of extra curricular activities in sport is a strength of the school. The quality of these activities benefits from good links with external organisations. There are opportunities for boys and girls to compete with pupils from other schools in several sports. Annual musical and dramatic performances for parents give occasional extension to extra-curricular activity. Although there have been regular extra-curricular activities in music in the past, at the time of inspection the only regular extra-curricular activities were in sport.
- 26 The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' progress within the curriculum, especially in English, mathematics and science. The school chooses, in these subjects, to set pupils standard national tests at the end of each year. This is in addition to teachers' own assessments, which take place in other subjects, too, within each school year. Results in standard tests are thoroughly and carefully analysed, to track pupils' progress at each stage of their passage through the school and to compare performance of boys and girls. Portfolios of work representing agreed achievement at different levels are effectively used to agree standards and support teachers' assessment of work in subjects.
- 27 Very good use is beginning to be made of assessment information to set specific targets for particular pupils' progress within the school year. It is also beginning to be used to identify specific areas of weakness in pupils' progress and to adjust the curriculum and teaching accordingly in order to raise standards.
- 28 Since the schools' previous inspection there has been a substantial improvement in the quality of the curriculum and procedures for assessment. Planning of the work is more precise and detailed, more closely related to the National Curriculum and more responsive to the range of pupils' levels of attainment. Planning for mixed-age classes remains a concern, however, in science. The present planning system for science, means that pupils are being taught different topics of the scheme of work at the same time in mixed-age classes. Assessment procedures are improving in precision and in the constructive use made of the data. Overall, the curriculum provided by the school and its assessment procedures have a satisfactory impact on the progress made by pupils and the standards they achieve.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

- 29 The provision made for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is satisfactory overall. This is an aspect of school life that has been sustained since the previous inspection, but is still relatively undeveloped, particularly in the wider curriculum. There is, for example, no clear written policy in this area and the provision is therefore uneven, depending mainly on each teachers' understanding of the principles involved and how these important areas of personal development can be promoted within individual classrooms.
- 30 The provision made for the pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The most effective provision is made in collective worship and to a lesser degree, in religious education. During daily assemblies, there are several occasions when pupils are asked to reflect on their own values and particularly those of the school and their families. During the inspection week, the themes of 'belonging to a group' and 'sharing achievements' were well explored. This was illustrated with the story of Ezekiel and the importance of living in harmony with each other. Pupils are given a high profile in worship and are also given time to pray and reflect on how God would expect them to think and act. Some of the aims of the school centre on the values, tolerance and respect for the beliefs of others.
- 31 In the wider curriculum, there is insufficient planned provision made for spiritual development. In religious education, pupils are led thoughtfully and sensitively through several key stories that illustrate human faith and belief. These vary from Moses to leaders within other cultures. However, in other subjects, there are too few opportunities in art, drama, literature, music and science for the spiritual nature of human life to be considered and commented on.
- 32 The provision made for the moral development of pupils is satisfactory. The school's aims and values provide an appropriate basis for moral teaching and for pupils to act in the right way. Although there is little implicit teaching of moral principles, there is a satisfactory understanding of right and wrong in most pupils. A small minority of pupils require more direct teaching and influence in this respect and this is not always forthcoming. However, adults and many pupils provide good role models for moral example and understanding. Several assemblies have moral undertones and teach the pupils to think carefully about their own actions and to respect the moral code of the school. In a few lessons, the teaching is more direct. For example in a literacy lesson in Year 6, pupils considered issues of right and wrong and had to consider an argument from both sides.
- 33 The provision made for the social development of pupils is satisfactory. Although the school has no formal policy promoting the personal and social education of its pupils, there are several settings that help encourage this aspect of their personal development. An aim of the school is to help develop confidence and self-esteem and this is achieved through appropriate opportunities for pupils to discuss their work, to take part in assemblies and to perform in front of an audience, on occasions such as Christmas shows. The great majority of pupils know the way to behave around the school and show satisfactory awareness of the need to work and play in close harmony with others. The need for social responsibility is also included in the Home-School Agreement and most pupils are aware of how to protect the rights of others in the school community. Pupils are frequently rewarded with 'merit marks' for acts of consideration or thoughtfulness. The residential visit for pupils in Year 6 has proved to be a good base for social development in the past. Most teachers provide at least some opportunity for collaborative working and the chance to solve problems in conjunction with others. Older pupils are given tasks such as helping with dinner arrangements or acts of worship, and also exercise their social skills when showing prospective parents and pupils around the school. A strength of the school is the many sporting activities available to pupils during the year

and these, too, are a good source of character building and a developing sense of teamwork.

The provision made for the cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. The school provides a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to explore aspects of their own culture and heritage. In the past pupils have been to the theatre and touring groups have performed in school. At least once a year, pupils take part in a stage show, such as 'Oliver'. There are suitable opportunities to study the work of famous painters and musicians, although these tend to be biased towards the Western culture at the expense of other traditions. Pupils do well in their studies of the Aztecs and learn useful information about past civilisations and cultures. The best work is done in religious education where pupils undertake useful comparative studies of the cultural aspects of religion, such as Sikhism, Judaism and Hinduism. While there are some attractive artefacts to help support the learning of such cultures, the library has relatively poor stock to help extend the knowledge of pupils in these areas.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

- 35 The school makes satisfactory provision for the educational and personal support of pupils and their guidance. The pastoral care provided by the school for its pupils is good, which is a similar picture to that noted by the previous inspection. The school has implemented an appropriate personal social and health education programme which ensures suitable teaching of health education, sex education and drugs awareness across the school. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are good and they include the setting of appropriate individual targets. Satisfactory use is made of assessment information to keep parents informed of their children's progress through appropriate annual reports.
- 36 The procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour are at present unsatisfactory. There is a whole-school policy, but practices vary considerably between classes and the actual impact of the policy is negligible. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour were observed in lessons involving younger pupils during the week. This adversely affects both learning and progress. Where the school's policies are implemented effectively, mainly in the classes for older pupils, behaviour is good and consequently pupils maintain better progress and attain higher standards.
- 37 Attendance and time-keeping are very well monitored by the school and the education welfare officer. The school takes every opportunity to reward and promote good attendance through its home-school agreement and in correspondence to parents. The prospectus makes a clear statement about the importance of full attendance and individual pupils' good attendance achievements are regularly celebrated in assemblies.
- 38 Child protection procedures are effective and known to all staff. There are sufficient personnel trained in first aid and they handle their responsibilities effectively when required. Regular fire drills, electrical checks and risk assessments take place and are effective in ensuring the school is a safe place to work. The school has appropriate links with the necessary outside agencies, including the police, school nurse, social services, and the education welfare service. The school makes good provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils with special educational needs. Staff are caring and sensitive to pupil's needs. Overall the standard of pastoral care provided for pupils is good. This makes a significant contribution to their academic and personal development.

Partnership with parents and the community

- 39 The school has satisfactory links with parents and the community. This is not such a good picture as found by the previous report. Although responses both at the parents' meeting and from returned questionnaires were supportive, there is clearly less parental involvement in the life of the school than on the occasion of the previous inspection. Communications are good and there are regular newsletters, topic information, meetings and parents' evenings. Additionally, parents felt that staff were both approachable and friendly, with the secretary offering valuable support. However, some parents expressed concern that they did not receive adequate notice of changes to the school's routine. Evidence present during the inspection indicated that this was not the case. Reports to parents are satisfactory and comply with legal requirements. However, they do not consistently inform parents of their child's strengths and weaknesses or methods for improvement in all subjects of the curriculum. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are given good opportunities to be involved in the review process.
- 40 At present there is no parent teacher association, but some events are organised and the money used to enhance resources. Some parents help with swimming and educational visits and others hear their children read at home. However, the lack of a reading diary means dialogue between parents and the school about pupils' reading progress is irregular. Class assemblies are well supported by parents.
- 41 Links with the community are good with a range of visits and visitors to support the National Curriculum and enhance learning. Pupils from the local secondary school on work experience attend annually but industry links are limited. Transition arrangements, both from the feeder infants' schools and into the secondary school, are very good. A programme of visits, ensure that pupils are well informed and well prepared for their transfer to secondary schooling.
- 42 There are a number of omissions in the prospectus. For example, details of the special educational needs policy, the complaints procedure and parents' right to withdraw their children from religious education. Similarly, details of the action taken to strengthen links with the community are missing from the governors' annual report to parents.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

- 43 The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall. During the period of the inspection, the headteacher was absent due to illness and in his place, the deputy headteacher provided good leadership for the school. Evidence indicates that the headteacher is an effective administrator and all the day-to-day management systems are of a good quality. There is an appropriate educational purpose and direction to the work of the school, which is focused mainly on creating a secure learning environment. Using the action plan drawn up after the previous inspection, the governors, headteacher and deputy headteacher have continued to review progress, to make appropriate adjustments where necessary and initiate new plans when targets have been reached. As a result, the school has made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection. There have been notable successes in raising standards in writing, art, and physical education. Satisfactory progress has been made in improving the level of challenge for all pupils, in improving the quality of the curriculum and assessment and in reviewing the organisation of mixed age classes. However, the management have been less successful in addressing issues relating to standards in information technology, the role of co-ordinators in monitoring teaching and the evaluation of spending decisions.

Little significant progress has been made in resolving these issues. Overall the management of the school reflects a similar picture to that found by the previous inspection.

- 44 The support and monitoring of the curriculum by the governors, headteacher and subject co-ordinators is unsatisfactory. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have monitored the teaching of literacy and numeracy, but this has been lacking in focus and as a consequence, has not resulted in specific targets for improvement. Too few opportunities exist for co-ordinators to monitor teaching and learning in their subjects. As a result of the limited monitoring, there are some considerable variations in practice in several subjects. For example, although some teachers do assess their pupils regularly, the lack of consistent practice throughout the school means that assessment information is not always used effectively in all classes to match work to pupils' individual needs. There is significant disparity in the quality of learning in science in the middle years of the school and the aspects of control and monitoring are neglected in information technology. The monitoring of teaching in younger classes has not dealt with issues of behavioural management. However, governors have recently been appointed to oversee a number of subjects and areas of the curriculum. This is beginning to have a positive effect, especially in the provision for special educational needs, where the well-informed governor is actively supporting the special educational needs co-ordinator. The National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy have been implemented satisfactorily and they are managed appropriately.
- 45 The implementation of the school's aims, values and policies is unsatisfactory overall. Although the school's aims are clearly stated and are met appropriately in practice, there is considerable variation in the implementation of its policies. For example, the whole school policy for behaviour management is not followed by all teachers, and where it is, there are inconsistencies of practice. This has been noted by several parents, who are unhappy with standards of behaviour in some classes. The inspection team agrees with these comments. Very few teachers are following the information technology policy in their planning, as they only very infrequently plan for the effective use of technology to support learning in their lessons. The school's aim of providing a broad and balanced curriculum is generally met appropriately, with the exception of information technology. It has been successful in developing pupils' creativity, as art is a strength of the school. The school's values are understood well by older pupils, who seek to the best of their ability to support each other and their teachers. However, younger pupils are unclear about the values expected of them and there is less evidence that they are consistently promoted by all teachers.
- 46 The governors have worked in partnership with the school staff to implement the school's appropriate development plan. It contains suitable priorities and links to financial and other resources. Governors' meetings occur regularly in order to monitor the outcomes of the plan. The development plan is appropriately detailed for the next twelve months and termly discussion in governors' meetings ensure that progress is reviewed regularly. A number of new governors have been appointed and the governing body is now beginning to work effectively, although it does not yet have a full complement of governors. The minutes of governors' meetings show that their formal business is properly conducted. Statutory requirements are met, with the exception of the curriculum for information technology, items in the prospectus and in the governors' annual report to parents. In the light of the satisfactory leadership of the school, the effective administrative systems, generally satisfactory teaching and broadly balanced curriculum, the school has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.
- 47 The management of special educational needs takes clear account of the Code of Practice. Although the co-ordinator for special needs has a full-time class-teaching responsibility the provision for this aspect of the school's work is well managed. There is a policy which is being followed effectively. The co-ordinator has a good overview of special needs in the school and the school's approach is well-organised and co-ordinated. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is monitored

well. The special needs governor is well-qualified and very supportive. There is a positive ethos in the school which promotes the provision for special educational needs as a high priority.

- 48 There is a satisfactory ethos for learning and older pupils are generally keen to work. Most respond positively to their teachers and there is a good working atmosphere throughout the school. However, in the classes for younger pupils, the noisy character of some lessons means that good working practices are not promoted effectively.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

- 49 There is a satisfactory match of qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of the pupils and the demands of the curriculum. Despite the well above average pupil/ teacher ratio, pupils' attainment is broadly average and the great majority make satisfactory progress. The school has mainly an experienced staff, but there are also new members who offer additional strengths and enthusiasms. With the exception of information technology where some weaknesses in knowledge and expertise occur, staff have secure subject knowledge and generally teach their own classes in all curriculum areas. Staff co-ordinators are in place for all subjects.
- 50 There is an unsatisfactory number of support staff to meet the needs of the pupils and the demands of the wider curriculum. Classroom help is largely confined to staff appointed to support pupils with special educational needs and there is only limited impact on other pupils. For example, the lack of support staff has an adverse effect on practical science lessons in classes for younger pupils, where the teacher is frequently trying to unsuccessfully support as many pupils as possible. As a consequence, pupils of average attainment make relatively slower progress in these lessons. Other non-teaching staff fulfil their roles well. The caretaker, cleaning staff and dinner staff provide good quality help to pupils throughout the school day.
- 51 As the co-ordinator for special educational needs has a full-time class-teaching responsibility, support for pupils has mostly been given by class teachers, who make good provision. Although there are few support staff to work with pupils with special educational needs, they are well-trained and briefed about pupils' needs, especially where pupils have statements. The principal member of support staff has participated voluntarily in training to enhance her work.
- 52 There are both strengths and weaknesses in the current arrangements for the professional development of staff. On the positive side, there is a good appraisal system in place, some of which is centred on subject development. There are however, areas of teaching which require self-examination and strengthening and the current arrangements for staff development is failing to influence and improve on these areas. In addition, teachers expertise and subject knowledge in information technology is inadequate and this has adversely effected standards in the subject.
- 53 The school's accommodation is satisfactory for the needs of staff and pupils. The new classroom suite is a considerable improvement on the previous units and makes an attractive and welcoming learning environment. The main building is older, but generally sound and secure. Storage is limited and the area given to the centralised library is inadequate for the age and number of pupils on roll. A new room has been created for centralising resources and this is proving very useful. The space given over to computers is on the increase but is still not conducive to the strong development of that subject overall. The playing fields and grounds are quite extensive and provide an attractive resource for learning.

- 54 The quality and quantity of learning resources are satisfactory in most areas, an exception being in information technology where the range of resources is insufficient for the correct development and secure delivery of the subject. Resources in physical education are good and, with the exception of the library where stock is too limited, resources for the promotion of literacy and numeracy are satisfactory. The immediate school environment is also used satisfactorily as a teaching and learning resource. There is a satisfactory range of visits to museums, outdoor centres and places of interest that help enhance pupils' learning and progress.

The efficiency of the school

- 55 The school is efficiently run and makes satisfactory use of the financial and other resources made available to it on an annual basis. The quality of this area of school life has been maintained since the previous inspection.

There are good and efficient levels of financial planning in place. This has a positive impact on learning as the school has ensured there are adequate resources in most areas, despite the very low level of funding it receives. The amount of budget share received by the school is low in national terms and there are inevitable difficulties in maintaining a balanced budget, a challenge that the school meets well. Senior staff and governors are jointly involved in ensuring that available finance is well targeted towards the priorities expressed in the school development plan. Finance is appropriately spread across all areas of school life although staffing costs are a major area of expenditure. The relatively modest contingency that the school had accrued, has all but gone and this is an obvious concern. Grants given towards the support of special educational needs and for staff training are clearly identified and expenditure is monitored appropriately.

- 57 The budget is well administered and accounts are well maintained and open to scrutiny. There has been no local authority audit since before the previous inspection, but at that time, the school was praised for its financial systems and has continued to model its methods on the recommendations of the Audit Commission. However, the school as yet does not have a suitable system for monitoring the effectiveness of spending decisions as required by the previous report.
- 58 The school is well administered on a daily basis. An experienced school secretary, together with the headteacher, ensures that the routines of the school office are both well established and efficient. Parents rightly praise the first contacts they have with the school and the manner in which daily routines support the pupils and their families.
- 59 The school makes satisfactory use of its teaching and support staff. The expertise offered by some staff is used well, such as that in physical education and music. Support staff are used well in the help given to pupils with special educational needs. The use made of the accommodation and learning resources is satisfactory overall. The school hall is well utilised for physical education, but too little use is made of the small, centralised library which is used in only a limited way for pupil research and other aspects of independent learning. Space is at a premium, even within the new teaching block, and staff do their best to maximise its potential for learning. Good use is made of available space to display pupils' work and to celebrate their achievements. Teachers ensure that learning resources are well organised and used appropriately to extend the experiences of the pupils. An exception is in information technology where there is insufficient use made of computers and related software.
- 60 Building on average attainment on entry, the school achieves satisfactory standards within pupils'

attainment, progress, behaviour and overall response. This, coupled with mainly satisfactory teaching and very low unit costs, ensures that it gives satisfactory value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

- 61 Pupils enter the school with attainment which is broadly in line with national averages. Although their results in the 1999 National Curriculum tests were well below average, pupils are judged by inspectors to attain standards which are similar to the national average by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6. As a result, progress is satisfactory. Contrary to the national pattern, boys do as well as girls.
- 62 In the 1999 national tests, the proportion of pupils attaining at least the expected level 4 was well below both the national average and the average for similar schools. The average level achieved by pupils was also well below the national average and the average for similar schools. However, the trend over the three years 1996-1998 is of an above-average performance, thanks largely to particularly good results in 1998. The 1999 results are judged to misrepresent the overall picture of standards in English and reflect high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils. Records of regular testing confirm that these pupils entered the school with generally low standards and that they made satisfactory progress overall. Inspection evidence confirms that in all aspects of language, this overall attainment of pupils when they leave is broadly average. This picture is broadly the same as at the school's previous inspection, except that there has been a significant improvement in writing which was previously identified as an area of relative weakness.
- 63 Pupils make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening throughout the school. They become increasingly confident and clear when speaking in their lessons across the curriculum. By the time they leave at the end of Year 6, the great majority of pupils make effective contributions to discussions. They express opinions, offer explanations or make suggestions using appropriate vocabulary. What pupils have to say generally shows that they have listened carefully and understood what they have heard. Although satisfactory overall, progress in this aspect is uneven, reflecting the different approaches of teachers in different classes. Some give very good opportunities and encouragement for pupils' speaking while others make far fewer demands and give less encouragement and progress is only just satisfactory. The best progress in speaking is made in the separate Year 4 and Year 5 classes. Progress in listening across the curriculum is also uneven, being sometimes hindered because teachers' unsatisfactory control of pupils' behaviour in some lessons in the Year 3 and the mixed classes in Years 3, 4 and 5 results in pupils not attending well to what teachers say.
- 64 Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and generally make good progress towards the individual targets set for them. A useful recent innovation has been the programme of Additional Literacy Support which targets younger pupils in need of extra help with basic literacy skills. These pupils are given regular and suitably intensive teaching in small groups often with the help of an effective and well-trained member of the support staff. The programme is promoting good progress.
- 65 Satisfactory progress is made in pupils' reading although there are specific areas of both strength and weakness. Pupils improve steadily in the fluency and accuracy of their reading of increasingly challenging text. Many learn to read aloud with good expression. Pupils develop satisfactory comprehension of the factual content of what they read. These skills serve pupils well in their work across the curriculum. However, older pupils do not develop sufficiently in understanding deeper

layers of meaning. By the time they leave the school, only a few pupils can talk thoughtfully about characters, motivation and feelings in fiction they have read or can evaluate the qualities of the literature in any depth. This reflects generally unenthusiastic attitudes to reading and literature on the part of teachers, shown by the narrow range of books and authors pupils have read and can discuss and unsatisfactory book stocks. A further weakness in older pupils' reading skills is within the area of researching information from non-fiction books. Although most pupils leave the school knowing how to use the list of contents and index in a book they have little understanding of how libraries are organised and how to access information from them. The small, poorly stocked school library is an unsatisfactory resource for research. Most of the books are old and the non-fiction often describes and illustrates the world ten or more years before the pupils were born.

- 66 However, a strength in the work on reading is good development in pupils' appreciation of the different styles and formats of non-fiction text. They learn to recognise differences in layout, style, structure and vocabulary associated with text which serves different purposes. This is then translated into good progress in pupils' own writing for different purposes and audiences. By the time they leave the school most pupils can write effectively for a wide range of purposes and audiences adjusting their style and vocabulary appropriately. They can, for example, write effective newspaper reports, advertisements, estate agents' details, school reports, instructions for operating apparatus, persuasive letters and stories. This highlight in attainment reflects well on the planning and teaching of writing, as does pupils' good habits, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Drafting, re-drafting and proof-reading their work in order to arrive at a correct final version is a strength. Sometimes pupils practise their writing skills through appropriate use of a text processing program on the computer. A good number of pupils do not find spelling easy but they know the need to check their spelling through use of dictionaries, or the spell-checker when text processing, and most are capable of producing a correct final version of their writing. There is satisfactory progress throughout the school in pupils' knowledge and use of punctuation. Regular use of capital letters and full-stops is established early in the school for the great majority of pupils. It is then extended to the use of commas, speech marks, colons and other forms in later years. Handwriting, too, progresses satisfactorily throughout the school. By Year 6, most pupils achieve at least a satisfactory standard of handwriting, which is legible and attractive, although a few do not have a consistently joined style. A minority of pupils produce writing of clearly above-average standard with some examples of outstanding use of effective vocabulary, phraseology and style to achieve striking effects, such as suspense in a story.
- 67 The satisfactory progress generally made reflects pupils' mainly good responses to their lessons. They take an interest, volunteer answers to teachers' questions and settle down to written tasks quickly. They generally take care to achieve a satisfactory, and sometimes good, standard of presentation. There are occasional exceptions when in some lessons a few pupils show insufficient self-discipline to get on with their own writing while the teacher's attention is focused on other pupils. When teachers are talking to the class, there is also occasional inattention and misbehaviour when teachers do not succeed in ensuring all pupils listen.
- 68 Although there are weaknesses in some teachers' ability to control classes to ensure pupils are always attentive and purposefully busy, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Nearly half of lessons seen during the inspection showed teaching of good quality, with one very good lesson. In one unsatisfactory lesson the teacher's control of the class was not secure enough to support pupils' progress. Planning of lessons is generally good, sometimes very good and always at least satisfactory. It is best when the intended outcomes for pupils' learning are defined with precision. Teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve are generally high in relation to writing and presentation, satisfactory in relation to reading, but low in relation to listening and speaking, especially in younger classes. Tasks in writing are generally well matched to pupils' prior attainment. This is helped by watchful checking of the progress pupils are making in lessons and

good regular assessment of their long-term progress. Assessment information is beginning to be well-used to set specific targets for particular pupils to achieve within each year. Marking of pupils' work incorporates useful encouragement, but is inconsistent in provision of pointers to pupils on how to improve.

- 69 Planning reflects teachers' satisfactory knowledge and is well supported by the school's satisfactory implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. There are valuable supplementary lessons to the literacy hour when pupils are given good opportunities to practise and refine their writing. Thorough and imaginative planning and teaching of writing is a clear strength and much improved since the previous inspection. While generally satisfactory, the approach to reading pays insufficient attention to the more advanced skills older pupils should develop. Planning for speaking and listening is not sufficiently systematic with the result that there is a good deal of inconsistency between classes in the attention paid to promoting pupils' speaking. The best progress is achieved when there is effective use of open questions to draw out pupils' understanding and speaking. Teachers, however, generally use a very limited range of methods to promote speaking and listening, for example, there is little use of drama, role-play or small-group discussion. Lessons mostly proceed at a satisfactory pace and make effective use of learning resources. There are some satisfactory examples of homework being used to extend pupils' learning, but too little is done to encourage pupils to practise and extend their reading at home. The new co-ordinator for the subject has appropriate plans to address this shortcoming in the near future.
- 70 The curriculum is appropriately broad and covers most of the required aspects of the subjects at suitable depth, with the exception of the provision for drama. Literacy is appropriately used in most subjects and the literacy strategy is satisfactorily used to promote key language skills throughout the school. Pupils' cultural development is appropriately supported through the effective introduction to literature and poetry.
- 71 The co-ordinator has worked effectively to establish a structured approach to the subject in keeping with the National Literacy Strategy. While the current co-ordinator has a clear view of the improvements needed to raise standards, she has not yet been provided with suitable opportunities to develop her role and to monitor teaching and learning in other classes. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, particularly in the management of pupils' behaviour, reflect the school's failure to monitor the teaching with sufficient rigour. As a result weaknesses have not been recognised or put right. Resources for learning are satisfactory and are generally used appropriately to support learning.

Mathematics

- 72 The results of the 1999 statutory tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, indicate that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 and above was below the national average and well below the average for schools serving similar social areas. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was also below the national average. Statistics provided from the school suggest that this was a relatively low attaining group of pupils whose difficulties had been monitored from early on in their junior schooling. In the previous year, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above was above the national average, and the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was close to the national average. Over the period 1996 to 1998, the performance of pupils in mathematics was close to the national average. This latter trend was verified by the results of the current inspection which confirm that pupils make satisfactory progress overall and that by the end of Key Stage 2, standards in mathematics are broadly in line with the national average. Attainment overall has remained at the level indicated at the previous inspection, but standards in numeracy

have risen as a result of the additional emphasis given to this area of mathematics.

- 73 There are strong links between the quality of teaching and the levels of progress achieved by pupils. While progress is at least satisfactory throughout the school, it is heightened and strengthened towards the end of the key stage as the direct result of the most effective teaching, that carefully monitors pupils' previous learning and then consolidates and extends pupils' skills and experiences to new horizons. Additionally in Year 6, pupils make more gains by being 'set' for mathematics, which allows teachers to challenge more pupils within a similar span of attainment level. Pupils with special educational needs make mainly good progress set against their previous learning. Most are well targeted and supported on a daily basis.
- 74 In the majority of lessons, pupils also make the best progress where they are interested and responsive to the tasks they are set. For example, in a Year 6 lesson that aimed at teaching pupils suitable strategies for adding and subtracting with large numbers, pupils responded enthusiastically to the teaching, they behaved well and made very good progress in terms of consolidating their mental and written skills. The response of pupils is generally good and sometimes very good. Pupils enjoy the renewed emphasis on mental work and are keen to answer and participate fully in oral sessions. Where the response is less good or borders on unsatisfactory, it is most often because a lesson fails to engage their interest and they are insufficiently challenged to do their best.
- 75 Progress was frequently good in lessons observed, but in terms of work over a period of time, the work sample shows that most pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Pupils enter the school with broadly average attainment and leave in line with national averages, but with many doing particularly well in numeracy. The best progress occurs in Year 6 where the teaching is very focused and careful assessments are made at regular intervals to ensure that pupils remain on track to reach or extend beyond the targets set for them. Throughout the school, progress in mental arithmetic is good, with most pupils showing good understanding of number relationships, place value and patterns involving multiples of five, ten, hundreds and thousands. During the inspection week, particularly good progress was observed in terms of pupils rounding up and down, developing quick mental recall, and with written strategies that showed they understood the strong relationship that exists between addition and subtraction. In a lesson in Year 5, pupils made very good progress in their attempts to multiply and divide whole numbers by 10 or 100. This came about through their own measured response to the teacher and through the pace of learning generated by the teacher's planning and delivery. Where progress occasionally dips below satisfactory, it is usually the result of low expectations on pupils' standards and unsatisfactory management of pupils. This allows too many to drift through the lesson at an easy pace or to proceed without good levels of concentration.
- 76 By the end of Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils in particular complete a wide range of accurate and well-presented work. Average attaining pupils almost match this output, but their work is governed by a lack of speed and less understanding of basic principles. The lower attaining pupils are less adept at using mental strategies, but make good progress overall in consolidating their basic skills and learning to apply these in simple problem solving situations. A strength of both the attainment and progress is the above average range of topics covered and understood by all pupils during the year.
- 77 Much good work is carried out in Year 6 involving decimals, data handling, co-ordinates, reading and writing numbers up to a million and the links between vulgar and decimal fractions and percentages. Pupils throughout the school show average attainment for their age in terms of weight, time, volume and shape. The introduction of the Numeracy Strategy has meant additional emphasis on understanding the relationships between the four operations of number, and the standards reached reflect the current input into this aspect of mathematics. In comparison, there is less time given over

to the use and application of mathematics in problem solving situations, although here too, standards are satisfactory overall.

- 78 The quality of teaching is mainly satisfactory to good but with over 36 per cent of teaching judged very good. A relatively small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was observed and this was mainly as the result of inefficient management strategies in the classroom allowing pupils to work off task and for inattention and even poor behaviour to predominate. In the great majority of lessons, teachers show clear evidence of the hard work they have put in to establish the Numeracy Strategy as a major tool and occasion for learning. In these lessons, teachers show good subject knowledge and planning is a considerable strength. The tasks given to pupils are usually appropriate to their level of skill and understanding, as could be seen during a Year 5 lesson on decimals and a Year 6 lesson on subtracting large numbers, using a system of partitioning and extended notation.
- 79 The management strategies employed by most teachers are effective in keeping pupils on task and ensuring there is a good pace to learning. Where this is not the case, the quality of what pupils achieve is not always their best and topics are not covered in sufficient depth. The assessments carried out in mathematics are at least half-termly, but also involve teachers in making more regular assessments set against the targets made for pupils or the more general aims of the lesson. Day-to-day assessments are satisfactory and appropriate use is made of the results of assessment to decide where the emphasis should be for the next stage of learning and teaching. Satisfactory use is made of homework as an extension to learning. Outside of formal mathematics lessons, teachers make satisfactory use of the development of numeracy skills across the wider curriculum, but there is scope for more improvement in this area.
- 80 The curriculum is broad, balanced and appropriate to the needs of all pupils. There is an appropriate policy and a scheme based on the National Numeracy Strategy to assist teachers in their medium term planning. There are satisfactory procedures for assessment, based mainly on the statutory assessment tasks and tests. Appropriate use is made of assessment information to set whole-school and individual targets. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and they are well supported by teachers and special needs assistants.
- 81 The subject is well led by an experienced co-ordinator who has a good overview of mathematics across the school. Strengths within the leadership and management of mathematics include good target setting for pupils and the adoption of the Numeracy Strategy across the school. A current weakness is the lack of monitoring in some classes where teachers would benefit from closer liaison to help improve their own classroom strategies during lessons. There is also insufficient use made of information technology to develop pupils' skills and experiences, particularly in relation to data handling. The lack of support staff is a disadvantage in relation to the individual help needed by many pupils. Resources are satisfactory and are particularly well used during the numeracy hour.

Science

- 82 Pupils enter the school with standards which are broadly average. The results of the National Curriculum tests in 1999 show that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 or above was very low. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was well below the national average. When compared with schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals, the results are very low. These poor results can be largely attributed to the composition of the 1999 cohort, which contained a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils. The trend over the past three years shows a steady improvement between 1996 and

1998. Inspection findings indicate that pupils make satisfactory progress overall and standards of attainment for the majority of pupils is similar to the national average. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in relation to their capabilities. This is a similar position to that found by the previous inspection.

- 83 Younger pupils have a good grasp of investigative science and know how to conduct a fair test. They know how to make a sensible prediction and test the accuracy of that prediction against their experimental findings. They have an appropriate understanding of the bones of the human body. They can also name some of the teeth, recognising ‘incisors’, ‘canines’ and ‘molars’. Older pupils have a satisfactory grasp of the composition of air and are able to explain the effects of burning in a confined space. For example, a group of pupils in Year 6 were able to correctly predict that a candle burning in a measuring jar immersed in water would use up the oxygen in the jar and then go out. They correctly explained the rise of water level in the jar as indicating the amount of oxygen consumed. They use appropriate scientific vocabulary and know the names of several measuring instruments. Pupils are able to conduct an investigation with reasonable accuracy. They make accurate observations and record their results in tables. For example, pupils in Year 4 were observed conducting an investigation into the insulating properties of various materials. They made careful measurements using thermometers and recorded these in appropriate tables. Pupils are able to describe the properties of different materials and explain how these differences are used to classify solids, liquids and gasses. The subject makes an appropriate contribution to pupils’ literacy skills, providing them with opportunities to write up experiments and use scientific vocabulary. Pupils’ numeracy skills are developed suitably by the use of measurement, the drawing of diagrams and the calculation of experimental results. Insufficient use is made of information and communications technology to support learning in the subject, and as a result pupils’ skills in using computers scientifically are poor. The school lacks the appropriate software and hardware to enable pupils to monitor investigations or gather data.
- 84 The quality of response is generally good. Older pupils behave particularly well in lessons, but younger pupils find it difficult to work quietly. In several lessons this had a detrimental effect on the progress made. Pupils enjoy their work and this has a positive impact on learning and behaviour in the lessons for older pupils. When older pupils work in groups they display good concentration and support each other well. They listen politely when others are talking and respect their views. The good relationships between pupils and between teachers and pupils combine to create a good atmosphere for learning. When conducting investigations, pupils generally handle equipment appropriately and follow safety instructions carefully. Younger pupils find concentration difficult and their attention spans are considerably shorter than those of older pupils. As a consequence, the youngest pupils quickly lose interest and noise levels rise unacceptably.
- 85 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Most teachers have appropriate subject knowledge and suitable use is made of questioning to direct pupils’ learning. Teachers’ expectations are satisfactory and they use effective organisational methods to ensure that pupils have a variety of learning experiences. Planning is generally good, although some teachers’ lesson plans are not sufficiently focused on what pupils should know and understand at the end of the lesson. Also, most teachers do not regularly plan to use information and communications technology in their lessons, and as a consequence many valuable opportunities to link computer technology to science teaching is lost. As a result, pupils do not always achieve to the maximum of their potential. The management of behaviour and control of pupils is good in the older classes and teachers make appropriate use of time and resources. However, in some classes for younger pupils, behaviour management is insecure and as a consequence noise levels, rise and pupils lose concentration. There has not been sufficient emphasis on developing pupils’ self-control and as a consequence, the impact of teaching is lost through the time taken by teachers regaining control of the situation. Although satisfactory overall, teachers’ day-to-day assessment is not always clearly focused and the data gathered is not regularly

used to adjust the planning for subsequent lessons. When teaching is good, it is characterised by clearly focused objectives, imaginative and stimulating discussion, and tasks which are well matched to the needs of individual pupils. Less successful lessons lack focus and as the tasks are the same for all pupils irrespective of prior attainment, higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Homework makes an appropriate contribution to pupils' levels of achievement and adequately prepares pupils for their next stage of their education. Overall, teaching has a satisfactory impact on the progress made by pupils and the standards they attain by the end of the key stage.

- 86 The curriculum is broad, balanced and appropriate to the needs of all pupils. There is a satisfactory policy and a scheme based on national guidelines to assist teachers in their medium term planning. However, there are weaknesses in planning for the subject. Regular opportunities to make relevant use of information and communications technology are not identified and this results in very limited use of computers and other technology to support learning in a subject which lends itself readily to the use of such equipment. Another weakness is the present planning system which means that pupils are being taught different topics of the scheme of work at the same time in mixed age classes. For example, pupils in a class for Year 4 and Year 5, where pupils in Year 5 were studying the circulation of the heart, whilst the pupils in Year 4 were looking at the skeleton. Apart from the difficulties this presented for the teacher trying to cover both topics at the same time, the pupils in this Year 5 group did not get as thorough coverage of the topic as their peers in the parallel Year 5 single-age class. There is satisfactory provision for pupils with special educational needs and they are appropriately supported by teachers and special needs assistants in lessons. There are satisfactory procedures for assessment, based mainly on the statutory assessment tasks and tests. Appropriate use is made of the information collected, but this is limited mainly to tracking pupils through the school. Insufficient use is made of assessment information to adjust long-term planning in the light of the previous years' performance. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the discussions of moral issues associated with scientific investigation.
- 87 The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership for the subject and she has appropriate ideas about how provision could be improved. She supports and monitors learning by regularly monitoring pupils' work and looking at teachers' planning. However, as there have been too few opportunities for the co-ordinator to effectively monitor the quality of teaching, this aspect of management is unsatisfactory. The subject is regularly reviewed in the school's development plan and evaluations are carried out in the light of national test results. There is generally a satisfactory ethos for learning and pupils in Year 6 are particularly enthusiastic about their scientific studies. There is a satisfactory number of teachers who are suitably qualified and trained and meet the demands of the curriculum. However, there are insufficient support staff, especially in the light of the high numbers of pupils in most classes. This has an adverse effect on practical lessons in classes for younger pupils, where the teacher is frequently trying to unsuccessfully support as many pupils as possible. As a consequence, pupils of average attainment make relatively slower progress in these lessons. Procedures for staff development are satisfactory and the school is adequately resourced.

OTHER SUBJECTS

Information Technology

- 88 Pupils make unsatisfactory progress and by the end of Year 6, standards are below those expected from pupils of this age. This is a similar position to that found by the previous inspection and as a consequence, the school has made unsatisfactory progress in addressing the issues raised at that time.

- 89 Standards in text processing are at the expected level by the end of Year 6 and pupils have adequate opportunities to practice their skills. The quality of work seen was satisfactory, covering an appropriate range of tasks, from writing poetry to preparing brochures. However, standards in other areas of communicating and handling information are below the expected standard. Pupils have an insecure knowledge of the keyboard, do not know any shortcuts and are clumsy in handling the 'mouse'. They do not know how to change type colour, size or font. Pupils' attainment in data handling is below the expected standard. They have very limited opportunities to enter data into spreadsheets or databases and to manipulate data. Some pupils in Year 5 have done work entering personal information into a database and printing out the result, but pupils in Year 6 could not recall having used a database recently. Overall, pupils' attainment in using graphics is slightly better than other areas of the subject, but still unsatisfactory. Older pupils have not had many opportunities to manipulate images or create graphic designs.
- 90 Pupils have very limited opportunities to use control technology and as a result, progress in this area of the curriculum is poor and standards well below those expected. A few pupils in Year 6 have used a program which controlled an 'on screen' roamer, but they expressed frustration when interviewed because of their limited skills and the lack of direct teacher input. Standards in modelling and simulations are well below the expected level and pupils have only the vaguest memory of ever having covered any aspect of this area of the curriculum. A few pupils were observed using a simulation program based on the Aztecs, but again a pupil spoken to complained of the poor quality graphics and 'game play'. He clearly had a much more sophisticated computer at home and well developed computer skills which were not being effectively developed by the task in hand. Programs for the support of this aspect of the curriculum are severely limited and as a consequence pupils' progress is poor. Pupils' experience in the monitoring of external events through the use of remote data capture, the scanning of images or use of digital cameras is very poor as the school has no equipment or programs to support this aspect of the curriculum. As a result, attainment is very low in comparison with the standard expected.
- 91 Overall, all pupils make unsatisfactory progress irrespective of prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs also make unsatisfactory progress. The quality and range of programs to support pupils with special educational needs is very limited and a significant number pre-date the introduction of the National Curriculum.
- 92 Pupils behave appropriately when using equipment and generally handle computers responsibly when given the opportunity. However, pupils' lack of proper training and insufficient supervision means they are learning 'bad' computer habits. For example, one pupil was observed attempting to remove a disc from the drive whilst it was still being accessed by the computer, thus risking the loss of data or damage to the drive 'heads'. Pupils' behaviour whilst working on computers is generally satisfactory. Pupils co-operate well with each other on collaborative computing tasks, but these opportunities are rare. As a consequence of pupils' limited opportunities to use relevant computer technology, several expressed frustration with the subject. This results in is poor motivation and a general lack of progress throughout the school.
- 93 The quality of teaching is generally unsatisfactory. There is virtually no direct teaching of the subject and pupils are expected to pick up expertise as they go along. As already noted, this results in the picking up of 'bad' computer habits. A lack of qualified direct teaching is having a detrimental effect on pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers generally have insufficient subject knowledge and computer expertise. Their knowledge of both the Acorn and the Windows operating systems means that programs are frequently ignored or not used to their full advantage. Expectations are generally low and no differentiation is made between pupils who have computers at home and those

who do not. The former usually have far greater capabilities, which some teachers fail to exploit to the maximum. As a consequence, more technologically capable pupils make relatively slower progress and are frustrated by the lack of opportunity to develop their skills. The organisation of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory and only a few teachers make any use of computers to support learning in their subjects. One good example was seen in Year 6, where a pupil was using a drawing program to design an Aztec mask in an art lesson. Elsewhere, the methods and organisation of the subject is poor, with pupils only having occasional access to computers. As sessions are generally unsupervised, their educational value is limited. Poor use is made of time, and resources, with some computers being left on the same screen for hours on end. Teachers' day-to-day assessment of pupils is unsatisfactory and in most cases only records who has used the computer.

- 94 The curriculum is neither broad nor balanced. Access is limited and pupils are given a very unbalanced programme of study, restricted mainly to text processing and data handling. It makes an unsatisfactory contribution to the development to pupils' literacy and number skills. There is also clear evidence that the majority of pupils do not have access to their curriculum entitlement in the subject. Overall, the school is failing to provide an adequate education in the subject and in the key computing skills needed in later life. As it stands, the school does not meet statutory requirements. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is similar to their peers. The scheme of work is based on national guidelines and is appropriate. However, a significant number of staff do not use these plans to support the teaching of the subject and as a consequence, planning is unsatisfactory overall. There is no systematic whole-school procedure for ensuring continuity as pupils move from class to class and there has been no recent audit of pupils' key skills. Systems for assessing pupils' attainment are unsatisfactory and do not focus on what pupils know and can do. As a consequence, teachers do not have sufficient information to set whole-school or individual targets for improvement. The subject does not make any significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As it stands, the curriculum for the subject does not meet statutory requirements.
- 95 The management of the subject is unsatisfactory, although the co-ordinator has worked hard to develop a policy and scheme of work. The well-conceived action plan is currently frustrated by the insufficient time given to teaching the subject, the lack of planning for information and communications technology in many subjects and the generally low level of subject knowledge possessed by many teachers. Insufficient time has been spent monitoring teaching and learning and this has resulted in low standards and slow progress in addressing the issues raised by the previous report. As a result of low expectations in many classes, the ethos for learning in the subject is unsatisfactory and many pupils and some staff are frustrated by the low profile given to the subject.
- 96 The arrangements for staff development are unsatisfactory overall. The co-ordinator has conducted an audit of teachers' skills, which indicates generally low levels of expertise and confidence, and from this has drawn up a schedule for professional development. However, this is yet to take place and expertise remains low. Although there are sufficient numbers of teachers, the general lack of expertise and understanding of the equipment at the school's disposal means that the demands of the curriculum are not being met. The situation is exacerbated by the lack of sufficient support staff, especially in the classes for younger pupils. Although accommodation for the teaching of the subject is adequate, the number of computers available for pupils to use is well below the national average. Resources are generally unsatisfactory and a significant proportion of software pre-dates the National Curriculum and is generally inappropriate. The use of resources and staff is poor and many valuable opportunities to extend pupils' learning in the subject are missed.

Religious Education

- 97 Standards meet the expectations of the local agreed syllabus and most pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Attainment and progress in the subject have remained at the levels indicated at the previous inspection. The knowledge and understanding expressed by pupils reflects both the quality of the teaching in the subject, as well as pupils' overall response during lessons. The current arrangements for teaching and learning ensure that statutory requirements are met.
- 98 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a satisfactory grasp of the topics and learning they have undertaken. They know mainly about the basis of the Christian faith and understand the importance of Christ's teaching and leadership as factors in how Christianity has emerged as a world-wide faith. Pupils in Year 6 know about the importance of group membership and how belief and activity underpin common agreement in worship. The oldest pupils also understand something of the history of the Jewish faith, as revealed in Old Testament times, and recall with ease the stories of Joseph, Moses and Ezekiel. Pupils understand that faith has often to be tested and they recall the lessons learned in the story of Elijah and the followers of Baal.
- 99 As they move through the school, pupils revisit the teachings of Jesus and know, for example, the moral and social implications of stories such as 'The Good Samaritan' and the healing of the blind. Considerable work is undertaken on the theme of 'celebrations' and pupils know how believers in a single faith come to view certain dates or seasons, such as Lent, as central to belief and reflection. Pupils also undertake studies of moral issues during their lessons. For example, they are asked to look at events in the world from differing viewpoints and respond well to such a challenge.
- 100 There is considerable evidence of pupils learning about world-wide faiths other than Christianity. Several displays are on show, illustrating pupils' work and knowledge of faiths such as Judaism and Hinduism. Pupils have a satisfactory grasp of the traditions of these and other faiths and particularly the importance of their religious writings. For example, a class in Year 5 studied the Koran, the Torah and the Bible and knew the important backgrounds behind each. They have appropriate knowledge of the Bible as a collection of books and know these are divided into chapters and verses and can access particular references such as Noah and the Flood with reasonable accuracy.
- 101 Pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their previous learning, including pupils with special educational needs. The subject has relatively high priority in the school development plan and this, coupled with the curriculum time given to it, ensures that pupils' learning is both continuous and progressive. Pupils make particularly good progress in the field of multicultural awareness and this has strengthened since the previous inspection. Appropriate emphasis and time is given to the teaching about minority ethnic groups.
- 102 The response of pupils in lessons observed was at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Pupils show appropriate interest and motivation in the work they undertake. In a particularly good lesson in Year 6, pupils were very well behaved and anxious to express their feelings during the debate on viewpoints of the world. In a less successful lesson on leadership and faith, pupils were less directly involved in their own learning and became restless, contributing too little to the main theme and thrust of the lesson. Overall, the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development by providing regular opportunities to consider their own beliefs and those of others. Good contributions are also made to pupils' moral development as they consider important ethical issues and moral dilemmas. The subject makes an appropriate contribution to pupils' social and cultural development through the study of the social and cultural traditions of various world religions.

- 103 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and some good teaching was observed in the upper part of the key stage. The strength of the teaching is the use made of time and resources in the great majority of lessons. This is particularly true during lessons on comparative faiths and the importance of the scriptures. The tasks set for pupils are generally well chosen to extend and enrich their learning and are seldom merely worksheets that give brief consolidation of the main facts learned. Some of the best work seen, for example on Hinduism and Sikhism, was mainly based on oral discussion, but this was well used to build up the confidence and knowledge base of the pupils. Overall the subject makes an appropriate contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills.
- 104 The subject is satisfactorily led and there is good reference to the locally agreed syllabus and to the overall subject policy. Assessment is weak and this is a matter acknowledged by the co-ordinator and is rightly on the agenda for improvement. Resources are satisfactory overall and appropriate use is made of the local parish church to extend the concept of Christians at worship. The centralised library is insufficiently stocked with books that depict the multicultural nature of society and there is too little emphasis on pupils researching their own work, including the use of information technology where this is seen to be relevant and appropriate.

Art

- 105 Pupils generally have skills which are below those expected of seven year old pupils when they enter the school. They make very good progress and by the end of Year 6 attain standards which are higher than those expected for pupils of this age. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. In one lesson in Year 6, for example, pupils produced good quality clay sculptures in the style of the Aztecs. They applied patterns to the surface of the clay to produce interesting textures and appraised their work effectively as it progressed. Several pupils produced very good clay masks, which reflected Aztec design conventions very well. Younger pupils produce well drawn observational pictures of plans, which show a wide range of skills in colouring, shading and line drawing. A survey of samples of work undertaken during the past year shows that pupils undertake a wide variety of art tasks. They investigate and make interesting artefacts in a variety of scales and different media. Pupils have good opportunities to develop an understanding of artists' work and apply it to their own. Many painters and other artists are investigated and in one lesson, pupils were seen producing good quality coloured pencil drawings in the style of Lowery. Other examples see include work in the style of Toulouse-Lautrec, Matisse, Turner and Gauguin.
- 106 Pupils' response in lessons is good. Pupils enjoy their art activities, listen carefully to the teacher, and respond well to practical guidelines and show pride in their work. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development, introducing them to a wide range of Western and some non-western artists. The good response of pupils has a positive impact on the standards achieved and the progress made in lessons.
- 107 The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, maintain a good pace throughout lessons, motivate pupils well and, through good one-to-one support, encourage them to evaluate their work effectively. This is having a positive effect on pupils' enthusiasm and the progress they make. Teachers make effective use of the scheme of work to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are covered. They provide pupils with experience of a wide range of artists from different cultures and ensure continuity and progression in the key skills as pupils move through the school. Resources for art are generally of satisfactory quality, are well-utilised and are readily accessible.

Design and technology

- 108 Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Standards are similar to those reported at the previous inspection, but there has been improvement in teachers' planning for higher attainers. The best progress observed during the inspection was seen in a lesson in Year 6, where the teacher's very good planning and provision of resources was promoting very good progress in pupils' understanding and skills in both the design and making aspects of the subject. Pupils were given a challenging task to design attractive and practical packaging for a provided piece of fragile pottery, the packages were then to be tested. Pupils responded with a lively interest and a determination to design and produce a quality product. A good understanding of the functions of the planned product was evident. Pupils disassembled examples of commercial packages thoughtfully and used these, and their own imagination, very effectively to produce their designs. They also showed commendable care and precision in measuring, cutting and assembling their materials. These qualities of care were also a positive feature of pupils' work in another lesson in Year 6, although on this occasion the teacher overlooked some opportunities to challenge pupils on design considerations. Previous work from Year 6 on display shows good progress being made on the design of advertising materials.
- 109 In other year groups good progress was seen during the inspection when pupils in Year 4 tackled a challenging task of making a pop-up mechanism for a greetings card. They showed enthusiasm and persistence as they experimented with their constructions, refining their approach until almost all produced mechanisms that worked well. In a class in Year 3 pupils mostly showed satisfactory progress in consolidating basic skills of manipulating card and paper to make masks but again the teacher failed to exploit opportunities to challenge pupils on design issues or the selection of materials, tools and techniques. The teacher's planning had pre-empted consideration of these matters. In another similar lesson in a year 3 and 4 class, pupils' progress was unsatisfactory because the poor attitudes and behaviour of a significant number of pupils resulted in careless work and poor-quality products. Past work on making musical instruments displayed in the school shows that pupils have made some attempt to evaluate their products, but that this has been done only superficially.
- 110 Pupils show a good level of interest in the subject, but their progress in individual lessons is closely related to their attitude to work and to their behaviour. Though satisfactory overall, attitudes and behaviour range from very good, as in a lesson in Year 6, to unsatisfactory on occasions with younger pupils. This reflects the range in the quality of teaching which is also satisfactory overall but includes examples of both very good and unsatisfactory practice. Planning is satisfactory overall, though better in relation to the making than to the design aspects. The range of activities planned is somewhat limited, with few examples of the use of electrical and mechanical devices. Inconsistency is found in expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. They are high, for example in Year 6, but low in some Year 3 and 4 lessons. The same variations apply to teachers' effectiveness in managing pupils' behaviour. In the most effective lessons teachers are able calmly and quietly to conduct pupils with little need for correction. In less successful lessons, teachers spend too much time attempting to correct pupils, sometimes with little success, and this leads to unsatisfactory progress.

History

- 111 Pupils make satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs. Standards in the subject have remained broadly the same since the last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their understanding of chronology. The structured scheme allows them to study a wide range of topics relating to periods as far apart as the Aztecs and post-war Britain. Pupils develop an appropriate bank of knowledge but their enquiry skills are undeveloped. When studying topics such as the Romans and Victorian Britain pupils are aware of the importance of leadership and its influence on the lives of ordinary people. They show good recall of many important events and make satisfactory progress in their use of artefacts and information gained from textbooks or worksheets. For example, Year 4 pupils illustrate their knowledge of the kinds of food eaten by the Ancient Greeks and write appropriate sentences about what they know. Pupils make good progress in interpreting evidence and in separating fact from fiction when they are given the opportunity to do so.
- 112 The response of pupils is satisfactory. Most enjoy their lessons and are fully involved in their own learning, although in some classes too little is asked of their own enquiry skills. In a particularly good lesson dealing with 'invaders,' pupils showed a keen interest and responded to their teachers' questions with clear, confident and extensive answers. Behaviour was good in observed lessons but in the lower school, a few pupils are unable to concentrate for long periods and this is reflected in some of the length and quality of their written work.
- 113 The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge and research their topics well. This is reflected in the knowledge gained by pupils. Planning is also good with effective links made with other subjects, including literacy. Teachers make satisfactory use of the scheme of work, but the fact that it omits sufficient emphasis on the development of pupils' enquiry skills, means this aspect is given too little emphasis. Some resources are outdated, but are generally used effectively in lessons.

Geography

- 114 Progress is satisfactory, with pupils generally showing levels of attainment appropriate to their age. Standards and the quality of provision are similar to those reported following the last inspection. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 have a good knowledge and understanding of rain forests. This includes climate, layers of vegetation, and the habitats of animals. Pupils have a suitable understanding of how climate influences the crops that can be grown, land-use, people's jobs and homes and the trade of a country. Pupils know which parts of the world have rain-forests and why they are found there. Pupils have a good understanding of man's impact on the environment. This was evident in a lesson where pupils representing developers wishing to cut down the rain-forest and others representing forest residents, debated the ethics of the situation.
- 115 Pupils in Year 6 make satisfactory progress in their knowledge of a foreign country and the consolidation of their map reading skills. Pupils also make satisfactory progress throughout the school in developing basic skills of using maps and symbols. Most pupils know the purpose of compass points and can work out, for example, that a journey from London to their home would take a north-westerly direction. They also learn the basic use of grid references. Generally, however, pupils' ability to interpret geographical data such as photographs or statistical evidence is underdeveloped.

- 116 In the two lessons seen, pupils showed interest in the work and behaved well. Examples of pupils' past written work also shows pupils undertaking their work with care. Evidence from the two lessons seen, from pupils' progress in past work and from planning for the work shows teaching to be satisfactory overall. However, good practice was evident in one of the lessons seen. Here high expectations of pupils' understanding, effective questioning, good use of video-tape resources, imaginative planning of a range of teaching methods and good management of pupils promoted good progress. Where teaching is effective, pupils behave well and these combined factors ensure that they make satisfactory progress overall.

Music

- 117 Pupils make satisfactory progress overall, which is a similar judgement to that made at the previous inspection. There is significant variation in the progress made in lessons. During the inspection it ranged from very good in Year 6 to unsatisfactory in a lesson in Years 4 and 5. This results from differences in pupils' attitudes and behaviour that are in turn reflections of the quality of teaching. Pupils show a steady development of the awareness of basic musical ideas like rhythm, pitch, volume and structure. They apply this understanding to their performances when clapping rhythms, singing or playing percussion instruments. The best progress is made in Year 6 where both classes are taught by the subject co-ordinator. A high level of musical expertise is evident in the very good planning and teaching. High expectations are set, pupils' enthusiasm and concentration is effectively encouraged and the result is very good progress. Consequently, most pupils leave the school with a satisfactory grasp of the basics of conventional musical notation. They know how music is structured and symbolised when written down and can correctly read the pitch and duration of notes. They use these skills well to read a conventional score and join in an accurate whole-class performance in which every pupil plays a tuned percussion instrument, such as a xylophone. Pupils play percussion instruments with a good measure of care and control. The quality of the work in Year 6 is very good and enables pupils to achieve satisfactory progress overall.
- 118 In Years 3, 4 and 5, teachers' planning of lessons is satisfactory and sometimes makes appropriate use of commercially produced resources of taped broadcasts and the accompanying books. However, the impact of these satisfactory plans and resources was reduced in the two lessons seen in these year-groups because the teachers' control of pupils' behaviour was not secure. Pupils responded by talking out of turn or showing a frivolous attitude not conducive to progress. Attempts by the teacher to regain control by raising her voice proved ineffective. This was particularly true in one such lesson which was judged unsatisfactory. School assemblies represent a missed opportunity to build on pupils' progress by reminding them of musical concepts and encouraging them to apply them to their singing.

Physical Education

- 119 Pupils make good progress overall, including those with special educational needs. This represents a similar picture to that found in the previous inspection. Among the factors creating and influencing the above average progress are the good leadership in the subject, combined with some effective teaching that not only targets essential skills, but emphasises the importance of competitive enjoyment, a factor that brings out a positive response from pupils.
- 120 Pupils show good progress in their overall skills across a range of activities. In Year 3 they use

movement and dance expressively and progress well with strong and gentle movements. For example, in a lesson on the theme of 'The Body Machine', they show satisfactory awareness of their levels of performance and a strong desire to improve on their efforts still further. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils had progressed onto more complex movements and sequences, combining their rehearsed movements with those of a partner to illustrate moving machines. By Year 6, pupils show good knowledge of competitive games and play tag rugby, basketball and football to at least average standards. They build up their knowledge of several minor and national games and understand the significance of teamwork and progressive practice. Pupils in all year groups show satisfactory awareness of the impact of exercise on the human body and illustrate good self-control and appropriate levels of safety. Pupils make good progress in using self-assessment, which allows them to take a critical view of their own progress and that of others, and this creates effective new targets for improvement. Standards in gymnastics are also good and the great majority of pupils are able to transfer their balances and sequences between floor and apparatus.

- 121 Swimming was a particular focus during this inspection, with the target pupils being in Year 4. Standards in this age group are broadly average, but by the time pupils leave the school, the national requirement that they should be able to swim at least 25 metres, is met in all but a small minority of pupils. Provision in the school is good. All age groups attend the local pool at some time during the school year and when any one class attends, they do so for between eight and ten weeks, thus allowing for progressive skills to be taught and well established. During the inspection week, some unsatisfactory teaching was seen that prevented pupils in both the learner and larger pool to make the progress they could and should have made. The teaching provision is under the control of the local authority and does not formally involve the class teachers. It is clear from the standards reached by the end of Year 6 and the awards pupils receive, that progress over time is better than that suggested by the observed lessons. Pupils receive transport and tuition at no expense to themselves and the overall provision presents satisfactory value for money.
- 122 The response of pupils to their swimming and other provision is almost entirely good. Pupils prepare themselves well for lessons, are appropriately dressed and are enthusiastic and willing to learn. The majority listen carefully to instructions and show good awareness of each other and the need to compete hard but fairly. These are also important factors in the good progress that is achieved.
- 123 The quality of teaching is good overall, with particular strengths in Years 4 and 6. Teachers show good awareness of the skills they are to introduce or consolidate, and have the necessary knowledge and enthusiasm to ensure this is reflected in their planning and lesson organisation. The use of time and resources is good, as seen in a lesson in Year 6 when pupils were kept fully active and a good range of equipment was used to ensure pupils made good progress in the area under review. A further strength of several lessons is the use made of pupils to demonstrate good practice. This teaches pupils to evaluate their own performance effectively as well as that of others. The teaching of progressive skills is often good and teachers use their ongoing assessment satisfactorily to ensure work is well consolidated before moving pupils onto new areas. Teachers provide appropriately for adventure activities at a residential field-study centre. They also make good use of outside coaching brought in to supplement that done by the school itself.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 124 The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors who, over a period of four days, completed a total of fourteen inspection days in school.
- 125 For the majority of the time in school the inspectors visited classes, talked to individual groups of pupils, and evaluated their work. A total of 55 lesson observations were made for a total of 38 hours. A range of work from a representative sample of pupils from each year group was examined, together with their records and reports. A representative sample from each year group was heard to read and interviewed. Formal interviews were held with a representative sample from some year groups relating to specific curricular issues. Approximately 25 hours were spent on these activities.
- 126 In addition:
- interviews were held with the deputy headteacher, subject co-ordinators, the chair of governors and other members of school management;
 - informal and formal discussions took place with members of the non-teaching staff;
 - informal discussions took place with many pupils as part of lesson observations;
 - the documentation provided by the school, including teachers' planning, was carefully analysed;
 - the school's attendance registers and discipline documents were examined;
 - playground arrangements, dining arrangements, registration periods and collective worship were observed;
 - the budget figures were analysed;
 - a parents' meeting was attended by 10 parents and completed questionnaires were received from 73 parents. In addition 16 parents submitted written comments. The issues raised helped inform the inspection process.

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y3 - 6Y	233	2	27	32

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (Y3 - 6Y)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	29

Education support staff (Y3 - 6Y)

Total number of education support staff:	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	35

Average class size:	33.3
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Financial data

Financial year:	1998/9
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	£
Total Income	271,983
Total Expenditure	276,707
Expenditure per pupil	1,246
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,991
Balance carried forward to next year	4,267

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

197

Number of questionnaires returned:

99

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	21	57	14	8	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	38	52	5	5	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	16	51	22	8	3
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	19	65	9	7	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	38	49	4	5	3
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	36	57	5	1	1
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	26	55	11	7	1
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	22	61	8	8	1
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	23	63	9	4	1
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	30	53	9	7	1
My child(ren) like(s) school	41	47	8	0	3

Other issues raised by parents

- Parents are happy with the progress their children make at school.
- Teachers try to do the best for their pupils and are supportive.
- Parents are positive about the sporting activities of the school.
- Parents are positive about the incentive system used to improve standards.
- Most parents are satisfied with the amount of information provided by the school for parents.
- Parents think arrangements for transfer to secondary school are good.
- A few parents were unhappy with the provision for special educational needs during the co-ordinator's long-term sick leave.
- Pupils take too long to complete homework.
- The school does not keep parents sufficiently informed of changes made to routines.
- Quieter pupils are ignored.
- Pupils are not given sufficient reading to do at home.
- Some parents feel that uniform standards should be more strictly enforced.
- Several parents were concerned about poor behaviour and incidents of bullying.
- A significant number of parents feel class sizes are too large.