

INSPECTION REPORT

Fawcett County Primary School
Cambridge

LEA area : Cambridge

Unique Reference Number : 110766

Headteacher : Mr C J Knight

Reporting inspector : Ms E M de Lancey
22272

Dates of inspection : 4th – 7th October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707022

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Infant and junior
Type of control :	County
Age range of pupils :	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Alpha Terrace Trumpington Cambridge CB2 2HS
Telephone number :	01223 840 258
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Appropriate authority :	Governing body
Name of chair of governors :	Mr S Brown
Date of previous inspection :	March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Ms E M de Lancey, RgI	English Music Children under five English as an additional language Literacy	Attainment and progress Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mr G Stockley, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Mrs V Brittain, Team Inspector	Science Design and technology History Geography Religious education	Curriculum and assessment Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Mr A Morgan, Team Inspector	Mathematics Information technology Art Physical education Numeracy Special educational needs Equal opportunities	Teaching Leadership and management The efficiency of the school

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The children make a very good start in the nursery and they make good progress in all areas of learning.
- The school is successful in sustaining its raising of pupils' attainment. Results in national tests over the past three years have improved steadily.
- The school's strategies for developing the skills of literacy and numeracy are effective in raising standards.
- The quality of teaching is good in more than half the lessons; it is very good in almost one-tenth of lessons. Very good teaching occurs mostly in the nursery and in Year 6.
- The school successfully integrates pupils of all abilities, including those from Green Hedges, local special school.
- The school promotes pupils' personal development very effectively and relationships throughout the school are excellent.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and enables them to make good progress.
- The school's links with the community are good and enrich the children's education.
- Staff manage the pupils well and promote their good behaviour and well being.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social and cultural development is very good overall, moral and social development are particularly strong.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher, staff and governors contribute effectively to the school's very good ethos.

Where the school has weaknesses

- The lack of consistency in marking. There are good examples of teachers giving guidance to children on how they can improve their work, but it is not an established procedure.
- The lesson planning and use of assessment in the foundation subjects of art, design and technology, history, music and physical education
- The variation in the practice of setting homework across the school.
- The quality of books in the library which do not offer sufficient challenge to the more able readers.

The weaknesses identified in this report are far outweighed by what the school does well. They will, however form the basis of the governors' action plan. A copy of this plan will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has overcome most of the weaknesses pointed out in the last inspection in 1996. Since the previous inspection the school has given a high priority to eliminating underachievement and has improved pupils' standards of attainment, particularly those of more able pupils. The school has set realistic targets to help pupils do better in the national tests. Attainment in English and mathematics has improved significantly. The school has schemes of work in place for all subjects and these help the teachers plan for pupils to build on their previous learning. The roles and responsibilities of the headteacher and staff in curriculum development are clearly understood and effectively carried out. The school has reviewed the assessment, recording and reporting policy and has useful procedures in place. Teachers have successfully implemented the assessment procedures in English and mathematics and this is helping them to plan work which meets the needs of pupils of all abilities, but it is too early to judge their effectiveness in all subjects. The headteacher effectively monitors and evaluates classroom practice. He uses assessment data effectively to establish precise targets for improvement and to track the progress of individual pupils. The quality of teaching has improved. Teachers now have a secure knowledge of the National Curriculum and they usually have high expectations of their pupils. In English and mathematics, planning is good and teachers share the lesson objectives with their pupils. Lesson planning and the use of assessment are still weak in art, design technology, history, music and physical education. The school continues to try to improve the punctuality of a small minority of pupils. It is well placed to make further improvements and to meet its targets.

Standards in subjects

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

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

Although pupils are reaching average standards in English and mathematics and above average in science in comparison with all primary schools, they are doing better when compared with schools with similar backgrounds. In each of the last three years standards in English and mathematics have risen significantly, especially for higher attaining pupils. Results for science have been consistently good. The school's most recent results suggest that standards in English and mathematics have continued to improve but national comparisons are not yet available.

At the end of the year in which pupils were seven, their results were broadly in line with the national average in reading and well below average in writing in comparison with all schools. In comparison with similar schools, reading was above the average, but writing remained well below. Whilst these results are based on the average curriculum level achieved by pupils at this school, this is slightly at odds with individual national test results where a significant minority of children achieved below the national level and one third of pupils achieved the higher level which was well above the national average. The school's most recent results (1999) show an improvement in pupils' attainment in reading and a significant improvement in writing. In mathematics, pupils' attainments were average when compared with all schools, but well above average in comparison with similar schools.

The school was not able to produce sufficient evidence in information technology at either key stage on which to base judgements about standards. Standards in religious education are average.

Inspection evidence and national test results indicate that standards have risen since the last inspection in English and mathematics at both key stages.

Almost all of the children under five are on course to achieve the nationally agreed desirable outcomes for children's learning. A few are working within the early stages of the National Curriculum.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	good	good	good
Mathematics	good	good	good
Science	-	satisfactory	satisfactory
Information technology	-	insufficient evidence	insufficient evidence
Religious education	-	insufficient evidence	satisfactory
Other subjects	good	satisfactory	satisfactory

Overall, the quality of teaching for children under five and for pupils in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is good. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good. It is satisfactory in science, music and physical education and in religious education and history at Key Stage 2.

Because of timetabling arrangements, it was not possible to observe sufficient lessons in religious education and history at Key Stage 1 and in art, design and technology, geography, and information technology at both key stages to make judgements about the quality of teaching.

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	Good; pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
Attendance	Good; it is above the national average. A small number of pupils arrive late for school.
Ethos*	Very positive; there is a strong commitment to raising standards further. Pupils enjoy coming to school and they are interested in their work. The very good relationships that exist throughout the school provide an effective climate for learning.
Leadership and management	Good; the school benefits from the effective leadership of the headteacher, the efficient management of the senior management team and the clear strategic role of the governors.
Curriculum	Good provision for children under five. For pupils from five to eleven, the curriculum is broad and balanced; close attention is focused on the need to improve standards in literacy and numeracy. Planning and assessment in these areas is good. Lesson planning and the use of assessment are weak in art, design and technology, history, music and physical education. Provision for the arts enriches the curriculum
Pupils with special educational needs	Good; well-directed support is given to pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties which enables them to make good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good overall; with particular strengths in the provision for moral and social development
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good; there is an appropriate number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers. The nursery nurse and learning support assistants build on their existing skills through additional training to enable them to further pupils' learning. Together, they make a positive contribution to the standards achieved. The accommodation inside and around the school is spacious and attractive. Resources are adequate.
Value for money	Good; the effective deployment of all staff and the effective use of accommodation and resources have had a significant impact on raising achievement, especially that of higher attaining pupils.

* *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">• Their children are happy and enjoy school.• The very good start their children make in the nursery.• The way the school teaches early reading skills.• The positive attitudes and values the school promotes.• The excellent quality of the provision for children with special educational needs.• The integration of children with special educational needs, especially those from Green Hedges School.• The benefits derived from the pupils who have English as an additional language.• The high standards of behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The variable, and in some cases limited, use made of homework.• The lack of guidance the more able children receive in their selection of books.• The unsatisfactory quality of the books in the library.

The inspectors' judgements support the positive views expressed by parents. Homework requirements are inconsistent; the school has addressed this issue through the newly-written home-school agreement so that pupils, parents and carers know what to expect each week, but it is too early to judge its effectiveness.

Inspectors agree that there is insufficient guidance given to higher attaining pupils to help them choose challenging books.

The parents have raised funds to improve the quality and quantity of books in the library.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

- * Improve the quality of teachers' lesson planning and the use of day-to-day assessment in art, design and technology, history, music and physical education. (paragraph references: 48, 175, 179, 189, 194 and 201)
- * Improve the quality of marking in order that pupils know what they should do to improve their work. (paragraph references: 50, 136, 145 and 188)
- * Improve the quality of the books in the library by providing fiction and non-fiction that offer good opportunities for sustained reading. (paragraph reference: 102)

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

- * Give more guidance to able readers to help them select more challenging books. (paragraph reference: 130)
- * Following the introduction of the home-school agreement monitor the consistency of provision of homework. (paragraph references: 51, 137 and 145)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Fawcett County Primary School is situated in Trumpington, two and a half miles south of Cambridge city centre. Most of the pupils live in the area surrounding the school. It is an inclusive primary school and attracts a significant number of pupils with special educational needs from outside the immediate area.
2. There are currently 179 pupils attending the main school which is about 13 per cent fewer than at the time of the last inspection. A further 26 children attend the nursery on a part-time basis.
3. The pupils represent a very wide range of ability. The results of baseline assessments over the past two years indicate that overall their social, personal, literacy and numeracy skills are average on entry to the reception class.
4. The school serves a diverse community. Parents pursue a range of occupations ranging from manual to professional but many are unemployed. Housing varies from owner occupied properties to privately rented but the majority of pupils live in local authority accommodation. A significant minority of the pupils are transient. Many of these pupils are the children of visiting academics and speak English as an additional language. Fifteen pupils (eight per cent) speak English as an additional language.
5. There are 40 pupils with special educational needs which is above the average for a school of this size. Seven pupils have statements of special educational need; this is also above the national average.
6. Eighteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is broadly in line with the national average
7. Parts of the school are let out to a variety of local authority services, including the special educational needs service. One room is rented by Green Hedges, a local special school, for a group of autistic children who are integrated into the main school for educational and recreational purposes whenever possible. The association between the schools is an initiative designed to enrich the educational provision for pupils of both schools. Each group of pupils has an opportunity to grow within a shared setting in which their awareness of other children and their needs and responses are enhanced and developed. It is this emphasis on mutual benefit which marks this project out.
8. The school admits children to the nursery class at the beginning of the year in which they are four. Those living closest to the school have priority. They transfer to the main school at the beginning of the year in which they are five. Almost all the children entering the reception class have had pre-school experience either in the school's nursery or the local playgroup. At the time of the inspection, all of the children in the nursery and the reception class were under five years of age.
9. The school's prospectus sets out its aims and values for pupils, as follows:
 - to create opportunities for children and to develop a critical facility in each child to interpret the world around them;
 - to help pupils to develop lively and enquiring minds with an ability to apply themselves to tasks;
 - to help pupils to acquire the knowledge and skills demanded by society in the adult world;
 - to promote understanding and tolerance of others and their ways of life and an awareness of the wider world.

10. The school's priorities include:

- to improve the range and quality of pupils' writing, in particular at Key Stage 1;
- to raise the achievement of boys in English, in particular, writing.
- to implement the numeracy strategy;
- to implement the scheme of work for ICT and to update the resources;
- to have a home school agreement in place by September 1999;
- to review resources for the literacy hour and buy more books for the library.

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	13	13	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	7	6	11
	Girls	9	11	10
	Total	16	17	21
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	67	71	88
	National	80	81	84

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	7	11	11
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	18	22	22
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	75	92	92
	National	81	85	86

Attainment at Key Stage 2

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	11	12	23

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	6	6	9
	Girls	9	8	10
	Total	15	14	19
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	68	64	86
	National	65	59	69

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	5	5	9
	Girls	8	8	10
	Total	13	13	19
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	59	59	86
	National	65	65	72

Attendance

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	4.9
	National comparative data	5.6
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.7
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

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

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	9
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

- 11 Children enter the nursery with a very wide range of experiences and skills. The provision for all areas of learning is good and the children make good progress, especially those entering the nursery with low levels of attainment. The results of baseline testing show that over the past two years the attainment of children entering the reception class is broadly average in their personal and social development, English and mathematics. By the time they reach the age of five most children attain the nationally agreed desirable outcomes for children's learning¹ and are working in the early stages of the National Curriculum. Children are helped to reach this standard by the good quality of teaching and the adult support they receive.
- 12 By the end of Key Stage 1, on the basis of the 1998 national tests, pupils' results were broadly in line with the national average in reading and well below the national average in writing. These results based on the average curriculum level achieved by pupils at this school, are at odds with the individual test results for reading. These show that in comparison with all schools, the proportion of pupils reaching level 2, the national standard, in the 1998 national tests was well below the national average in reading. Results of the national tests were close to the national average in mathematics. One-third of the pupils reached the higher level (level 3) in reading which was well above the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was average in mathematics and well below in writing. In science, on the basis of teacher assessment the proportion of pupils reaching both the national standard and the higher level was above the national average.
- 13 In comparison with similar schools throughout the country, based on the average level for the school, the pupils at Fawcett School achieved results that were above average in reading, well above average in mathematics and science and well below average in writing. The results for higher attaining pupils were well above average in most subjects with the exception of writing where they were average.
- 14 By the end of Key Stage 2, in comparison with all schools, the proportion of pupils reaching level 4, the national standard, in the 1998 national tests was broadly in line with the national average in English and mathematics and well above in science. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level (level 5) was below the national average in English, well below in mathematics and average in science.
- 15 In comparison with similar schools, pupils' results were above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was well below average in English and mathematics and above average in science.
- 16 Standards dipped in reading and writing at Key Stage 1 in the years following the last inspection. They improved in 1998, although they were still below the national average. Improvement has continued in 1999, particularly in writing, although national comparisons are not yet available.

¹Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. SCAA, 1996

The Desirable Outcomes are goals for learning for the time they enter compulsory education, which begins the term after the child's fifth birthday. The desirable outcomes cover the children's development in six areas of learning; personal and social development; language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development.

- 17 Over the past three years, from 1996 to 1998, standards of attainment at Key Stage 2 have improved significantly. This is reflected in the year-on-year improvement in the results of the national tests in English. The percentage of pupils who attain the national standard, level 4 has risen steadily. The latest results show that this improvement has been sustained with a greater proportion reaching the higher level; about one in three pupils achieved level 5 in English. In mathematics, standards have been sustained consistently and the school's most recent national test results suggest that standards have improved, especially for higher attaining pupils.
- 18 Over the past three years, from 1996 to 1998, standards of attainment in Key Stage 2 have remained consistently high in science. The gap between the achievement of girls and boys at Key Stage 1 in reading and writing has narrowed, but girls still do better than boys in writing. Although the differences in the achievement of boys and girls at Level 4 has reduced, more girls than boys exceed the expected standard at Key Stage 2 in English which reflects the national trend.
- 19 Inspection evidence indicates that the school is sustaining these improved standards in reading and writing. By the time they reach the end of the year in which they are seven, most pupils will achieve the national standard in reading, writing and mathematics and a significant minority are likely to exceed this level. Similarly, by the time they leave the school at the age of eleven, almost all pupils are set to achieve the national standard in English, mathematics and science, with a significant minority likely to exceed this level.
- 20 The school sets targets for the pupils it expects to achieve level 4 or above in national tests. It has introduced a number of tests to help establish the ability of each year group and to monitor their progress as they move through the school. It has also begun to monitor the results of these tests to track the progress of groups and individual pupils and to set targets for future performance. The results of the headteacher's monitoring and the setting of precise targets have been effective in strengthening the curriculum, particularly in writing, improving the performance of boys in reading and writing, and raising teachers' expectations of higher attaining pupils.
- 21 The staff have worked hard to improve standards of attainment, in particular for higher attainers and to raise the achievement of boys. The raising of standards follows from the school's effective adoption of the national literacy and numeracy strategies and the provision of work to challenge pupils of all abilities. The clear structure of the literacy hour and the increased focus on non-fiction texts has begun to make a positive contribution to boys' attitudes and attainment.
- 22 Inspection evidence indicates that all pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, are making satisfactory progress overall. Pupils make most progress in English and mathematics and progress within individual lessons is often good, but this level of progress is not maintained consistently over time. Progress in writing has improved at both key stages. It improves rapidly towards the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 6 it is good in almost all aspects of English. Pupils make steady progress in all aspects of mathematics at Key Stage 1. They build effectively upon their learning in Key Stage 2 and continue to make satisfactory progress. In science, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. They continue to develop their knowledge and understanding, but in experimental and investigative science, progress is more variable because higher attaining pupils are not always given the opportunities to achieve the higher skills of which they are capable.
- 23 There is high quality support from learning support assistants for pupils with special educational needs. This enables these pupils to make good progress against the targets set for them. This is exemplified by the number of pupils who move off the register of special educational needs.
- 24 There are good arrangements in place to support the few pupils who speak English as an additional language. All pupils have full access to the curriculum and there are no significant differences in the attainment and progress of pupils of different background or ethnicity.

- 25 The school was unable to produce sufficient evidence at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 on which to base judgements on information technology. During the inspection only a few examples of the use of information technology were observed. Consequently, it is not possible to report on the standards of attainment or progress at either of the key stages.
- 26 In religious education, the attainment of the pupils at both key stages is consistent with the expectations in the Agreed Syllabus and the pupils make satisfactory progress.
- 27 In art and music and history, most pupils, of all abilities, including those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress. In gymnastics, games and swimming pupils work at a suitable level for their age. They make satisfactory progress and many attain high standards in swimming. In art, music, history and physical education the pupils pursue a well-balanced curriculum through which they steadily improve their acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding.
- 28 The school's timetabling arrangements meant that it was not possible to see dance at either key stage. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about pupils' progress in design technology or geography.
- 29 The literacy strategy is having a positive impact in all subjects where an emphasis is placed upon specialist subject language. The majority of pupils attain satisfactory standards in literacy at both key stages and the development of their literacy skills are having a positive impact on the standards attained in other subjects. The majority of pupils are making satisfactory progress in developing numeracy skills and they generally apply them effectively across the curriculum.
- 30 There was insufficient evidence of pupils' work on which to base judgements about their use of information technology skills to support work across the curriculum.
- 31 Progress in art through Key Stage 2 has improved since the last inspection. In history, music and physical education, the rate of progress has been sustained.
- 32 The school has given priority to the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies and to developing schemes of work in all subjects. These initiatives have contributed to the raising of standards in English and mathematics and had a beneficial effect on the progress pupils' make.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

- 33 Children under five enjoy coming to school. Their parents agree that the school's very good induction programme and the warm welcome they receive helps the children settle quickly into the routines of the nursery and the reception class. As a result, the children feel secure and grow in confidence. Most children work and play together showing consideration and respect for other people and show care and concern for animals. They learn to take turns, share resources and take some responsibility for tidying them away. They acquire good learning skills and demonstrate initiative in choosing resources. Throughout the school pupils' attitudes are good. Pupils enjoy school and show a keen interest in their studies. They work eagerly with sustained concentration, persevere when tasks become difficult and show pride in their achievements. They willingly volunteer comments in discussions and offer contributions from their own experiences. Pupils with special educational needs are equally positive in their attitudes.

- 34 Behaviour in classes and around the school is good. Pupils understand the rules of behaviour inherent in the school's ethos. They move around the school purposefully and quietly, lining up sensibly when waiting to go into the hall for assembly or physical education. They listen quietly to their teachers, both in class and during assemblies, and respond quickly when asked to pay attention. During lunch times pupils sit and eat their meals in a quiet, civilised fashion. Many are often involved in interesting discussions about their work, social events they have attended or are looking forward to. Inspection evidence supports the parents' views that pupils behave well at school.
- 35 Relationships between pupils and between adults and pupils are excellent, they are friendly and supportive and a strength of the school. All members of the school community are valued and treated with respect, as a result they feel part of one large family. Pupils are trustworthy, considerate and polite. They speak confidently and contribute well to class discussions, whilst respecting the opinions of others. They work well together, for example, they support one another when using the computer or making a paper chair sufficiently strong to hold a teddy bear. There is no evidence of bullying or racial tension and it has not been necessary to exclude any pupil in the last few years. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are welcomed into the school community and they respond well to the sensitive support they receive.
- 36 Pupils' personal development is good. All pupils demonstrate a willingness to take responsibility for routine tasks in the classroom and older pupils contribute to the daily routines of the school. They carry out duties such as setting up the hall for assembly, operating the projector and the sound system willingly and efficiently. The performances in school concerts, much enjoyed by parents builds pupils' confidence and improves their self-esteem. Older pupils respond well to planned opportunities for them to use their initiative by taking greater responsibility for organising their own learning and undertaking independent research projects. This aspect of pupils' development has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils make a worthwhile contribution to the life of the community by participating in a variety of activities in support of local and national charities, including a children's hospice and Oxfam. These enhance their personal development and foster their growing awareness of a wider world.
- 37 Parents agree that the values the school promotes have a positive effect on their children's behaviour and their attitudes to others in the community.

Attendance

- 38 Attendance is good and above the national average. The rates of authorised absence are below national averages, and those of unauthorised absence broadly in line. Most pupils arrive on time, registration is conducted efficiently and a prompt start is made to lessons. This helps to ensure that pupils derive the maximum benefit from their time in school. Registration is used well to teach the social skills of courtesy and appropriate response. However a small number of pupils regularly arrive late for school, causing disruption to the lesson for other pupils and reducing their own benefit from important lessons such as the literacy hour.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

- 39 Overall, the quality of teaching for children under five and for pupils in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is good. For children under five, it is very good in 18 per cent of lessons, good in 55 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is good in 62 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the others. At Key Stage 2, it is very good in 10 per cent of lessons, good in 40 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. Overall, teaching is very good in 9 per cent of lessons, good in 50 per cent and satisfactory in 41 per cent. The consistency in teaching across the school helps to sustain improvement in pupils' attainment. It also ensures that pupils make sound progress throughout the school, with examples of good progress in some lessons across the curriculum and consistent good progress of pupils with special educational needs. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen.
- 40 This represents an improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. The weaknesses in teaching identified in the report have all been addressed. This accounts for the rise in good teaching and the absence of unsatisfactory teaching observed during the inspection. The staff responded effectively to the issues of teaching quality raised. Led by the senior management team, they raised their own expectations of the pupils, improved planning by establishing clear learning goals and ensured the level of work was appropriate for pupils of all abilities, especially higher attaining pupils. The success of this response was seen in the very good and good lessons taught during the inspection.
- 41 For children under five, a key characteristic of the teaching is the good understanding the staff have of the children and of the appropriate curriculum for them. They place a strong emphasis on personal and social development and provide a warm and secure environment in which the children settle with confidence. They have a clear understanding of all areas of learning. They plan interesting activities and are skilful in managing a careful balance of adult-directed and child-centred tasks which help pupils in their attainment of the desirable learning outcomes. They successfully exploit practical situations to develop the children's understanding, encourage them to think about what they are doing and promote their steady progress.
- 42 At both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching of literacy and numeracy lessons is good. The teachers draw effectively on the national guidance and follow the suggested format for lessons to good effect. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' steady progress and their continued improvement in attainment. Opening class sessions are usually well prepared, the pace is brisk and teachers provide clear introductions to new work. The pace is maintained during group activities with appropriate work prepared for all pupils and directly related to the lesson focus. The end-of-lesson, plenary sessions consolidate and extend pupils' learning. The teachers effectively use the aims of the lesson to remind the pupils what they have covered, assess their learning and show how it can be used in other work.
- 43 Across the curriculum high quality teaching is characterised by activities which are modified to match the full range of pupils' ages and abilities. The teachers' aims for their lessons are clear, relevant and assessable. The teachers have a firm understanding of the subject and its teaching which is demonstrated through their effective use of well-chosen material to extend pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. The teachers' discussions with pupils are judged well to assess pupils' work and further their learning. Through well-organised sessions at the end of lessons the pupils' contributions are used effectively to consolidate and develop their learning and that of other pupils.
- 44 Less successful teaching is characterised by a lack of consistency in the identification and use of day-to-day assessment opportunities to note pupils' attainments and help track their progress. Lesson introductions are overlong and there is an imbalance between the teacher's contributions and those of the pupils and as a result the pace of lessons slows.

- 45 Throughout the school the quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good, with examples of very good teaching in English at Key Stage 2. In science, music and physical education it is sound. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is satisfactory in religious education and history. There was insufficient evidence to give an overall grading for the teaching of religious education and history at Key Stage 1 and information technology, art and design and technology at both key stages.
- 46 The teachers and support staff relate very well to the pupils and sustain very good relationships with them. The calm and sensitive manner through which the teachers manage their pupils helps each of them recognise how much they are valued. This is the significant contribution which instils confidence in pupils with learning needs, and helps pupils with challenging behaviour settle to their tasks and supports them at times of need. These are strengths of the teaching and enhance the quality of education for all the pupils. Classroom routines are well established and staff help pupils to develop a sense of responsibility by involving them in the collection and return of learning resources. All staff succeed in helping the younger pupils, those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language feel secure and this is reflected in the positive attitudes the pupils have to their work and the confidence with which they pursue set tasks.
- 47 The staff co-operate well and organise useful planning meetings as a result of which long-, medium- and short-term plans are in place. The staff make good use of their secure knowledge and understanding of the curriculum in this planning process. In physical education, music, art and information technology the short-term plans, which cover individual lessons, do not indicate how work will be matched to the full age and ability ranges of the pupils or how work will be assessed or recorded during the session. Although, during lessons, the teachers use their interactions with pupils satisfactorily to assess their learning in these subjects, the results of this assessment are not used consistently to inform planning and teaching. The good organisation and methods employed include the effective use of question and answer techniques to recap earlier work and build lively introductions to new activities.
- 48 The quality of teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. Pupils are well supported in their own classrooms. The teacher's thorough planning in co-operation with the class teachers and support staff makes a significant contribution to this good quality provision. As a result the pupils make steady progress as they move through the school. The teachers recognise the special contribution the parents of these children make to their learning and they welcome such parents into their classrooms to support them in their teaching.
- 49 The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. In consultation with the school's special educational needs co-ordinator the teachers write the individual programmes for the pupils in their class who have special educational needs and determine the appropriate strategies required to help them. The learning support assistants help in this process and as a result of this and good management by the teachers they are well briefed and fully integrated into the school's teaching programme. They regularly report to the teachers to inform them of the work of specific individuals or groups within the classes. As a result of this well-judged practice, pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported and make good progress towards their identified targets. They are helped in this by the teachers' explanations of their targets, keeping them informed of their progress and sharing with them the recording of their achievements. In this positive learning environment the teachers are effective in their integration of pupils from Green Hedges and in their joint planning with the pupils' support staff.

- 50 The school includes a statement on marking within its assessment policy. This offers staff a unified approach in responding to pupils' work. It is appropriate and identifies the value of giving pupils guidance on how they can improve their work, but this is not an established procedure within the school. Some good examples of such marking were seen, but it is not consistent within classes or across key stages. The emphasis is on monitoring work to ensure it has been completed and acknowledging this with a tick and, sometimes, an encouraging comment.
- 51 Although teachers set useful homework tasks in reading, spelling and number tables, and use homework imaginatively to promote independent learning by setting appropriate research projects there is much variation in practice across the school. Homework linked directly to lessons and recorded in a designated book has recently been introduced, but it is too soon to judge its effectiveness. Teachers encourage parents, especially those of younger pupils, to comment on reading homework through the provision of a home-school diary. This is a useful measure to involve parents in their children's learning, but its scope is limited with its restriction to reading.

The curriculum and assessment

Curriculum

- 52 The curriculum for children under five is appropriately planned to take account of all the areas of learning and there is planned progression into the early stages of the National Curriculum. There is a strong emphasis on the children's personal and social development and on improving their early literacy and numeracy skills so as to benefit achievement across the curriculum and equip them with a strong foundation for Key Stage 1. There is a good balance of adult-directed activities and activities chosen and planned by the children which helps foster independent learning. Children with special educational needs receive good support. Assessment is used effectively to plan future work, to target children and to promote their progress. The staff quickly identify children with special educational needs and those who are ready for more challenging work.
- 53 For all pupils between the ages of five and eleven, all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant, covers all aspects of pupils' development and reflects the school's aims. It provides a good framework for successful teaching and learning and pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- 54 Provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is good. A programme for sex education is included in science lessons and due attention is given to substance abuse. Provision for religious education is in accordance with the local authority's Agreed Syllabus.
- 55 The school places an appropriate emphasis on English, mathematics and science. The staff has worked hard to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and to follow the guidance detailed in the frameworks to establish progression in English and mathematics. These initiatives are having a positive impact on the quality of educational provision. Throughout the school, the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is strongly emphasised and sufficient time is allocated to improve pupils' performance in these key skills.
- 56 The organisation of the curriculum means that not all subjects are taught weekly; for example, the school alternates the teaching of history and geography each half-term to improve the opportunities for pupils to study the individual subjects in greater depth.
- 57 Most subjects are taught separately. Teachers are generally successful in identifying links between subjects and provide pupils with opportunities to apply their skills across the curriculum. Overall, there is a good balance between activities to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding and those which develop pupils' skills.

- 58 Curriculum planning has improved since the last inspection. The school has developed schemes of work for all subjects based on nationally recognised schemes such as those published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. These give guidance to teachers on what is to be taught to particular year groups and set expectations that are appropriate for the pupils. Teachers use these schemes as a framework for their half-termly plans so that they can build systematically upon knowledge, understanding and skills that pupils have already acquired.
- 59 The school provides well for pupils for whom English is an additional language. These pupils are appropriately assessed and effective support is arranged for them. As a result, they have access to the whole curriculum and are able to make a valuable contribution to the life of the school.
- 60 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school's aims and objectives for special needs are well known, supported by parents and set out in the school's policy statement. The school maintains an appropriate register of special educational needs, complies with the national code of practice and meets statutory obligations. The organisation of the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is well co-ordinated. The pupils are very well integrated within their classes and receive all their support there. They are only withdrawn for exceptional reasons such as special appointments with outside agencies; for example, with a physiotherapist. Detailed individual education plans, which describe the school's strategies for supporting pupils' progress towards clearly stated targets, are drawn up for all pupils requiring them, and appropriate targets are set. Reviews for pupils on the register of special educational needs are carried out by staff and the co-ordinator for special educational needs; parents are invited to attend these reviews. Statements of special educational need are reviewed annually by an appropriate multi-disciplinary team. Pupils are consulted at each review. This good provision, together with the co-operation and support of parents, has a positive impact on the pupils' good progress.
- 61 The aims of the school's equal opportunities policy are effectively implemented in all areas. Boys and girls are encouraged to take part in all activities.
- 62 Pupils benefit from the school's good provision for the arts. Its quality is enriched by theatre groups, poets and musicians who are invited to perform at the school. Participation in drama workshops enhance the older pupils understanding and enjoyment of Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. The pupils choose favourite poems to read on National Poetry day. Music clubs for pupils who want to play the recorder or sing in a choir have recently been re-introduced and there are opportunities for violin tuition from a peripatetic teacher. During the past year pupils have enjoyed visits to the pantomime, and the school organised a film week. Older pupils benefit from opportunities to 'live' for a day in the historical period they are studying, for example the 'Tudor day' at Kentwell. These experiences enhance pupils' social and cultural experiences. They are extended further by excursions to local sites of educational interest and residential visits, for example to Stibbington which provides rich opportunities for pupils to develop their environmental work.
- 63 The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities which are well supported by a quarter of pupils in Key Stage 2. In addition to netball, soccer, cricket and Kwik Kriket the pupils have opportunities to participate in locally organised, mixed, competitive sports. The school is part of a national sports scheme and receives specialist coaching from local rugby and tennis clubs. The opportunity for pupils to participate in these activities improves the quality of their education.

Assessment

- 64 The school has recently reviewed its procedures for assessment, recording and reporting. A comprehensive policy, which provides good guidance on the strategies and procedures to be adopted, is in place. In the nursery, assessment procedures are well established and thorough, and records are comprehensive. The staff know the children well and monitor their achievements carefully. The introduction of baseline assessment in the reception class is helping the school focus on the children's starting points against which progress can be monitored, and activities are planned to target children's specific learning needs.
- 65 The quality of teachers' assessments in English and mathematics is good. Learning objectives are identified in teachers' planning and assessments are used effectively to inform their planning for the next stage of learning. This practice is not yet secure in other subjects. For example, in science, there is no systematic procedure to assess and record pupils' acquisition of science skills.
- 66 In order to establish a shared view of standards, the teachers have compiled useful portfolios of work in English, mathematics and science to illustrate pupils' levels of attainment; these are carefully annotated. Each give examples of assessed work with levels of attainment according to National Curriculum criteria. Individual records of assessed work in English, mathematics, and science are kept for each pupil and these provide valuable evidence of progression across the school and inform the pupils' end-of-year assessments. The recording of high or underachievement in other subjects is in place but it is not yet an established practice across the school.
- 67 Statutory national tests are administered at end of both key stages. In addition, the school administers standardised tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of each year in Key Stage 2; the results of these tests are used to record pupils' attainment and track their progress, they form the basis for future school targets. The results are shared with pupils and parents. Annual reports to parents reflect strengths and weaknesses and targets are set for improvement. These provide a good basis for the involvement of parents and pupils in the monitoring of progress. Individual pupil portfolios in which pupils select their 'best' pieces of work provide valuable evidence of pupils' achievement.
- 68 Standardised reading and spelling tests are administered and the results of these tests are used to help in the identification of pupils with special educational needs. The information from these tests is used to monitor the progress of these pupils and to inform the setting of their individual targets.
- 69 Since the last inspection, the curricular shortcomings related to the development of schemes of work have been addressed. Increased emphasis has been placed on assessing pupils' levels of attainment in English and mathematics and this has contributed to higher standards in these subjects. Effective use is made of national tests and other standardised tests to identify areas of improvement.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

- 70 The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. It relates clearly to the school's aims to educate the whole child. It creates an environment which fosters good social attitudes and respect for moral values in which all pupils can contribute to the life of the community. There is a positive and calm working environment engendered by the staff's care and consideration for their pupils as well as by the clear values they promote.

- 71 The provision for spiritual development is good. There are opportunities for prayer and silent reflection in the daily act of corporate worship and pupils are encouraged to reflect on the messages conveyed. A memorial garden has been set aside to allow pupils and staff to have moments of solitude and stillness in a busy school day. Younger children enjoy watching sunflowers and vegetables grow and gain a sense of wonder in the natural world. Religious education makes an important contribution to spiritual development, it gives pupils opportunities to extend their understanding of other religions and to reflect on their own beliefs and those of others. The school is successful in encouraging pupils to reflect on the wonder of life through art, music and literature; for example, Year 3 pupils interpret their understanding of the creation by painting pictures. The school fosters an appreciation of poetry and literature, and the work of famous painters is well displayed around the school.
- 72 The school makes very good provision for the moral development of its pupils. The ethos of the school is firmly based on respect and care for others. It promotes honesty and fairness and the pupils develop a clear sense of right and wrong. The staff provide good role models and set clear expectations for behaviour. A discipline and behaviour policy is in place, and staff consistently apply the agreed awards and sanctions. They encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour by setting class rules; these demonstrate clearly the pupils' understanding of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, and are prominently displayed in each classroom. Staff help pupils to understand the importance of care and respect for other living creatures, for example, an opportunity to look closely at a canary in the nursery stimulated a sensitive discussion about the welfare of others. Teachers plan good opportunities to discuss a range of moral issues such as bullying, through the careful selection of poetry and stories, and 'circle time' provides further opportunities for pupils' concerns to be addressed in a secure atmosphere.
- 73 The provision for pupils' social development is very good. The nursery places a high priority on children's social development, it provides a secure environment and is particularly successful at helping children settle in to the routines of school life. Throughout the school, teachers provide good opportunities for the pupils to work together in small and large groups and encourage them to value and respect one another's contributions. These opportunities help to develop pupils' self-confidence and their respect for other viewpoints. Pupils from Green Hedges, and those for whom English is a second language are welcomed and successfully integrated into the school and enable all pupils to widen their experiences. Adults are polite and courteous and provide positive models on which pupils can base their relationships. Older pupils are expected to take responsibility for their own learning and are trusted to work in groups outside the classroom without close supervision and they respond well to the trust. The school fosters the development of responsibility for others. A 'Buddy' scheme links older pupils with younger ones and the oldest pupils are encouraged to look after the younger children at playtime and lunchtime. Team games, music groups, school productions and residential visits engender the idea of collective responsibility. Extra curricular competitive team sports are encouraged to develop an understanding of fair play and sportsmanship. A sense of citizenship and community responsibility is developed through pupils' contribution to charities and the opportunities to entertain senior citizens at Harvest and Christmas.

- 74 Provision for cultural development is good and is reflected in many areas of the curriculum. The school promotes pupils' appreciation of their own culture as well as the diversity and richness of others through literature, art and music, geography, history and religious education. For example, pupils study the beliefs, celebrations and festivals of their own and other cultures. Staff used the marriage of one of the teachers to simulate a wedding ceremony in which the whole school participated and pupils' performed in a Peace Concert at Easter. These opportunities serve to underline the importance of celebration in the Christian calendar. The significance of different celebrations and symbols to followers of other faiths is explored by inviting visitors into school to talk about their own beliefs and how it affects their daily lives. For example, a Muslim visitor talked about the daily life of a Muslim child, and pupils responded by contrasting it with their own lives. Islamic religious artefacts are displayed reverentially in one class and pupils respect their importance for Muslims. In art, pupils learn about the work and styles of western artists and in Years 4 and 5, they study Islamic art. In history, pupils learn about the development of our culture and their work has been enriched by visits to historical buildings and 'experiences' such as the Celtic village. Pupils listen to wide range of music and enjoy singing songs from other cultures. The school provides a good range of books which reflect pupils' own and other cultures and there are rich opportunities for pupils to meet authors and poets. A display of African landscape paintings, artefacts and books presents attractive images of the continent and develops pupils' appreciation of non-western art.
- 75 Since the previous inspection report the planned opportunities to develop personal responsibility and to widen pupils' understanding of other cultures have increased.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

- 76 The school's provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils is good and this makes a positive contribution to the quality of educational provision for all pupils. The school provides a welcoming and caring atmosphere in which pupils feel happy and secure. There are very good procedures to ensure that children entering the nursery have a smooth and comfortable transition from home to school. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate and effective support which is reviewed regularly, and there are good links with the support services. Teachers know their pupils well. They are caring, accessible and they respond quickly to their needs. This support and guidance makes an important contribution to pupils' progress. The evidence of the inspection supports the views of the substantial majority of parents who feel that the school is very approachable and that concerns are dealt with appropriately.
- 77 The school has good procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and personal development. Comprehensive records on pupils' attainments in English, mathematics and scientific knowledge and understanding are kept and these are used to identify areas of weakness, and inform future planning. These procedures are contributing effectively to the school's sustained improvement in the standards achieved by all pupils, especially higher attaining pupils. Those for other subjects have recently been put in place, but it is too early to judge their effectiveness. There are good procedures for identifying and monitoring the progress of pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are well supported in their classes. Pupils for whom English is an additional language, are also well supported in classes and they are withdrawn for weekly support from a specialist language support teacher. The success of the well-judged measures to enable the pupils from Green Hedges to join classroom activities when appropriate, as well as on whole school occasions such as assembly, are evident in the readiness with which these pupils embark upon these activities and the sensitivity with which the staff and pupils involve them.

- 78 The school's procedures for monitoring discipline and promoting good behaviour are very good. There is a good behaviour policy, which was introduced following consultation with parents. It provides an effective framework for encouraging positive attitudes, in a supportive and friendly atmosphere where mutual respect is fostered. Lunchtime supervisors work to the same rules as teachers and this helps to ensure that standards of behaviour remain high throughout the school day. There are agreed procedures for dealing with any incident of bullying that might arise and pupils are encouraged to report any such problems immediately to their class teacher. No incidents of bullying or harassment were seen or reported during the inspection. Effective child protection procedures are in place, these adhere to the guidelines provided by the local authority and staff understand their roles.
- 79 Procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' attendance are satisfactory. Attendance and punctuality are monitored by class teachers who inform the headteacher of any matters that need following up. Good standards of attendance and punctuality are expected and parents are made aware of the importance of punctuality in regular newsletters.
- 80 The school effectively promotes the safety and well being of all its pupils. It is a safe and caring place. There is a detailed health and safety policy, which is conscientiously adhered to by all members of staff; this is confirmed by the absence of any outstanding issues of concern at the time of the inspection. The site manager plays an important role and with the governors undertakes regular safety checks. The school has an adequate number of staff trained or experienced in carrying out first aid procedures.

Partnership with parents and the community

- 81 The school's links with parents and the community are good and enrich the educational process. Over fifty per cent of parents were of the view that they found it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with their children. The partnership between the school and the parents of children under five is very good. Parents praise highly the way their children are introduced to school. Nursery staff make home visits and form good relationships which are valued by parents. The children visit the nursery before they are admitted and there are meetings for parents. Parents report that they feel welcome in the classroom as they work alongside the children. These close links help to promote the children's progress. They are kept well informed of the activities planned for their children through regular oral and written communication. There is regular feedback to parents about their children's progress and about how they can support their learning at home. These good relationships have a beneficial effect upon the children's work.
- 82 Parents report that the school keeps them well informed about their children's progress and gives them a clear understanding of what is being taught. They receive regular newsletters which provide useful information about events in school and the work their children will be undertaking. Information about the curriculum is displayed for parents outside the classrooms. Parent consultations and open evenings provide appropriate opportunities for parents to discuss their children's attainment and progress, whilst curriculum evenings keep parents updated on recent developments, such as the implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies. Pupils' annual reports contain detailed information for parents on their children's attainment and progress and set specific targets for future improvement. Older pupils also have the opportunity to evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses, to reflect upon what they have achieved and to set their own goals for learning. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately involved in regular reviews and kept well informed of their children's progress.

- 83 Parental involvement in their children's learning is good. Parents contribute to the work of the school by their involvement in classrooms, with swimming, at after school clubs and on school visits. Parents bring a range of skills and experience which significantly enhance the quality of pupils' education. Parent helpers in the classroom are given guidance on the tasks that are expected of them, which increases the value and quality of this additional support. The staff are appreciative of the contributions of parents.
- 84 Parents play an important part in improving the quality of their children's education. Many listen to them read, help them learn spellings and tables and support their individual research. By making time to help their children at home, parents show the importance they place on their children's education and this improves the standards they achieve. Some parents voiced concerns about the inconsistencies in the quantity and regularity of homework between classes. Teachers are now providing homework tasks in accordance with the recently implemented home-school agreement, but it is too early to judge its effectiveness. Useful written guidance for parents about how they can help their children at home is also provided.
- 85 The school benefits from its involvement in the 'School Friends' programme under which volunteer staff from a large commercial organisation visit the school to assist children with their reading. In addition, the school is involved in a 'Family Literacy' scheme which has a beneficial effect on children's performance by raising the reading achievements of some parents.
- 86 An active "Friends of the Fawcett" association holds many social events which not only raise money for the school but also provide enjoyable entertainment for families and the local community.
- 87 The school has very good links with the local community, including the church. Its association with Green Hedges school underlines its commitment to such links and acknowledges the mutual benefits to be derived from them. The police and fire service visit to give talks to pupils and the school provides work experience opportunities for students undertaking courses related to working with young children. Regular community assemblies are held, to which parents and members of the local community are invited. The governors are looking at ways in which these links can be strengthened further. The school buildings are used on a regular basis by a number of local organisations and groups, and the school football pitches with their excellent changing facilities are hired by a local football team throughout the season. Members of the community are able to have free access to the internet by means of a computer situated in the school's entrance hall.
- 88 The school has established effective links with local secondary schools which include the exchange of information to ensure continuity, especially of specialist support for pupils with special educational needs.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

- 89 The school benefits from the effective leadership of the headteacher, the efficient management of the senior management team and the clear strategic role of the governors. They give positive direction and purpose to the school, which is founded upon a commitment to 'sustaining an inclusive community, valuing and developing every individual'. They are committed to the raising of standards and the effective monitoring of teaching and learning. The headteacher leads this initiative through his monitoring of the quality of teaching and pupils' work; it has contributed very effectively to the continued improvements in pupil attainment. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection and has contributed effectively to the school establishing itself as an improving school. With the informed guidance and support of the headteacher, the staff and governors develop effective teams through which the professional and statutory responsibilities of each are exercised. There are good levels of formal and informal consultation between the staff and governors, and all work to sustain the school's very good ethos.
- 90 The roles of the headteacher and the governing body in determining the strategic direction of the school's development are clearly understood and effectively carried out. The governors are conversant with the work of the school, and they are supported in this through the chair's weekly meetings with the headteacher. Their planned visits to the school and the reflective reports which follow are useful in informing their deliberations. The governors have active committees for personnel, local management, curriculum and premises to which appropriate responsibilities have been delegated and through which they monitor school development and engage with staff as critical friends. The governors have built a structured and systematic approach to their monitoring of standards by linking with curriculum co-ordinators, observing pupils' activities and analysing nationally organised and school-based test results. All statutory requirements are met, including the provision of daily acts of worship. The governors receive regular reports and professional advice from the headteacher which inform their decision making; they have every confidence in his day-to-day management of the school.
- 91 Teachers with responsibility as curriculum co-ordinators are provided with an appropriate job description which is approved by the governing body. They offer useful support and advice to colleagues and those with responsibility for English and mathematics play a significant part in the monitoring and evaluation of their subjects. Their work has already had a significant impact on the improvement in standards in these subjects. These responsibilities are being extended to other co-ordinators, but it is too soon to judge their effectiveness. The formalising of a monitoring role for co-ordinators marks a significant improvement since the last inspection when it was highlighted as a key issue. The teacher for English as an additional language manages her responsibilities well to secure the conscientious implementation of well-targeted support for individual pupils. The nursery teacher gives good guidance to the early years' staff. The unit is well managed and the teamwork between staff is very good. The children's progress is enhanced by the commitment of the staff and the very good links the school has with parents.
- 92 The special educational needs co-ordinator provides good leadership to secure the identification of pupils with special educational needs and to effectively supporting their learning. Her weekly management time is well used to assess pupils' progress, guide staff and liaise with outside agencies. This well-judged practice ensures that targets are precise, individual programmes updated and that pupils receive appropriate teaching. The co-ordinator is well supported by the nominated governor who visits the school each term to review practice and discuss proposed developments. The headteacher and staff successfully manage the inclusion of pupils from the Green Hedges school. They work effectively with its staff to secure the pupils' social integration and to develop additional opportunities for them to learn within the school's established classes and in recreational periods, such as playtimes.

- 93 The school's clearly expressed aims and values are agreed, understood and regularly reviewed by all staff and governors, and are supported by parents; they fully inform the work of the school. All staff and governors are involved in compiling the school development plan which ensures they each have a clear view of the school's priorities. It offers detailed guidance for the year ahead with priorities for the next two years briefly outlined as governors' objectives. The implementation of the plan is monitored effectively by the staff and the governors' committees. A comprehensive review of the previous year's planning by the headteacher is part of this monitoring process.
- 94 This structured approach to planning has aided the school's commitment to improvement and effectively informed its implementation of both the national literacy and numeracy strategies. The success of the literacy implementation is evident in the improved standards in English, especially for higher attaining pupils; it is too soon to judge that of numeracy. To secure improvement the senior management team and governors closely monitored the implementation of the school's inspection action plan; this has resulted in all key issues being successfully addressed. In addition the school has agreed targets with the local authority. The headteacher has introduced annual standardised testing and undertaken a structured approach to the analysis of their outcomes and those of the annual national tests. This approach assists the school in tracking pupil progress and planning effective strategies to support learning. This analysis has enabled the school to monitor its targets effectively over the year and confirm they are realistic. The headteacher's most recent analysis indicates that the school is likely to reach its agreed targets by the specified time, signifying the improvement the school is making. It highlights also the school's commitment to further development and continued improvement in standards.
- 95 The leadership and management of the headteacher, staff and governors contribute effectively to the good attitudes, behaviour and very good relationships within the school. These aspects, together with the good management of equal opportunities and the successful raising of standards make a significant contribution to the school's very good ethos which guides and nurtures each of its pupils.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

- 96 The school has an adequate number of teachers who are suitably qualified and experienced, and appropriately deployed to teach the National Curriculum. There is a specially qualified senior member of staff appointed to co-ordinate the provision for pupils with special educational needs and the nursery teacher is appropriately qualified to teach young children. The staff form a well-integrated team which is committed to the school's aim of raising standards.
- 97 Pending the outcome of the national review for teacher appraisal, the headteacher has established an effective programme of professional interviews for all staff which include classroom observations and are appropriately linked to the priorities identified in the school development plan. Staff development also benefits from the planned programme of in-house training which has focused appropriately on the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies. The school follows the local authority's induction programme for newly qualified teachers and the nursery teacher is appointed as mentor to her early years colleague.
- 98 Learning support assistants are effectively deployed and they make a valuable contribution to the quality of educational provision. They are well qualified and many have attended additional training to improve their qualifications. They work closely with class teachers to ensure a consistent approach in their teaching; this has a beneficial effect on the pupils' good progress. The nursery nurse is appropriately trained and makes a significant contribution to the work of the nursery. The work of staff with responsibility for administration, premises, cleaning and lunchtime supervision is effective; they are well informed about procedures and their work contributes to the efficient running of the school.

- 99 The school site is extensive. The accommodation is of a high standard; classrooms are large and attractive and provide a very good learning environment for the teaching of the National Curriculum. There is an attractive library and an information/design and technology base which are sufficiently large to accommodate whole classes. The many, colourful and interesting displays enhance the school's environment as well as celebrating the pupils' attainments. The spacious and well-laid-out grounds provide ample outdoor space for recreation and education. The innovative wild-life garden, a pond, designated areas for sedentary activities and zoned play areas make a significant contribution to the quality of education. Good use is made of the school grounds to support environmental education and to influence pupils' attitudes to conservation. Both indoor and outdoor facilities are well used to support artistic and sporting attainment.
- 100 The accommodation for children under five in the nursery and the reception class is very good. It provides an attractive and stimulating setting for learning which is enhanced with carefully labelled displays that often include children's work. Children have direct access to an enclosed outdoor area with a hard surface, a grassed area, and a garden for planting and growing seeds and plants. The children make good use of the facilities in their outdoor play and this promotes their knowledge and understanding of the world and their personal, social and physical development.
- 101 Resources for children under five are generally good. They are well organised and attractively stored to allow the children to select their own items which helps develop their skills of independence. Resources for learning at both key stages are satisfactory but some of the musical instruments need repair. Resources are accessible to staff and pupils; and sufficient to meet the demands of all areas of the curriculum. The school has invested heavily in the purchase of large texts and sets of books to support the teaching of literacy. These attractive books have a significant impact on pupils' attitudes to reading and this makes a positive contribution to the raising of standards.
- 102 There are insufficient challenging fiction and non-fiction books in the library to make a significant contribution to the pupils' literary development and to play a central part in supporting pupils' independent learning. Staff and parents are aware of this deficiency. It was raised at the pre-inspection meeting with parents and they have already raised funds to increase the book stock.

The efficiency of the school

- 103 Resources are managed effectively throughout the school. A significant impact on the raising of standards, especially for higher attaining pupils, in English, mathematics and science since the last inspection has been made by the effective deployment of teaching and support staff, and the efficient use of the accommodation and learning resources. Funding for professional development is appropriately linked to school priorities and staff use their training well to develop their practice in line with stated school policies. This is particularly evident in the quality of the education support staff and the assistance they give to pupils with special educational needs. Effective use is made of educational visits, loans and general resources to support pupils' learning.
- 104 Financial and administrative routines are good, and the school runs smoothly. The routines are reviewed periodically and the most recent has resulted in an improved system for the administration of dinner monies. This has relieved the school secretary and the teachers of some routine administration. The efficient day-to-day organisation and administrative procedures, including school finance matters, make a positive contribution to the school's very good ethos.

- 105 The school's financial planning is good. The headteacher and governors are aware of the value in predicting likely school income over the next few years. They monitor projected pupil rolls and take an enterprising approach to their promotion of the hiring of school premises by outside groups. The staff undertake regular, internal, management and curricular audits to help determine the school's priorities. The school development plan directly informs the setting of the budget. This provides the school with a good basis for short-term development, but it is not set within the context of long-term financial planning. The governing body monitors financial trends and spending patterns effectively through its systematic oversight of budget reports. The governing body sets appropriate spending limits for individuals, and reviews cost-effectiveness measures regularly to ensure full use of available resources and the planned replacement of the more expensive items. All the recommendations of the recent auditor's report have been implemented.
- 106 Local authority and additional school funding for pupils with special educational needs, and for pupils for whom English is an additional language is well managed to provide educational support staff and specialist resources. Funds for the Family Literacy Project have been used appropriately to promote family and pupil learning. This is already having a positive effect on pupils' interests and progress. The auditor's report confirms that all special grants have been spent wholly and exclusively for eligible purposes.
- 107 The school provides good value for money. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved significantly in recent years and are continuing to improve, especially those of higher attaining pupils. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress as they move through the school, while those with special educational needs make consistently good progress. Pupils have good attitudes to learning, behave well and sustain excellent relations with each other and the adults who work with them. The quality of education is good with strengths in teaching, including the skilled and sensitive management of the pupils. The ethos is very good and parents value what the school is doing. This is balanced against a unit cost which is relatively high because of the high individual costs of the school's above average numbers of pupils with special educational needs.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

108 Children enter the nursery with a very wide range of experiences and skills. The provision for all areas of learning is good and the children make good progress, especially those entering the nursery with low levels of attainment. Almost all the children are on course to achieve the nationally agreed desirable outcomes for children's learning² by the time they are five. A significant minority have already achieved these targets and are working in the early stages of the National Curriculum. Children are helped to reach this standard by the good quality of teaching and the adult support they receive. The staff form a very good team and there is an appropriate balance of both adult-directed and child-selected activity.

Personal and social development

109 The provision for children's personal and social development is a strength of the school. Throughout the nursery and reception class, the children make good progress in their personal and social development. The staff place a high priority on helping the children settle to the routines of the nursery, developing positive attitudes to work and good behaviour. The children gain confidence through a wide variety of well-planned activities which they are eager to explore. By the age of five, most children work and play together showing care, consideration and respect for one another and the staff. They develop increasing levels of concentration and respond enthusiastically to the wide range of experiences provided. They learn to take turns and to understand the difference between right and wrong. They are courteous and well behaved. The children are learning to take initiative and to be independent. They select resources and materials, handle them with care and return them after use.

110 The staff provide a secure environment and sustain very good relationships with the children. They encourage children's independence and their ability to co-operate. They value their work and the contributions they make. This is evident in the care they give to displaying their work and the enthusiasm with which they share significant daily achievements with parents. As a result, the children are happy at school and grow in confidence.

Language and literacy

111 The development of children's language and literacy skills is given a high priority in both the nursery and the reception class, and as a result, the children make good progress. The staff plan a good range of activities to improve the children's speaking and listening skills and involve them in purposeful talk. They read aloud to the children and provide valuable opportunities for them to join in with rhymes, songs and poetry. Children develop a good understanding of books and join in enthusiastically with their favourite books, such as 'Handa's Surprise'. They sequence stories, such as 'The Hungry Caterpillar' correctly. They handle books with care and are keen to talk about the stories. Higher attaining children recognise words and letters and identify the title and author. These children work towards the early stages of the National Curriculum. The foundation established by the nursery is effectively built upon within the reception class. The children in this class demonstrate an increasing range of vocabulary, they recognise more words by sight and a few read simple books.

²Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. SCAA, 1996

The Desirable Outcomes are goals for learning for the time they enter compulsory education, which begins the term after the child's fifth birthday. The desirable outcomes cover the children's development in six areas of learning; personal and social development; language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development.

- 112 The quality of teaching is good. The development of speaking and listening skills is a priority and children are helped to improve these skills, by good teaching and sensitive interventions by staff. The staff talk with children as they work and promote the use of correct vocabulary. They are good at using opportunities to develop the children's reading and writing skills in day-to-day activities. The children are encouraged to read with their parents. They take home library books which are changed weekly and this helps foster the partnership between home and school.

Mathematics

- 113 The provision for mathematics is good. The children experience a wide range of activities to develop their mathematical awareness and their progress is good. They enjoy singing counting songs and reciting number rhymes. They practise their number skills as they count the fruit in 'Handa's Surprise'. They recite from one to seven and count and recognise numbers to four. They use a number line and a few children recognise and use numbers beyond ten. They sort, match and order objects according to size, and compare the shapes and sizes of fruit at snack time. They explore the concept of capacity as they play in the sand and water and they know 'full' and 'empty'. While playing outdoors they gain an understanding of position and use terms like 'in front of', and 'behind'. In the reception class, the children consolidate their counting skills and by the time they are five most children recognise, write, add and subtract numbers to ten. They select and name some two-dimensional shapes correctly; for example, triangle, circle and square and describe their properties.
- 114 The teaching of mathematics is good. Staff use story books effectively to develop children's awareness of mathematics and exploit opportunities to investigate mathematics in other activities, for example the development of distances, far away, near, close and in the distance.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 115 The provision for children's knowledge and understanding of the world is effectively developed through a variety of experiences, which encourage children to talk about their homes and their families. The children have good opportunities to develop their observation skills as they study snails, and look at frogspawn and tadpoles in the school pond. They breed butterflies and grow vegetables in the nursery garden. They know that living things need food and water to help them grow and that plants stop growing in winter. Their early scientific skills are effectively developed as they move into the reception class and they predict the taste of drinks and record their findings. Through listening to stories, poems and music from other cultures they develop a broader awareness of the world in which they live. They develop their skills in construction work. Several acquire simple information technology skills.
- 116 The quality of teaching is good. The staff provide good opportunities for children to look after living creatures, to explore the attractive environment surrounding the school and the local area. These experiences are linked successfully to children's classroom activities. All the staff are very effective in using questions to consolidate and build upon children's knowledge.

Physical development

- 117 The provision for physical development is good. The development of the children's physical skills is clearly demonstrated through the increasing control with which they move, use space and manoeuvre wheeled toys. The children run, skip, hop and move confidently. They develop these skills well in the reception class where they take turns to climb, jump and balance on the climbing frame. The children have access to an attractive enclosed outdoor space and a good range of outdoor apparatus to improve their physical skills and they are used imaginatively to encourage children to improve their mobility and manipulative skills. They use the school swimming pool and enjoy a 'Sporty Fun' morning in summer. They acquire a good range of co-ordination skills through using tools for woodwork and a range of materials requiring increasingly complicated manipulative skills. The children weave, sew and make models. As they move into the reception class the children grow more confident in their use of tools and equipment. The quality of teaching is good, particularly when teachers give appropriate feedback to the children to help them improve their performance and be more inventive. The staff pay appropriate attention to health and safety.

Creative development

- 118 The provision for creative development is good. Children explore sound, colour, texture, form and space through a variety of activities. They draw, paint and colour with a variety of media from direct observation and imagination. They make attractive collage pictures using shades of green. They develop basic skills in colour mixing which they use competently as they draw and paint shape paintings in the style of Kandinski. Nursery children sing songs from memory and perform suitable actions at appropriate times. Older children clap and tap rhythmically as they sing a growing repertoire of songs, recalling the words accurately and singing tunefully for their age.
- 119 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers link creative activities effectively to other areas of the curriculum. Displays of paintings of poppies by Monet and sunflowers by Van Gogh provide a good focus for colour themes and children's work is attractively displayed alongside that of these artists. Staff support the children well and good quality interaction with the children consolidates and extends their learning experiences and encourages them to improve the quality of their response. The use of music and song makes a good contribution to their language skills.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

- 120 By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language attain the national standard (level 2), with a significant minority attaining at the higher level, level 3. This reflects the standards attained by the school's seven-year-olds in the 1999 national tests. It is an improvement on the results of the 1998 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1. Although standards of attainment in reading, as reflected in the school's average test levels, were broadly in line with the national average, in writing, results were well below the national average. When compared to similar schools pupils' attainment in reading was above average but well below average in writing. This is at odds with the individual results for reading, where a significant number of pupils achieved below the national standard and one third of pupils attained the higher level which was well above the national average. Pupils' attainment in writing was well below the national average at both the expected and higher level.
- 121 By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils attain the national standard for their age, level 4, with a minority achieving at the higher level, level 5. Although in comparison with all schools this reflects the results for pupils attaining the expected level in 1998, it suggests an improvement for pupils attaining the higher level. The effective teaching of English together with the school's implementation of the literacy strategy has contributed to the raising of standards.

- 122 Standards dipped in reading and writing at Key Stage 1 in the years following the last inspection. They improved in 1998, although they were still below the national average. Improvement has continued in 1999 although comparisons are not yet available.
- 123 Over the past three years, from 1996 to 1998, standards of attainment at Key Stage 2 have improved significantly. This is reflected in the year-on-year improvement in the results of the National Curriculum tests. The percentage of pupils who attain the national standard, level 4 has risen steadily. The latest results show that this improvement has been sustained with a greater proportion reaching the higher level; about one in three pupils achieving level 5.
- 124 The gap between the achievement of girls and boys at Key Stage 1 particularly in writing has narrowed. Although the differential achievement in the performance of boys and girls at Level 4 has reduced, more girls than boys exceed the expected standard at Key Stage 2. The school has worked hard to raise the achievement of boys. The clear structure of the literacy hour and the increased focus on non-fiction texts has begun to make a positive contribution to boys' attitudes and attainment. Inspection findings indicate that pupils of average and above average ability at both key stages are making satisfactory progress overall. Progress in writing has improved at both key stages. Progress improves rapidly towards the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 6 it is good in almost all aspects of English. There is high quality support from learning support assistants for pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language. This enables these pupils to make good progress and to raise the standards they achieve.
- 125 Standards of attainment in speaking and listening are sound by the end of Key Stage 1 and good by the end of Key Stage 2. Younger pupils listen attentively to their teachers reading stories and poems and many re-create these stories during their imaginative play. As they move through Key Stage 1, pupils listen with growing attention and concentration. During the literacy hour, pupils listen carefully during shared reading. They are quick to recognise rhyming words in poetry and present their work confidently at the end of the lesson. They sustain more prolonged conversations with teachers and peers and learn how to adapt their speech for different purposes. School and class performances and assemblies provide rich opportunities for pupils to gain confidence in speaking to a wider audience. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils speak fluently and express their ideas coherently. The teachers encourage pupils to use appropriate, specialist vocabulary and this has a positive effect on pupils' ability to express themselves accurately. Higher attaining pupils convey their ideas and opinions articulately in discussions and justify their views confidently. During their study of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', older pupils understand how words are chosen for impact and effect. Pupils in Year 6 enjoy drama and their participation in plays and poetry performances strengthens their speaking and listening skills.
- 126 Standards of attainment in reading are in line with the national expectation at both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils read fluently, accurately and with good understanding. They enjoy looking for rhyming words and identifying alliterative phrases. Higher attaining pupils talk enthusiastically about books they read, recalling the storyline well and explaining what they like or dislike about them. They understand the way non-fiction books are organised and identify the contents page and index
- 127 By the end of Key Stage 2 the standards attained by a significant minority of higher attaining pupils in reading are good. Most pupils read with fluency, accuracy and understanding. Higher attaining pupils use good phrasing when reading aloud, and deduce information and ideas from the text.

- 128 A significant minority of pupils enter school with low levels of language and literacy but most pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language make sound progress in reading and develop a range of strategies to help them to read unfamiliar words. They develop skills in using the context and illustrations. They apply their phonic skills and reread and read on to check the meaning. Higher attaining pupils pay attention to the punctuation and read with greater expression. Most children use their knowledge of the alphabet to locate information in dictionaries. Many parents give valuable support by reading with pupils in school and most pupils read regularly to their parents. This has a positive impact upon standards.
- 129 Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils make sound progress in reading. They continue to build upon their reading skills and most pupils use an appropriate range of strategies to identify unknown words. Pupils with special educational needs read from a structured reading scheme. They read more frequently to adults and are helped to develop their phonic skills and to increase the number of words they read by sight; these procedures have a positive effect on their progress.
- 130 The pupils' appreciation and understanding of literature and poetry is enhanced in whole class and group reading sessions. By the end of Key Stage 2, they have studied a good range of challenging texts including 'The Ancient Mariner' by Coleridge, Mary Shelley's 'Frankenstein' and 'The Tiger' and 'The Chimney Sweep' by William Blake. Higher attaining pupils are familiar with a number of significant contemporary and well established authors, but they lack guidance in choosing challenging books for personal reading that consolidate the skills developed in class sessions and develop their personal awareness and critical taste. The inspection team supports the concerns of parents about the lack of support for pupils in selecting books.
- 131 Standards in writing are satisfactory at both key stages. There are some good examples of writing in Year 6. Pupils are given a sound start in the development of independent writing skills and they make satisfactory progress as they move through Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils write well about their personal experiences and use characters and incidents from the stories they have read as starting points for their own writing. They sequence events clearly, write accurate short sentences, and simple words are spelt correctly. In Year 1, the pupils respond to 'We're all going on a Bear Hunt' by Michael Rosen. They draw maps of the story and label the settings accurately with appropriate adjectives. They write attractive little books based on their work in other subjects. For example, when they study mini-beasts they write and illustrate books about spiders, caterpillars and bees. In Year 2, pupils improve their stories by developing events and characters. They extend their range of writing, write book reviews and develop their interest in authors. Higher attaining pupils write lively stories with increasing attention to detail with correctly spelt common words. Their work is generally neat with letters printed and correctly formed but they do not join their writing.

- 132 At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to build upon their early writing skills and make satisfactory progress. Progress improves as pupils move through the key stage and during Year 6, it is good. Pupils write for a range of purposes including letters, stories, reports, biographies, instructions, and poetry and for a range of audiences. They recognise the main features of fiction and non-fiction texts and use them in their own writing. In Year 4, pupils write detailed descriptions of the settings of their favourite books, such as 'Harry Potter' by J K Rowling and 'Mathilda' by Roald Dahl. They use their literacy skills in history to write obituaries, menus and lifelines. There are very good examples of pupils' writing vivid diaries of the Spanish Armada and realistic and entertaining descriptions of punting and skiing in 'a learning experience'. In Year 6, pupils explore the spellings, meanings and derivations of words through their study of texts. Amused by the oxymorons in Bottom's letter, they create their own and compose humorous verses. They understand the difference between spoken and written language. They produce writing that is appropriately organised, and edit it to improve quality and accuracy. There are good examples of pupils collaborating to write scripts for plays based on an air raid. In Year 6, higher attaining pupils develop their ideas imaginatively, use a more interesting vocabulary and there are some good examples of the effective use of figurative language in their work. They write in complex and extended sentences. There are good examples of sustained writing.
- 133 Pupils have good knowledge of punctuation but they do not always apply it accurately. The standard of presentation in books is variable but there are many good examples of well-presented work displayed around the school. Pupils do not begin a cursive style of handwriting until Year 3, and many are finding it hard to adopt. Standards in spelling are broadly in line with expectation.
- 134 Pupils generally make good use of their literacy skills in other subjects. This is evident in the quality of their discussions. They use their skills in reading to research aspects of history and in writing to explain their mathematical investigations. They devise clear instructions and rules for games in physical education.
- 135 Pupils enjoy English and their attitudes to work are good. They are enthusiastic about all aspects of the subject. They enjoy speaking in discussions and plays. They listen attentively to their teachers and classmates in discussions, respecting one another's viewpoints. They show a keen interest in literature. Many talked enthusiastically about their visit to a local bookshop to mount a display and to meet the author of the Harry Potter books and are eagerly anticipating Harry's next adventure. In the literacy hour, they settle quickly to their tasks and concentrate on their work. They are clear about the class routines, for example, they do not disturb the teacher during guided reading because they have a clear understanding about what they should do if they complete their work or encounter difficulties. They work independently when required and co-operate and share ideas well when working in groups on such activities as writing poems and playscripts. They behave well in class and this helps to create a good environment for learning.

- 136 Overall the quality of teaching at both key stages is good and there are very good examples in Year 6. Teachers take due account of the National Literacy Framework in their planning and apply the principles well. Learning is enhanced by the teachers consistently directing the pupils to the learning objectives of each lesson. Whole class teaching is used to introduce the lesson, group work is carefully matched to differing levels of ability and review time at the end of the lesson is used effectively to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. These good features enable the pupils to sustain steady progress. Lessons have a sound structure, pupils are well managed and resources are well prepared. Big books and enlarged texts are used appropriately. Where teaching is very good, the teacher has a good command of English and a contagious enthusiasm for the subject. High expectations and the use of skilled questioning to assess pupils' knowledge, to confirm their understanding and to exploit the literary possibilities of the text are consistent features of these lessons and were a significant factor in contributing to pupils' good progress. There are too few opportunities for pupils to use and develop their information technology skills in English. The school has a marking policy but it is not consistently implemented across the school. There are a few good examples of teachers' marking giving written feedback to the pupils on what they have achieved, and what they need to do to improve or to set targets for future learning but all teachers do not systematically apply this practice.
- 137 Most pupils take reading books home and many teachers ask their pupils to learn and practise spellings and this has a positive impact on raising standards in reading and spelling. The inconsistency and irregularity of homework was raised as a concern both in the response to inspection questionnaires and at the parents' meeting. The school has responded to this issue through the newly-written home-school agreement but it is too early to judge its effectiveness.

Mathematics

- 138 By the end of Key Stage 1, most of the pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, attain the national standard for their age, level 2, with a large minority attaining at the next higher level, level 3. This reflects the standards attained by the school's seven-year-olds in the 1998 national tests in comparison with all schools. In comparison with similar schools their results were well above average, especially for higher attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs attain standards consistent with their previous attainment. The school's most recent national test results suggest that standards have continued to improve, especially for higher attaining pupils, but national comparisons are not yet available. Inspection evidence and national test results indicate that the national standard has been attained consistently and that the standards achieved by higher attaining pupils have improved steadily since the last inspection.
- 139 By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, attain the national standard for their age, level 4, with a significant minority attaining at the next higher level, level 5. Although, in comparison with all schools, this reflects the school's results for pupils attaining average results in the 1998 national tests for 11-year-olds, it suggests an improvement for pupils attaining at higher levels. This raising of standards for higher attaining pupils follows from the school's effective adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy and the provision of work suited to the pupils' full range of abilities. In comparison with similar schools their 1998 results were above average, with level 4 results well above the national average and results at level 5 well below. Pupils with special educational needs attain standards consistent with their previous attainment. The school's most recent national test results suggest that standards have improved, especially for higher attaining pupils, but national comparisons are not yet available. Inspection evidence and national test results demonstrate that the school has made significant improvements in raising standards at Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls or pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.

- 140 Pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, make steady progress as they move through both key stages in their acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding in numeracy, including mental methods, shape, space and measurement, solving problems, and data handling at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the appropriate targets set for them. They are very well supported and encouraged to share responsibility for their own learning. At both key stages, these pupils have many opportunities to identify and collect their own resources. The adults they work with sensitively encourage them to talk about what they are doing and explain their findings.
- 141 At Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress in all aspects of mathematics. They recall basic number facts and use simple mental methods correctly to improve their numeracy skills. They develop an understanding of large numbers and undertake successfully a range of calculations including doubling and halving numbers. They identify odd and even numbers correctly and approximate by rounding numbers up or down. Pupils make sound progress in their understanding of shape, space and measurements. They increase their knowledge of two- and three-dimensional shapes and describe their properties correctly. They improve the accuracy of their measurements by carefully checking their work. They use their knowledge of number and money appropriately in simple shopping activities.
- 142 At Key Stage 2, pupils build effectively upon this work and continue to make satisfactory progress in all aspects of mathematics. They improve their skills in mental methods and explain with increasing precision how they have arrived at their answers. One pupil explained how the relationship between two adjacent digits in a number enabled him to predict that hundredths and thousandths followed tenths in decimal notation. They develop their understanding of written calculations: they successfully add and subtract large numbers and decimals to two places, multiply and divide two-digit numbers and solve simple equations. They increase their understanding of different types of triangle and describe precisely their similarities and differences. They improve their use of mathematical instruments to draw shapes to a given size. Pupils develop their ability to compile bar charts and pie charts, and draw line graphs accurately to record the results of their investigations.
- 143 Throughout the school, there are examples of pupils' mathematical knowledge contributing effectively to their work in other subjects and consolidating their mathematical understanding. Pupils use their knowledge of the properties of shapes to describe and form symmetrical and asymmetrical shapes in gymnastics. They recognise that by standing at the corners of a square they are equidistant from their immediate partners when practising throwing skills in games. To support their study of the weather they use pie charts sectioned into eighths to note cloud cover, block graphs to record rainfall and line graphs to track temperature changes. They use co-ordinates to locate buildings on plans and scales to calculate distances. Pupils' opportunities to record their investigations and set out their own explanations make a positive contribution to the consolidation of their literacy skills.
- 144 At both key stages, pupils are enthusiastic in their response to this subject. They listen attentively and contribute thoughtfully, especially during mental mathematics. They are eager to answer questions and meet the challenges presented to them when using unmarked number lines. One pupil remarked, 'Gosh, that was hard, but I did it.' The behaviour of most of the children is good and they are not affected by those whose conduct is challenging. They are patient taking turns and share resources without fuss. They work effectively on their own, in pairs and in groups when carrying out simple investigations or comparing measurements.

- 145 The quality of teaching at both key stages is good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, especially at Key Stage 2. Good teaching is characterised by the very good relationships between the pupils and the adults who work with them. This helps all pupils feel secure and confident in their learning. Teachers make sound use of their secure subject knowledge to develop pupils' mental mathematics and emphasise the pupils' recognition of patterns and relationships. The teachers' planning is good and is based effectively on the numeracy strategy. Teachers' have raised their expectations since the last inspection and this is demonstrated through their challenging questions which require pupils to respond in precise terms, and use appropriate mathematical vocabulary. There is an appropriate balance between direct teaching and the pupils' contributions, and time is used satisfactorily. During lessons, teachers make sound interventions to support their pupils' learning and they record useful assessments to inform their future planning. These qualities in the teaching are making a positive contribution to pupils' attainment and progress. Where regular homework is established pupils are helped to consolidate their learning, especially in numeracy, and develop independence. Although teachers mark their pupils' work regularly and include encouraging comments, across the school there is inconsistency in the use of written feedback to pupils to help them recognise what they should do to improve their work.

Science

- 146 By the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998, on the basis of teacher assessment, the majority of pupils achieved levels of attainment (level 2) which were in line with national averages, with over a third of pupils achieving at the next higher level, level 3. The school performed well above the national average in comparison with all schools and similar schools. This year the results are similar but national comparisons are not yet available. By the end of Key Stage 2 in the 1998 national tests, a large majority of pupils reached the national average, level 4, with nearly a fifth attaining the next higher level, level 5. These results were above average in comparison with all schools and well above average in comparison with similar schools. Results for those achieving the higher level were close to the national average. Results for this year are similar but national comparisons are not yet available. Over the past four years results show a trend upwards, particularly for higher attaining pupils. There are no significant differences in attainment between pupils of different gender or ethnic background.
- 147 At Key Stage 1, pupils in Year 2 know that warmth melts ice and most make sensible predictions to increase the rate at which it melts. Most carry out a simple test by following instructions. Pupils record their results appropriately in writing or pictorially. Year 1 pupils know the names of several building materials and use words such as hard or strong to describe their properties precisely. Their recorded work shows that much of the knowledge and understanding has been gained by investigation. Most pupils have a simple understanding of a fair test.
- 148 At Key Stage 2, most Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of their recent study of micro-organisms. They relate it to using yeast when making bread in technology. Discussions with these pupils shows that, for many, their knowledge and understanding of most aspects of the physical and biological sciences is higher than expected for pupils at this stage. However, their investigative skills are not as well developed. Pupils have some knowledge of setting up a fair test and have ideas about how to control variables although they do not understand the term. Recording of investigations is not sufficiently precise and there is little evidence of the use of line graphs to record data. Higher attainers are not always given the opportunity during investigations to achieve the higher levels of which they are capable. Many pupils in Year 4 cannot read a thermometer accurately. They record their investigations in varying amounts of detail. Although the results of measuring temperature are recorded in a simple chart, some pupils record insufficient information to reach valid conclusions.

- 149 The majority of pupils, at both key stages, including those for whom English is an additional language at both key stages make sound progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by learning support assistants and tasks are modified to match their needs; consequently, their progress is good. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils make steady progress in the development of science skills. They make good progress in knowledge and understanding as topics and concepts are revisited at greater depth. Pupils make predictions about what might happen before they begin their investigations. They recognise the similarities and differences between living things. During investigations they record their measurements accurately in tables and charts.
- 150 At Key Stage 2, pupils make steady progress as they build on their knowledge and understanding of living things. Progress is variable across the physical sciences. The pupils make good progress in their studies of solids, liquids and gases and in their understanding of evaporation and condensation. They make satisfactory progress in their increasing knowledge of forces, light, sound and the properties of materials; for example, when testing materials for their thermal insulation properties. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their acquisition of investigative skills. However, data is recorded simply and there is no evidence that tests are repeated to increase accuracy.
- 151 Pupils' attitudes to their work are generally good. Year 2 pupils show enthusiasm and are keen to find out whose ice cube would melt first. Pupils respond well to questioning and are willing to share their ideas. Groups without close adult supervision carry out tests sensibly and safely and co-operate well in sharing tasks. They clear away appropriately without direction.
- 152 Teaching is sound at both key stages. Very good relationships are maintained with pupils and class management is always good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of their pupils. Skilful questioning reinforces and develops earlier learning. Teachers' planning is satisfactory; it is particularly effective when investigations are developed from pupils' own suggestions. The teachers' clear explanations and instructions enable pupils to carry out tests successfully and to reach sensible conclusions. Differentiated work sheets allow all pupils to record their findings appropriately. At Key Stage 2, the teachers do not have a systematic and structured approach to the teaching of investigative skills, consequently, pupils' progress is variable across the key stage in this aspect of science.
- 153 Science teaching contributes effectively to the development of English. At both key stages pupils are encouraged to talk about what they see and do, and about their ideas. In Key Stage 2 they write their own reports. Pupils are developing an appropriate scientific vocabulary.
- 154 The co-ordinator's thorough audit of the subject demonstrates that for continued improvement to be sustained a more structured approach to the teaching of investigative skills needs to be implemented, particularly at Key Stage 2.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Information technology

- 155 The school was unable to produce sufficient evidence at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 on which to base judgements. This was one subject for which a portfolio of work had not been produced. During the inspection only a few examples of the use of information technology were observed. Consequently, it is not possible to report on the standards of attainment, progress or teaching at either of the key stages.
- 156 A useful review of some aspects of information technology has taken place since the last inspection. An appropriate scheme of work based on a national model is in place. Each classroom has a handbook to assist staff in their use of equipment and a satisfactory range of computer programs is accessible to all classes.
- 157 At both key stages pupils use appropriately a range of information technology including video tapes, audio tapes and a digital camera. They use CD-ROMs to support their studies in literacy, geography and history; Year 6 pupils extend their literacy skills by writing critical reviews of these resources.
- 158 At Key Stage 1, individual pupils create pictures by selecting colours and shapes and demonstrating established keyboard skills and mouse control. They link their work with a word processing package and design and make a simple title page. They control satisfactorily the movements of a programmable robot by keying in appropriate instructions.
- 159 At Key Stage 2, individual pupils send and receive e-mails and undertake research using the internet with ease; for example, linking to agencies who help others, such as UNICEF, as part of the school's support for charity. They create engaging websites for the school. One group of pupils produces a block graph to display their favourite colours. Pupils write accounts directly to the screen and improve their presentation by changing letter shapes, using colour, redesigning layout and using 'spellcheck'. A Year 6 pupil, especially skilled in the use of information technology, led a small group of pupils in producing a record of their work on Roman and Celtic soldiers. They created a series of images involving text, and still and moving pictures.
- 160 Teachers plan to the new scheme of work but it is not integrated consistently into that of other subjects. They need to distinguish between the development of pupils' skills in using equipment and accessing programs, and enabling pupils to draw on these skills to support their learning. They complete a recording assessment file to note pupils' attainments; recently introduced, it is too early to judge its effectiveness. Teachers make good use of those pupils who are highly skilled to support the work of other pupils and develop the range of experiences available to them.
- 161 The staff recognise that much of their computer equipment is out of date, but serviceable. They are in the local authority's last cohort to benefit from the national government's information communication and technology proposals. The staff rightly see this as an appropriate time to update their equipment.

Religious education

- 162 Because of timetabling arrangements it was not possible to observe lessons at Key Stage 1. Consequently, it is not possible to reach judgements on the quality of teaching. Evidence was collected from displays and samples of work; teachers' planning was examined, discussions held with pupils and staff and resources inspected.

- 163 By the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils attain standards in line with the expectations set out in the local authority's Agreed Syllabus. Throughout the school all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language make satisfactory progress in their knowledge of Bible stories and develop a sound understanding of the significance of baptism, confirmation, communion and marriage in the Christian church.
- 164 At Key Stage 1 pupils learn about Christianity and develop their understanding of Bible stories. They become familiar with the important festivals and celebrations of other faiths. By the end of the year in which they are seven, pupils have sound knowledge of important events in the life of Jesus. They consider the themes of relationships and responsibility and relate them to the stories they have heard. They show some understanding of the caring nature of God and link this to the care and consideration of other people.
- 165 At Key Stage 2 pupils consolidate their knowledge of the Christian faith and develop their understanding of the beliefs and practices of other faiths. They discuss the common links between Christianity and Judaism and compare the significance of food at celebrations. They understand the reasons why some foods are forbidden by different faiths. By the time they leave the school at the age of eleven, pupils have improved their understanding of the similarities and differences between the main religions. They know a range of stories from religious traditions and are familiar with the life and work of major religious figures including the prophet Mohammed. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding of the rules which govern religious activities and the significance of religious symbols found in different places of worship.
- 166 Attitudes to learning are positive. Many pupils speak confidently in class and demonstrate a sound understanding of the ways in which religion influences people's lives. They show respect for the beliefs and feelings of others. Most pupils show a genuine interest in learning and ask important questions about the nature of belief.
- 167 The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. Planning is based on the locally Agreed Syllabus and identifies appropriately what pupils should learn. Some teachers lack confidence in teaching this subject and their subject knowledge is insecure. As a result, the pace of the lesson is slow and pupils lose interest. Sound questioning enables pupils to improve their understanding; for example, when discussing God's test of Abraham's faith. The presentation and marking of pupils' work in religious education is inconsistent and varies between classes. Some work is incomplete.
- 168 The pupils use their literacy skills effectively and written work is presented in a variety of styles. Procedures for the assessment of pupils' work are in line with the school's assessment policy, they have not yet been implemented.
- 169 Since the last inspection the school has adopted the local authority's Agreed Syllabus and this provides good guidance and support for teaching the knowledge and understanding of religious education and ensures continuity in pupils' progress.
- 170 At both key stages, religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Art

- 171 Because of timetabling arrangements it was not possible to observe lessons at either key stage. Consequently, it is not possible to reach judgements on the quality of teaching. Evidence was collected from displays, portfolios, samples of work and sketchbooks; teachers' planning was examined, discussions held with pupils and staff and resources inspected.
- 172 During both key stages all pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, make sound progress. They pursue a well-balanced course through which they steadily improve their acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding in all aspects of art.
- 173 Throughout both key stages, pupils use sketchpads purposefully and use a range of materials and styles to express themselves through their work. They are aided in this by the useful insights they gain into the works and techniques of artists such as Monet, Kandinsky and Rousseau. The latter was the pupils' inspiration for striking paintings of a forest. They have further opportunities to respond to the work of established artists through prominent exhibitions of their work. These displays are effectively used to promote the pupils' own work, examples of which are framed and hung for public viewing.
- 174 At Key Stage 1, pupils investigate marking techniques of hatching, stippling and blending. Using charcoal and pencil they draw carefully images of shells and African artefacts. They design and make a simple fabric cover on which to sit during carpet time. They co-operate in groups to make bold collages to illustrate stories they have heard. Using a range of cards and recycled materials they help to construct and paint carefully a large, free-standing house to illustrate their current topic. At Key Stage 2, pupils build effectively upon these early experiences. They use pencil line and shading confidently in sketching representational drawings from life; for example, detailed sketches of shoes with stitching and lacing delicately drawn. They work imaginatively with fabric and produce a striking batik banner. They carefully research and make items of authentic design to wear on visits to historic sites. They create colourful portraits of fictional characters and engaging, recognisable portraits of their friends. They work with clay to make well-formed finger pots and decorated tiles. Using ancient techniques they weave baskets from worked twigs.
- 175 Teachers make good use of work in other subjects to help pupils develop their imaginations and respond creatively to the world around them. They use art effectively to make a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development; for example, reflecting on the subject of their work and in their sharing of ideas and skills. Teachers' medium-term planning ensures that all aspects of art are covered and that pupils have appropriate opportunities to practise their skills, develop new techniques and use a wide range of materials. Lesson planning and assessment are unsatisfactory. Lesson planning does not identify where assessment will take place or how the full range of pupils' abilities will be catered for. Useful procedures are in place to assess pupils over time but as they have only recently been put in place it is too early to judge their effectiveness. Teaching guidance, at Key Stage 2, has improved since the last inspection through the provision of a clear, supportive scheme of work and detailed illustrative guidelines for staff on the teaching of all aspects of art.

Design and technology

- 176 It was not possible to observe a range of lessons at either key stage during the inspection because of timetabling arrangements. Consequently, it was not possible to make judgements on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. Evidence was collected from a portfolio of pupils' design sheets and photographs of finished products from last year, together with displays of pupils' work.

- 177 All classes follow a similar programme and organisation based on the school's scheme of work. They use their own ideas to design and make artefacts and models. Pupils evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their products and their suitability for their intended purpose. There are satisfactory examples of older pupils describing how they make improvements. Pupils work with a wide variety of materials and a good range of tools. They select their own materials and test them first to see how they work, before deciding on the most suitable for the task.
- 178 Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 make hinged greetings cards. Year 2 pupils develop and practise techniques of paper folding to find out ways to strengthen it. Pupils are encouraged to generate their own ideas and they are well supported as they fold paper in different ways. They describe their techniques to the whole class using appropriate language such as bending, twisting and folding. Almost all pupils, including those with special educational needs, who are well supported by learning support assistants, use several techniques to strengthen card. At Key Stage 2, pupils practise and develop their making skills. They design and construct kaleidoscopes using satisfactory paper folding and joining techniques.
- 179 The school has addressed the issues from the previous inspection report. A comprehensive scheme of work is now in place and is used well for teachers' long and medium term planning but lesson planning is weak. There are planned opportunities to develop appropriate vocabulary and the mathematical skills of measuring. Assessment opportunities are planned in line with the school policy but at present there is no evidence of teachers using them. Lesson planning and assessment is weak. The co-ordinator's role in managing design technology has developed and recent changes are designed to raise attainment. Tools and equipment are stored in a safe place but there were no opportunities to see how safely tools are used. There is still a limited amount of food technology taking place but this is being addressed by the development of a specific food preparation area in the community kitchen.

Geography

- 180 Insufficient evidence was gained during the inspection week to make judgements on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching at both Key Stage 1 and 2. Evidence was gained from pupils' work samples, displays, the school policy, scheme of work, planning and from talking to pupils and the subject co-ordinator.
- 181 At Key Stage 1, pupils identify features of their own locality, and compare houses and homes. Their work is closely linked to their studies in history. For example, a display of variety of historical and present day maps and plans show the changes in Trumpington over the years. Pupils develop a sense of direction as they secure drawings of their own homes accurately onto a large plan of the immediate area around school. There are well-focused questions such as 'Can you find...?' and 'Who lives near you?' to encourage pupils to develop early mapping skills. The pupils talk about their work and show sound knowledge and understanding. They use maps and globes competently to find England and other countries. They know which are the hot and cold parts of the world and some explain the reasons for these differences. Pupils contrast towns and villages accurately and talk about their immediate environment. They develop an appropriate geographical vocabulary.
- 182 At Key Stage 2 pupils cover appropriate themes and skills although little work was seen contrasting the local environment with localities in the United Kingdom or abroad. Good use is made in Year 6 of the Stibbington environmental centre where pupils have a wide range of first-hand, geographical experiences. Pupils confidently use Ordnance Survey maps with six-figure grid references. They record the weather appropriately over a period using apparatus to measure rainfall and wind speed and direction. The pupils consider effectively the problems caused by the amount of traffic, pollution, pedestrians and access to the village in relation to the A1 trunk road.

- 183 A comprehensive scheme of work linked to the National Curriculum programmes of study has been adopted since the last inspection. It shows learning objectives, activities and what pupils are expected to learn. A new assessment procedure has just been put in place in line with the assessment policy but there is no evidence yet of its effectiveness.

History

- 184 Pupils make sound progress throughout both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Because of timetabling arrangements it was not possible to see a range of lessons at Key Stage 1; consequently, there was insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching at that key stage.
- 185 At Key Stage 1, pupils learn history through the topics of 'Ourselves' and 'Houses and Homes'. Pupils develop a clear understanding of chronology through personal and family history. They make a simple timeline of important events in their own lives and draw family trees. Pupils undertake historical enquiry effectively by visiting historical houses and using photographs and artefacts to extend their understanding of the past. Year 2 pupils make good progress when examining Victorian and Edwardian artefacts from everyday life. They find similarities and differences between, for example, a flat iron, carpet beater and hot water bottle and their modern day equivalents. They have factual knowledge of the past through stories of historical significance such as the Fire of London and Florence Nightingale.
- 186 At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make sound progress in knowledge, understanding and enquiry skills. Pupils in all classes use timelines to sequence events. Many pupils place accurately the periods they study in chronological order. Their knowledge of the everyday life of Celts in Britain is good. On a visit to a 'Celtic village' for a day pupils were introduced to aspects of Celtic life such as basket weaving, hut construction, cooking and spinning wool. Some Year 5 and 6 pupils use their knowledge and understanding to discuss the likelihood of Celtic buildings and artefacts surviving to the present day. Most pupils know the different ways that historians have found out about the past. Pupils in Year 3 develop research skills and find relevant information about the Romans from a range of books. Year 6 pupils use information from CD-ROMs to compare Celtic and Roman soldiers. Work from last year, when all pupils studied the Tudor period, shows the use of a range of sources including a Tudor day at Kentwell, paintings and music. By the end of the key stage pupils carry out more of their own research. The range and depth of knowledge increases over the key stage. However, little evidence was seen of pupils finding out why people acted as they did, why major events happened and what were the effects.
- 187 Pupils clearly enjoy history and have positive attitudes towards it. They are curious about the past and enjoy finding out. Pupils in Year 2 are fascinated by the everyday household artefacts and share their ideas with others. In all classes pupils behave well and take turns when talking. They listen carefully to each other.
- 188 The quality of teaching is sound at Key Stage 2. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are themselves enthusiastic about the subject. Visits, artefacts and displays of work are well used to capture pupils' interest. Half-termly planning is thorough and includes learning outcomes against which pupils' progress is assessed. There is no recorded evidence of assessment as the present system has only recently been put in place. Teachers have clear expectations of pupils' achievements and plan different tasks to support pupils with special educational needs. Good use is also made in class of learning support assistants. Marking across Key Stage 2 shows inconsistencies. The teaching of history makes a good contribution to the development of literacy as pupils carry out research and record their findings in a variety of ways, including reports, letters and diaries. However, the presentation of work varies between classes, with some instances of pupils leaving their work unfinished.

- 189 Since the previous inspection a new scheme of work has been put in place which provides good support for teachers' long and medium term planning but there are inconsistencies in lesson planning. The annual use of educational visits, which allow pupils to experience everyday life in their period, is a strength of history teaching in the school. It generates enthusiasm and has an impact on the progress which pupils' make. History makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development.

Music

- 190 All pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress throughout both key stages.
- 191 At Key Stage 1, pupils develop a good repertoire of songs that they sing from memory. They move in time to the music and show a keen awareness of pulse and rhythm. Year 2 pupils explore different ways of producing sounds from untuned instruments and recognise that different instruments produce different qualities of sound. They develop their work by experimenting with contrasting sounds, loud and soft, quick and slow and combine their sounds imaginatively to portray the story of 'The Three Little Pigs'.
- 192 At Key Stage 2, they improve their skills in singing, composing and appraising. Year 4 pupils compose marching music for a Roman army. They maintain a steady beat, introduce a simple ostinato and follow a conductor. Year 6 pupils listen attentively to 'Fanfare for the Common Man' by Aaron Copeland. They apply the knowledge they gain from listening to and discussing this music when they compose, rehearse and perform their own fanfares. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils have responded to the work of a range of composers. Opportunities to listen to a range of music during assemblies, sometimes with a focus on a particular composer, extend pupils' appreciation of a variety of music and helps them recognise that music comes from different times and places. Extra-curricular activities such as the choir and recorder group and peripatetic instrument lessons enhance the music curriculum.
- 193 Pupils' response to music is good at both key stages. Pupils generally sing with enthusiasm and enjoy performing simple instrumental pieces. They work well together in large and small groups to create simple tunes and are proud of their compositions. They listen with concentration to the music of their peers and discuss the effect of the music. They listen attentively to recorded music and many identify the name of the piece and its composer.

- 194 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers use the detailed scheme of work effectively and this ensures that the pupils receive a balanced experience of singing, composing, listening and evaluating, which builds on their previous learning. The scheme is closely linked to the topics or subjects being studied, so that a history theme such as 'The Invaders' is extended through the music they compose. Lesson plans are briefly written and assessments are not recorded. The teachers have appropriate expectations of their pupils. They require them to listen attentively to each other and offer constructive suggestions as to how compositions might be improved. Teachers manage the pupils well; they organise lessons so that good use is made of time and resources.
- 195 At both key stages, music makes an important contribution to the development of skills in literacy and numeracy. At Key Stage 1, pupils share their ideas, and consolidate their understanding of stories as they discuss what kinds of sounds they will use to portray the characters in 'The Three Little Pigs'. As they move through the school they gradually develop a more precise musical vocabulary as they appraise the work of others and acquire a greater understanding of the relationship between language and music, for example through the discussion of Peer Gynt by Greig.
- 196 Pupils perform in the community and at the annual Christmas concert. These opportunities enrich pupils' musical experiences and have a positive impact on their personal and cultural development.

Physical education

- 197 Pupils of all abilities make sound progress throughout both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in their acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding in gymnastics, games and swimming. Because of timetabling arrangements it was not possible to see dance at either key stage.
- 198 The school offers a balanced programme of activities at each of the key stages. Gymnastics, dance and games are undertaken throughout the year at each key stage. In addition, at Key Stage 2, athletics are covered during the summer term in games, and adventurous activities, such as archery, high ropes and orienteering, during residential visits to Grafham Water. Using the school's own pool, swimming is followed during the summer term by all pupils, with additional sessions at the city pool for Year 5 pupils during the autumn term. As a result of this good provision for swimming an effective course is followed by all pupils and their standards of attainment are very good, with almost all the pupils able to swim at least 25 metres by the end of Key Stage 2.
- 199 At Key Stage 1, the pupils plan and perform simple activities competently and demonstrate both their increasing agility and control. They move sensitively, showing a developing awareness of space and of other pupils. They follow instructions carefully and display their emerging, satisfactory skills in throwing, catching and bouncing balls. They use gymnastic apparatus carefully and control well their linking of simple movements. At Key Stage 2, pupils build effectively on these early experiences to further develop their skills in balancing and linking activities, and in sending, receiving and striking balls competently. Year 6 pupils show an increasing awareness of the need to position themselves appropriately to strike and bowl a ball. Pupils plan their performances with more care; for example, when devising a game to set criteria they recognise the need for rules, safety and fair play. They improve the precision of their performance: the higher attaining pupils in the quality of their actions, the average attaining pupils over greater distances and the lower attaining pupils in greater consistency over time.
- 200 Across both key stages, pupils' response is positive and their enjoyment obvious. They change quickly and quietly into appropriate dress. The pupils listen carefully to instructions, are enthusiastic in performance, and keen to succeed. They are well behaved and sustain good relationships through which they encourage and support each other.

- 201 The quality of teaching at both key stages is sound. The teachers have a clear understanding of the skills to be developed and a few of them have the confidence to demonstrate the appropriate standards expected. They give clear instructions and directions, supported by well-judged, pupil demonstrations and the simplifying of activities to ensure success for all pupils. The teachers provide insufficient opportunity for pupils to reflect on their own performances and comment upon that of others. Their interventions are useful in moving pupils on to the next stage in their performance, but there is no systematic approach to day-to-day assessment to record pupils' attainment and monitor their progress. Useful procedures are now in place to assess pupils over time but it is too soon to judge their effectiveness. Teachers' lesson planning is unsatisfactory as it is briefly set out and does not identify where assessment will take place or how the full range of pupils' abilities will be catered for.
- 202 A useful contribution to the school's sound physical education curriculum is made by the school's annual sports day, and the provision of well supported, extra-curricular activities. This is further enhanced by the pupils' successful participation in locally organised competitive sports.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 203 The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors who spent a total of 14 inspector days in school. Forty-four lessons or parts of lessons were observed as well as assemblies, registration periods and playground sessions. Twenty-one pupils read to the inspectors and the full range of pupils' work was scrutinised. Teachers' planning notes and records of pupils' work, together with individual education plans and statements of special educational needs, were examined. Discussions were held with staff, including the special educational needs co-ordinator, and the chair of governors, the governor with oversight of special educational needs and other representatives of the governing body. School documents were read including financial, curriculum, management and special educational needs papers, minutes of governing body meetings and the school's last inspection report and the action plan produced in response to it by the governing body.
- 204 A meeting was held before the inspection to provide parents with an opportunity to express their views about the school and to find out about the inspection process. It was attended by 18 parents. Twenty-seven completed questionnaires and the written observations accompanying them were also considered by the inspection team.

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	179	7	40	33
Nursery Unit/School	13	0	1	n/a

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)

7.0

Number of pupils per qualified teacher

25.6

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff

6.0

Total aggregate hours worked each week

110.0

Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)

0.5

Number of pupils per qualified teacher

13.0

Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of education support staff

1.0

Total aggregate hours worked each week

15.0

Average class size:

29.8

Financial data

Financial year:	1998
	£
Total Income	402,116.00
Total Expenditure	405,990.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,231.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	17,801.00
Balance carried forward to next year	13,927.00

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

205

Number of questionnaires returned:

27

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	44	52	4	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	52	37	7	4	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	31	42	19	8	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	27	65	0	4	4
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	26	59	7	7	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	30	59	11	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	48	30	19	4	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	15	52	4	30	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	48	44	7	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	30	56	15	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	70	30	0	0	0

Percentage of responses are rounded to the nearest integer, the sum may not = 100%

Percentages given are in relation to total number of returns, excluding nil replies