

INSPECTION REPORT

St White's School

St White's Road, Cinderford, Glos. GL14 3DH

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique Reference Number: 115520

Headteacher: Mr P S Woodward

Reporting inspector: Julia Steward

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th October 1999

School Inspection No. 186958

Under OFSTED contract number: 707338

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 School

Type of control: County

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: St White's Road
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Appropriate authority: Gloucestershire LEA

Name of chair of governors: Mr. D. Annis

Date of previous inspection: 4-7 March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Julia Steward, RgI		Attainment and progress; Attitudes, behaviour and personal development; Teaching; Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; Leadership and management
Catherine Fish, Lay Inspector		Attendance; Support, guidance and pupils' welfare; Partnership with parents and the community; The efficiency of the school
John Moles	Mathematics, Design and technology, Art, Religious education	The curriculum and assessment
Joyce Cox	English, Information technology, History	Special educational needs; areas of learning for children under five
Margaret Morse	Science, Geography, Music, Physical education	Equal opportunities; Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Provides a firm foundation for pupils moving into secondary education
- Promotes very good behaviour
- Provides a good start for children under five
- Establishes and maintains very good relationships within the school community
- Provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. In attainment at higher levels in National Curriculum tests
- II. In progress in writing at Key Stage 1
- III. In making insufficient use of curriculum co-ordinators to raise pupils' attainment

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

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Nearly all of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection report have been overcome. Standards in all subjects are now at least in line with national expectations. Higher levels are being achieved at Key Stage 2 but the school achieves standards in mathematics and science which are below those in comparable schools. There remains some under-achievement in Key Stage 1, including in writing, where attainment does not meet national expectations. Teaching is almost all satisfactory or better and lesson planning usually identifies clear learning outcomes. Links between marking, assessment and planning are clear. Co-ordinators' roles have been clarified though they do not play a role evaluating the quality of delivery of their subjects. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. The accommodation has been improved. The school continues to strive for improvement and makes best use of what is available, with the exception of use of time: the school makes insufficient allowance for time lost in moving around the site in planning teaching time. The school development plan focuses on an appropriate number of relevant priorities and helps the headteacher and senior management team to monitor progress towards them. The many improvements which have been made since the previous inspection and commitment to higher attainment put the school in a good position to move forward.

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	
			Well above average	A
			Above average	B
			Average	C
			Below average	D
			Well below average	E
English	C	C		
Mathematics	D	E		
Science	D	D		

While average levels attained show performance in National Curriculum tests in 1998 as below average in mathematics and science, and well below average for mathematics when compared with similar schools, results for 1999 show a considerable improvement in the number of pupils attaining higher levels in those subjects. Attainment in Key Stage 2 was judged by the inspection team to be in line with national expectations for the cohort of pupils who will take tests in the summer of 2000. Standards in other subjects are at least in line with expectations for pupils of the same age. In physical education, pupils attain standards higher than those expected at the end of Key Stage 2. In religious education and in information technology, pupils attain standards in line with those seen nationally.

Quality of teaching

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

The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory in 96% of lessons. In 42% of lessons it is good. In four per cent of lessons seen – three in all – teaching was unsatisfactory. In one lesson teaching was judged

to be very good.

Although no direct teaching of information technology was seen, the judgement that it is satisfactory is made based on the scrutiny of work, observations of and conversations with pupils. Teaching for children under five in the reception classes and those in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good.

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	Very good. Pupils are friendly and courteous. They behave sensibly when moving about a potentially difficult site.
Attendance	Good.
Ethos*	Good. Pupils are eager to learn and the school strives for higher attainment. Occasionally in lessons teachers have insufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
Leadership and management	Good. The headteacher has identified clearly the key areas which will have the greatest impact on raising standards and has effectively motivated the school community to work on them.
Curriculum	Satisfactory. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment to guide teachers' medium-term and long-term curriculum planning, particularly in English, mathematics and science, are good.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision maintained since the last inspection. Such pupils make good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good. Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong. They relate very well to one another and to staff.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory. There has been considerable improvement in the storage of resources. Improvement in accommodation continues.
Value for money	Good

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

- IV. The fact that staff are approachable
- V. The way they are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school
- VI. Pupils' good behaviour
- VII. The positive impact the school's values and attitudes have on their children
- VIII. The fact that their children like school

What some parents are not happy about

- IX. The information they receive concerning what
- X. The work which children are given to do at
- XI. Extra-curricular activities are too sport

Inspectors agree with the positive views held by parents. The school recognises the need to provide parents with more information on what their children are learning and this is to be incorporated with the new homework policy. Inspectors consider the range of extra-curricular activities, including those relating to music, art and science, to be sufficiently broad.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to continue to move the school forward, the governors, headteacher and staff should strive to achieve higher standards, especially in the core subjects, by:

- XII. Continuing strategies being implemented to raise boy's attainment (paras. 8, 39, 72)
- XIII. improving progress in writing at Key Stage 1 by implementing a writing policy (paras. 12, 43, 104, 108, 109)
- XIV. improving the quality of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 1, by
 - . ensuring lesson objectives focus on learning rather than just on activities
 - . ensuring pupils are appropriately challenged
 - . moving pupils on at a brisk pace
 - . encouraging pupils to evaluate their own learning(paras. 36, 37, 38)
- . developing the role of curriculum co-ordinators to monitor and improve teaching and learning in specific subjects (paras. 68, 108, 127, 133, 141, 147, 153, 159, 165)

In addition to the key issues above, less significant weaknesses referred to in paragraphs 29, 37, 41, 82 should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. St White's School is one of three primary schools in the town of Cinderford. In most years it accepts pupils from outside the normal catchment area. The original building is Victorian, but the school has been enlarged by the addition of a canteen/dining hall and several demountable rooms which occupy a second site across a service road. The split site inevitably causes some difficulties and the school has taken measures to minimise them.

2. The school is slightly larger than average, with 289 pupils on roll, and has roughly equal numbers of boys and girls. Twenty-four per cent of pupils are identified by the school as having special educational needs, which is also above average. The percentage of pupils who have statements of special educational need is in line with that seen nationally.

3. Most pupils have attended nursery or playgroup before coming to school. Their attainment on entry is average to below. Thirty-four pupils (12%) are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly average. Census data suggests Cinderford is comparatively disadvantaged when compared with neighbouring wards. All pupils come from homes where English is the first language.

4. For demographic reasons the number on roll has fallen by about forty since the previous inspection. The school now includes a governor-run pre-school group.

5. The school states that its main aims are to

- ensure everyone is valued
- create a caring community, involving everyone and meeting the needs of the children and staff
- provide resources and an environment conducive to learning
- promote positive attitudes to gender, equality, cultural diversity and special needs
- encourage the highest standards of behaviour and values appropriate to the age of the children, with staff being the role models
- enable each child to be as independent and self-sufficient as possible
- provide a wide variety of extra-curricular activities
- promote the personal and professional development of all members of staff
- encourage parental and governor involvement in the school as critical friend, and in decision-

making processes where appropriate

- create relaxed yet purposeful atmosphere
- publicise positive aspects of school life

6. The school's attainment targets for Key Stage 2 in the current academic year are to achieve 65% level 4s and above in English and 70% in mathematics. Main priorities identified in the school development plan for the year are

- to secure the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies
- to develop facilities for information communication technology
- to develop the school environment and improve playground facilities

7. 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	20	21	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils	Boys	17	14	18
	Girls	19	16	17
	Total	36	30	35
Percentage at NC	School	92	77	90
	National	80	81	84

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	17	20	17
	Girls	19	18	18
	Total	36	38	35
Percentage at NC	School	92	97	90
	National	81	84	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	23	23	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	11	11	13
	Girls	18	15	17
	Total	29	26	30
Percentage at NC	School	63	57	65
	National	65	59	69

Teacher Assessments¹		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Girls	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Total	n/a	n/a	n/a
Percentage at NC	School	65	63	70
	National	65	65	72

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• **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions)			%
missed through absence for the	Authorised	School	4.8
		National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.3
		National comparative data	0.5

• **Exclusions**

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

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	Number
Fixed period	2
Permanent	0

• **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:	%
Very good or better	1
Satisfactory or better	96
Less than satisfactory	4

¹ Breakdown of results by gender not available from school or DfEE

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

- **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**
- **Attainment and progress**

8. At the time of the previous inspection standards were in line with national expectations, except in mathematics, where they were below. Standards are now in line with expectations in all subjects. The percentage of pupils attaining the expected level in National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 for 1998 is in line with the national average, but a smaller percentage than average attains the higher levels (level 5 or above) in mathematics and science, which puts average levels below those seen nationally. Boys attain at lower levels than girls. Taking the three year average results for 1996-98, pupils attain above average in English and close to average in mathematics and science. The three year average results for 1996-98 shows boys attaining above the national average in English, close to the national average in science, but below in mathematics. Results of tests used to measure potential (Performance Indicators in Primary Schools and Verbal Reasoning Quotient) show that boys score below girls, and that the differential in ability is greater than that seen either in the County as a whole, or in schools identified as 'similar' within the County. The school recognises the need to work harder to raise boys' attainment and in addition to targeting individuals, is beginning to put in place teaching strategies specifically designed to meet the needs of boys. The school is being prudently cautious in implementing change, being careful not to disadvantage girls. There are indications that strategies are beginning to have an impact in English, where there has been an improvement in the percentage of boys achieving level 5 in national tests. Results for 1999 show an improvement over those in 1998 and the school exceeded its published targets. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 has increased in mathematics and science.

9. The percentage of pupils achieving level 2 in reading in Key Stage 1 tests for 1998 is well above the national average; it is above average in mathematics, but below in writing. 1999 tests show an improvement over the previous year. Taking into account average levels over the last three years, attainment is close to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics for all pupils. It is close to average for boys and for girls above average for reading, well above for writing, and close to average for mathematics. The percentage of pupils attaining higher levels in Key Stage 1 tests is consistently below the national average. Despite the absence of higher levels of attainment, taking into account their ability on entry, pupils make good progress during their time in school. It is best for those under five and in Key Stage 2.

10. Pupils enter school with levels of attainment below expectations for their age. They make good progress and by the age of five are attaining the desirable learning outcomes expected at that age.

Through Key Stage 1 the majority make sound progress although for some higher attainers it should be better, particularly in mathematics. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards are average. As pupils move through Key Stage 2 the pace of progress increases. At Key Stage 2 pupils attain standards in line with those seen nationally with an increasing number achieving higher levels. Given the below average attainment on entry, this represents good progress.

• **English, Mathematics and Science**

11. National curriculum test results in 1998, when compared with all schools and with similar schools (i.e. those against which the school is benchmarked, with a similar number of those taking free school meals) reveal the following:

	Compared with all schools		Compared with similar schools	
Key	level 2	level 3	level 2	level 3
Stage 1	well above average	below average	in line with average	well below average
reading				
writing	below average	below average	well below average	below average

12. Results for 1999 show an improvement in the proportion of pupils attaining level 2 in writing. Inspection evidence reflects the results of the 1998 tests. Attainment is broadly average, with few pupils attaining higher levels. Progress is sound overall, but is unsatisfactory for writing, with pupils' attaining standards below those expected at the end of the key stage.

13. National curriculum test results in 1998 for Key Stage 2, when compared with all schools and with similar schools, are as follows:

Key Stage 2 English	Compared with all schools		Compared with similar schools	
	level 4	level 5	level 4	level 5
	average	above average	below average	above average

14. Attainment in 1999 national curriculum tests is broadly similar to that in 1998, with a similar percentage of pupils attaining higher levels. Inspection evidence indicates that improved teaching in English in Key Stage 2 has led to standards improving. Pupils make sound progress in the use of literacy skills across the curriculum. Children under five develop their language through role-play and in circle time. They use spatial and numerical language which is well reinforced by their teachers. In Key Stage 1 pupils observe the conventions of taking turns in discussions, but have few planned opportunities to practise speaking and listening. Their writing skills are not consistently developed. In Key Stage 2 pupils' literacy skills are well promoted and they make good progress. They present work in a variety of ways in science and reinforce constantly their subject specific language. They make good use of extended writing in history.

15. In mathematics in Key Stage 1 the results of National Curriculum tests in 1998 when compared with primary schools throughout the country and with similar schools, are as follows:

Key Stage 1 mathematics	Compared with all schools		Compared with similar schools	
	level 2	level 3	level 2	level 3
	above average	well below average	average	well below average

16. Results in 1999 are similar. Inspection findings reflect national test results. Standards are broadly average, with a lower than average number of pupils achieving higher levels. Most pupils make satisfactory progress, but higher-attaining pupils are not always provided with sufficient challenge and thus they do not always make sufficient progress. Pupils of high prior attainment do not demonstrate higher standards in Year 2.

17. The results of National Curriculum tests in mathematics at Key Stage 2 in 1998, when compared with primary schools throughout the country and with similar schools, are as follows:

Key Stage 2 mathematics	Compared with all schools		Compared with similar schools	
	level 4	level 5	level 4	level 5
	average	below average	below average	well below average

18. Inspection evidence shows that most pupils are attaining the expected level at Key Stage 2, with some pupils attaining higher levels. They make at least sound progress as they move through Key Stage 2, and for many it is good, particularly in the upper years of the key stage, where pupils are taught in classes with pupils of similar ability. Attainment in the 1999 tests is slightly higher than for 1998, with a higher percentage of pupils attaining level 5. Pupils make sound progress in using mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum, notably in science, where they use sensors to plot temperature changes and record the results in tabular form, and in geography, carrying out a survey and presenting their findings in graph form.

1. In science at Key Stage 1 teacher assessments compared with schools throughout the country and with similar schools show attainment to be as follows:

Key Stage 1 science	Compared with all schools		Compared with similar schools	
	level 2	level 3	level 2	level 3
	above average	well below average	average	well below average

20. Inspection evidence shows pupils make good progress through Key Stage 1. They attain levels in line with those expected.

21. The results of National Curriculum tests in science at Key Stage 2 in 1998, when compared with primary schools throughout the country and with similar schools, are as follows:

Key Stage 2 science	Compared with all schools		Compared with similar schools	
	level 4	level 5	level 4	level 5
	close to average	below average	below average	below average

22. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils make good progress through Key Stage 2, particularly in experimental and investigative science, and they attain average levels at the end of the key stage.

23. National Curriculum tests in 1999 show that attainment has remained at similar levels to those in 1998 or improved. Three year trends to 1999 show a similar level of attainment in Key Stage 1 English, an upward trend in science and a downward trend in mathematics. In Key Stage 2 results show an upward trend for English and mathematics, and science has remained broadly similar. The improvements in Key Stage 2 are reflected in the inspection findings, with pupils making better progress in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. The school's own targets for attainment in Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 1999 were met.

19. **Other subjects**

24. Standards in information technology are in line with expectations at the end of both key stages and pupils make satisfactory progress. Attainment and progress have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education and achieve standards which are in line with those expected by the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

25. In all other subjects of the national curriculum, pupils make sound progress in both key stages

with the exception of physical education at Key Stage 2, where, despite limitations of accommodation, progress is good.

26. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and well supported. Work is well matched to their needs. They make good progress against the targets in their individual education plans, which are appropriately focused on developing the skills of reading and spelling which allow them to gain access to the wider curriculum. They are well supported in small group sessions taught outside the classroom and by learning support assistants within class. They are well integrated within the social life of the school and this helps them to make appropriate progress in all areas of the curriculum. There is no significant difference in the progress of pupils of different gender, though boys start from a lower baseline than girls.

19. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

27. As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils have good attitudes to their work. They are keen to learn and generally behave well in class. They move sensibly round a potentially difficult site. They learn to pay attention to others' needs when they go up and down steps, cross the road, and play in the restrictive playground area. Relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils are very good.

28. Children under five in the reception-only class make good progress in their personal development. They listen well to adults and to one another. They take responsibility for clearing up after themselves, and store equipment neatly. For those learning with pupils in Year 1 routines are less well established. They do not always clear tables at the end of lessons and are inclined to call out without being invited to speak.

29. Throughout the school most pupils are keen to join in when the teacher is addressing all pupils together. Teachers often draw in those few who are less confident. Pupils concentrate well when they are listening to their teacher, sometimes for long periods. Occasionally their attention wanes and they become fidgety when the pace of teaching is too slow or introductory sessions go on too long, as in a Key Stage 1 mathematics lesson where the teacher spent time going over the same thing when it was evident that pupils had grasped the required learning. Pupils often work together and they co-operate well when, for example, sharing computers, talking to response partners, or working in team games. Pupils' skills of becoming independent in their learning are not developed consistently. In classes in both key stages, pupils show inadequate strategies for helping themselves when they encounter difficulties. They are over-reliant on their teacher to help solve their problems, stopping work and putting up a hand to ask for a spelling, for example, rather than using dictionaries, or trying and

moving on. Early in Key Stage 2, however, pupils are expected to work independently, using 'have-a-go' books. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are able to use the library effectively for independent research and some do so. On the rare occasions when pupils' response in class was unsatisfactory, pupils took too long to settle when moving from one activity to another, they were allowed too long to complete tasks and there was no sense of urgency in their efforts to complete work set.

30. Pupils with special educational needs generally have good attitudes to learning. They are well integrated with their peers, who also celebrate their success. They concentrate well, particularly in small group sessions outside their normal class, and when working with additional adults in class.

31. Two pupils were excluded during the last school year. Whilst this is an increase on previous years, it has sent a clear message that unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated. Pupils know what is expected and understand the difference between right and wrong. They take care of their environment and show a sense of pride in their school. In listening to one another, and to staff, particularly in assemblies, they show respect for others' values and beliefs. By their behaviour they show that they value one another, mirroring the attitudes of adults around them. They are sensitive to each other, taking care of those not feeling well, or offering others the opportunity to join in playground games. Those given specific responsibilities, such as helping in the dining hall, carry out their tasks conscientiously. Some undertake duties spontaneously, stacking chairs after assemblies, for example, or organising competitions which raise money for charity.

Attendance

32. Pupils' attendance at school is good, maintaining the picture at the time of the last inspection. The level of both authorised and unauthorised absence is below the national average. Pupils are happy to come to school and rarely arrive late.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

33. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory in 96% of lessons. In 42% of lessons it is good. In four per cent of lessons seen – three in all – teaching was unsatisfactory. In one lesson teaching was judged to be very good. This represents a marked improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection, when 20% of teaching was judged unsatisfactory. Provision for pupils with special educational needs remains good. Teachers plan well to meet pupils' special needs, referring to helpful targets set out individual education plans.

34. In Key Stage 2 teaching is more often good or better than satisfactory and rarely unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 1 teaching is more often satisfactory than good. Teaching of the under fives in the reception classes is as often good as it is satisfactory. In one lesson teaching was unsatisfactory.

35. Good teaching in the school is characterised by high expectations of pupils' behaviour, clear learning objectives which teachers share with pupils, and good subject knowledge which is used to challenge pupils' thinking and move them on. Teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their own learning. They use results of assessment well to guide what they will teach next. On several occasions during the inspection, teachers modified their plans in the light of the previous week's, or day's, experiences. Homework is appropriately used to extend or consolidate what has been learned in class, but teachers do not always tell parents what is expected which makes it difficult for some to support their children at home. Throughout the school teachers promote pupils' confidence by valuing their contributions, even when answers are inaccurate. Less good or unsatisfactory teaching is marred by lesson objectives which are not sufficiently specific: teachers are not clear about what they wish pupils to learn from a particular activity; teachers consistently accept pupils' first answer, missing opportunities to challenge and develop their thinking; and plenary sessions are not used effectively to evaluate learning.

36. Children under five are taught in two parallel classes: one for reception children only, and one with a mixture of reception and year 1 pupils. The quality of teaching ranges from unsatisfactory to good, with one unsatisfactory lesson seen, and the remainder equally split between satisfactory and good. Whilst teachers of both classes plan to address the desirable learning outcomes for children's learning early in the term, they did not plan together, with the result that pupils have different experiences. Teaching of pupils in the reception-only class shows particularly good knowledge of the needs of young children. Some good features of teaching for the reception-only class are not apparent in the mixed-year class. In the better lessons, the teacher makes good use of the literacy sessions to raise the children's attainment and progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing, successfully conveying to the children her enthusiasm for language. There are high expectations of the children and the teacher works hard to ensure that they are all kept busy and little time is wasted. Good teaching of personal and social skills involves children in taking responsibility for their actions, helping to keep the classroom tidy and good habits, such as always writing their name on their work, are well established. Teaching of personal and social skills is less effective when classroom routines have not been established, and children are not encouraged to be independent and responsible. Generally, learning objectives are less clear for children under five in the mixed-age class. They focus on activities without being specific about what children are intended to learn. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen learning

objectives were not clear and activities took insufficient account of what pupils could already do.

37. On balance, teaching in Key Stage 1 is sound. Most teaching of science is good. In seventy-five per cent of lessons in Key Stage 1 teaching is sound and in 25 per cent it is good. The good teaching is characterised by secure subject knowledge which teachers use to challenge pupils, encouraging them, for example to give clear scientific explanations for their conclusions in a lesson on health and food. Teachers have clear learning objectives which they share with pupils, such as expecting them to identify the differences between life now and ninety years ago in history. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace with questions carefully targeted at individuals to keep their interest. Resources, such as the use of the overhead projector in literacy hour or postcards in history, are used well to motivate pupils. In less effective lessons there is a pedestrian pace which fails to inspire enthusiasm in pupils. For example, in numeracy hour the teacher continued to go over a concept without building in further learning when most pupils had already grasped it. Teachers have not established routines so that pupils know what to do when they get stuck. In history, when writing postcards, pupils wasted time waiting to spell words which were not on the blackboard because they had no word-books or dictionaries. On these occasions attention wanes and their progress slows. Plenary sessions are rushed and do not evaluate learning effectively, sometimes concentrating on discussing activities, rather than what has been learned. Work intended to extend pupils requires them to do more of the same, rather than challenging them to perform at a higher level. In mathematics in Year 2, higher-attaining pupils were expected to count the number of corners, faces and sides on a limited number of 3D models, rather than simply corners and faces, as the rest of the class.

38. The quality of teaching as a whole in Key Stage 2 is good, with 54 per cent good or better, 38 per cent sound and five per cent unsatisfactory. In the best lessons teachers display secure subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils, asking challenging questions when, for example, asking pupils in Year 3 to find adjectives to describe an orange. They expect pupils to evaluate and improve their own work, asking for contributions which will better match the criteria the teacher has set in imaginative writing or asking pupils to evaluate their own and others' performance in gymnastics. Activities are carefully planned to build progressively on pupils' previous learning. Teachers set appropriate time limits to help to maintain a rigorous pace and the pace of introductory sessions is appropriately matched to the circumstances, using quick-fire questions for revision of number work and a slower pace for introducing a new concept to a lower-ability mathematics group. Teachers make good use of the plenary sessions to evaluate what pupils have learned. In the literacy hour, when pupils were working on instructional texts, the plenary session not only identified what pupils had found difficult and what they had learned, but also linked the learning to experiences in life, emphasising the importance of clarity when, for example, instructions are given on an aeroplane. Teachers use a good

range of strategies to motivate pupils, with a mixture of whole-class, individual and group work, and a good range of activities and resources, including the use of computers, to engage pupils' interest and support learning. In the less successful lessons, routines are not established to enable pupils to persevere without the teachers' attention. Pupils are not expected to reflect on what they have learned. Opportunities are missed to move on pupils' understanding, such as in literacy hour when talking about dialect, confusion between dialect and accent was not explored. In the unsatisfactory lessons, learning objectives are not clear or linked to the demands of the curriculum, classroom routines are not well established, and pupils take too long to complete tasks.

39. The quality of teaching of English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 is good. Teachers are making effective use of the structure of the literacy and numeracy hour and this is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' attainment, particularly that of boys. Some teachers make good use of response partners to help pupils to organise their thoughts before being asked to volunteer answers. In upper Key Stage 2, grouping pupils according to ability for mathematics is allowing teachers to match work to pupils' abilities with greater precision. Plans to phase this in again in lower Key Stage 2 are well-founded. Teachers make appropriate use of opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills outside the literacy and numeracy hours. For example during registration time teachers require pupils to analyse attendance figures and check that sandwich and lunch figure tally with the number of pupils present. They ask pupils to explain their working clearly in mathematics and science and to use correct mathematical or scientific language.

The curriculum and assessment

40. Since the last inspection the school has improved the breadth of curriculum offered and put in place schemes of work which help to ensure continuity of the curriculum across the school. The way assessment is used to influence planning has improved and is now good. The school has particularly good arrangements to track and meet the learning needs of higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 2.

41. The school now offers a satisfactory curriculum. It is appropriately broad and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Timetabled hours taught at Key Stage 2 are below the minimum recommended by Department for Education and Employment and some teaching time is lost through movement around the site. The school should ensure that teaching time is not lost because staff do not allow sufficient time outside taught hours for moving around the site. Appropriately, English and mathematics have the largest share of teaching time. The daily literacy hour makes a good contribution to the standards attained, promoting pupils' literacy skills to provide access to other areas of the curriculum. Pupils' numeracy skills are satisfactorily developed through daily mathematics lessons. Teachers make appropriate use

of opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills outside the literacy and numeracy hours. Balance between the other subjects of the curriculum is satisfactory. The promotion of pupils' intellectual development is satisfactory, but planning does not promote their skills as independent learners progressively. The degree to which they are expected to be able to learn on their own varies between classes, regardless of age group. The school provides a good range and quality of opportunities for physical activity, making good use of facilities outside school to compensate for the limitations of the school accommodation. Pupils make good progress in physical education. Provision for sex, health, and drugs education is satisfactory. Pupils' personal development is well catered for, both through the expectations of the school community, and in planned opportunities to promote their moral and social awareness. Older pupils look after younger pupils at lunchtime and in the playground and all have an understanding of an input into school rules. Following analysis of results, the school is putting in place appropriate strategies to address unequal attainment by boys and girls. All pupils have equal opportunities to learn and make progress.

42. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Appropriate stages of provision and review are being used to ensure pupils receive provision that meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. Good procedures are in place throughout the school and there is a strong commitment to the early identification of special needs.

43. The school has set in place appropriate schemes of work and planning procedures that assist teachers in their long- and medium-term planning, and short-term literacy and numeracy planning. Teachers know what should be taught when, and the curriculum is planned to ensure that what pupils are taught builds progressively on their previous experience. An exception is in English, where the lack of a writing and spelling policy impedes pupils' progress. The curriculum fulfils the aims of the school well. Teachers who teach the same year group generally plan together and share ideas and activities, which helps to ensure that pupils in parallel classes have similar experiences.

44. The curriculum for children under the age of five appropriately covers the areas of learning for children of that age. Liaison with the pre-school playgroup which runs on the school site is having a positive impact on the attainment of children in the early years. They settle well and are eager to learn. Since the last inspection, the school has produced a policy to guide teachers in planning to meet the desirable learning outcomes for five-year olds, but lessons for the mixed reception/year 1 class do not always focus on these outcomes. Teachers of the reception classes, one of whom is new in post, did not initially plan together, which led to different experiences for the youngest pupils in their first half-term.

45. The school broadens pupils' experience by arranging visits from a range of people including the nurse, local police officer, an African performer and story-teller, and a theatre group. Visits to places of educational interest such as local museums, the public library, The Wilderness Centre, a centre for adventurous outdoor activities, and visits in the local environment, extend the curriculum well. Links with the partner secondary school are sound, and promote attainment well in physical education. Pupils in Year 6 look forward confidently to their next stage of education, for which they are well prepared.

46. The curriculum is further extended by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. They are well supported by teachers and by both boys and girls and have a positive impact on the ethos of the school. They include, for example, choir, handbells, nature club, recorders, netball and football.

1. Assessment procedures are good and the way the school uses information gathered makes a significant contribution to pupils' progress, particularly the good progress in Key Stage 2. The results of baseline assessment are used well to plan work for individuals to prepare them for successful entry to the National Curriculum. The school analyses its national assessment task and other test results carefully identifying weaknesses and setting targets for improvement both in the way the curriculum is planned and delivered, and in attainment of individuals or groups of pupils. Pupils with high prior attainment are identified early on and tracked through their time in school to ensure progress is continued and high attainment maintained. This is a good strategy which is beginning to show results in Key Stage 2. It is not yet fully embedded in Key Stage 1. The percentage of pupils attaining higher levels in Key Stage 2 national curriculum tests shows an improvement in 1999. Even so, curriculum co-ordinators do not have sufficient influence on or knowledge of the way the curriculum is delivered in class with the result that it does not always provide sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils.

2. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 are taught mathematics in groups with pupils of similar ability, which is contributing well to the progress of all. As a result of a recent review, the school is gradually reinstating the use of ability groups in years 3 and 4. The use of assessment to track individual attainment and plan the curriculum both on a daily and long-term basis are having a significant impact on attainment, particularly at Key Stage 2.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

49. Taken together, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school provides particularly well for pupils' social and moral development. This is a similar picture to that drawn by the previous inspection report.

50. Imaginative writing, such as poetry and the diary of a coal miner in 1835 shows that pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own experiences and those of others and encouraged to articulate their response. Daily acts of worship provide pupils with an experience of good quality. Time for reflection is used well to give pupils the opportunity to think about the messages of, for example, the value of diversity and the importance of teamwork. Children under five are encouraged to develop their vocabulary for expressing feelings through circle time as they talk about special friends. Throughout the school teachers value pupils' ideas which helps them to have the confidence to express them. 'Thank you' prayers show that pupils are aware of those less fortunate than themselves.

51. Pupils' moral and social development is promoted very well through a clear system of rewards and sanctions, and through high expectations both of pupils' behaviour and of their ability to co-operate. At the beginning of the year pupils talk about classroom rules and agree what is acceptable behaviour. This helps them to understand not only what is acceptable, but why they should behave in a particular way, thus contributing to their moral development.

52. The school clearly lives its mission statement. 'Together, we do our best' underpins the strong sense of community in the school. It stems not only from the fact that in many cases more than one generation has attended the school, but also because teachers constantly remind pupils of the need to co-operate and expect them to do so in class. There are planned opportunities for older pupils to write for younger ones, and older pupils are expected to undertake responsibilities such as acting as dinner monitors, librarians and milk monitors. Adults working together in class provide good role models for pupils sharing in the success of individuals. Residential experiences and pupils' contact with the world of work, through Compact, help to promote their social development.

53. A wide range of extra-curricular activities gives pupils an opportunity to achieve in a variety of contexts, including sport, music, country dancing, art and science. These make a good contribution to their personal development. The school is aware of the need to foster pupils' understanding of non-European cultures, hence the visit by a Japanese student in the recent past and plans for a visit by a Hindu story-teller. Within the curriculum pupils learn about St Lucia in geography, from other religions in religious education and they read texts from non-European countries in English. Art makes a good contribution to pupils' knowledge of European and – to a lesser degree – non-European culture. These experiences provide a good foundation from which to develop pupils' cultural awareness further, in line with priorities identified in the school development plan.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

54. The school makes good provision for the support, guidance and welfare of its pupils. The good practice identified in the last report has been sustained. Relationships throughout the school community are very good. Adults are very supportive of the pupils and there is mutual respect shown across the school community. Pupils are confident in their dealings with staff, feeling secure that their concerns will be taken seriously.

55. During lessons, teachers make encouraging comments to pupils; they develop pupils' self-esteem by valuing their views and ideas and through constructive support which helps pupils to know how to improve. The guidance given to pupils through marking of their work varies between classes. In the best examples, seen especially in English and science, work is marked for accuracy and comments make clear to pupils the strengths and weaknesses in their work, and how they could make it better. When marking takes place alongside pupils, the dialogue between teacher and pupil is helpful. A helpful, though not widespread practice, is teachers asking pupils to evaluate their own work, which helps them to acknowledge their own strengths and weaknesses. Some teachers make notes of any difficulties encountered in learning and there is evidence of this feeding quickly into lesson plans. Pupils with special educational needs receive good quality support from learning support assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator. There are good links with support agencies who provide additional help as the need arises.

56. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. Registers are marked correctly. Holiday leave is now appropriately identified, an improvement on the practice identified in the previous report. Registers are checked weekly by the school administrator; any unidentified absences are quickly followed up and the educational welfare officer appropriately involved with any cases of persistent unauthorised absence.

57. The school's strategies for promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good. Discussions of the behaviour policy which take place during assemblies and in class account for pupils' very good understanding of the policy. Rules are displayed around the school. Pupils spoken to during the inspection are aware both of the rules and the sanctions which follow any misbehaviour and feel that they are consistently and fairly applied. Pupils strive to meet the school's high expectations of behaviour and most succeed. The school deals with bullying appropriately. None was observed during the inspection. Pupils consulted know they must report any incidents of bullying to the staff and are confident it is dealt with quickly and effectively.

58. The school has an appropriately trained designated teacher for child protection. Staff are

aware of the need for vigilance, what to look for, and how to report their concerns. The school is very careful to re-inforce with pupils the need to take care of themselves, that it is all right to say 'no', and to report any problems to staff. Open and trusting relationships provide an atmosphere where child protection issues can be dealt with effectively.

59. The school has good procedures to ensure the health and safety of its pupils, in particular in managing the crossing of the road between sites. The buildings are checked regularly for any potential hazards and intruder alarms, fire alarms and appliances are tested. The school is beginning to undertake risk assessment for trips and visits; a member of staff has attended an appropriate course. All midday supervisors have had first-aid training and there is good provision for first aid on both school sites.

Partnership with parents and the community

60. The school works hard to promote its partnership with parents and the community and enjoys a good degree of success in this. Parents value the school's openness; a number were observed during the inspection talking to staff and to the school administrator about a wide range of topics.

61. Annual written reports to parents are of good quality. They give details of what skills pupils have learnt, and what they know and understand in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Brief but helpful comments are given about other subjects. Teachers sometimes set targets, which is good practice, but they are often insufficiently specific to help pupils to improve. The acknowledgement of involvement of parents where it has been helpful, or the mention of the lack of it where it is needed, shows the school's concern for true partnership in educating its pupils. In addition to being welcome to talk to staff at any mutually convenient time, parents are given formal opportunities each term to discuss their child's progress with teachers. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to regular reviews of targets set in individual education plans and thus are made aware of how they can help their children at home. Other information provided for parents is of very good quality. The governors' annual report to parents is presented in an interesting and accessible way. Regular newsletters are lively and informative and often include tips to help with learning. Pupils have a home-school contact book which is used as a reading record and a forum to exchange information. These books are generally very well used. Curriculum information is not consistently sent to parents, but it is to be incorporated into the homework policy. In the past the school has arranged curriculum meetings in response to parents' demand, but the attendance by parents has been very disappointing.

62. Parents contribute to the life of the school through the Friends' association, which is very successful in raising considerable sums of money which is used to further and enhance the work of the

school. Recent sums have been given to purchase library books and computers and to support the development of the school's outside environment, including the environmental area. Some parents and grandparents come into school regularly to help in the classroom, mostly in Key Stage 1. Whilst there is less regular support in Key Stage 2, staff are confident that if specific requests are made, parents will oblige.

63. The previous report identified a weakness in the school's links with business. There has been a significant improvement here, in that the school is now part of the local education-business partnership scheme, COMPACT, which supports pupils in building good work habits. The partnership has also provided financial support for trips out, such as to the Dean Heritage Centre. The school makes good use of the local and wider community to support the curriculum. Pupils use the local community for geography and history topics and the wider community such as Beechenhurst Woods for orienteering.

64. Good links with the school-based Earlybirds pre-school group have a positive impact on attainment for the youngest pupils. An effective induction programme is in place to help the transition of the oldest pupils from primary to secondary education. The school choir has sung with other schools in Gloucester cathedral and as part of the local 'Shine' concert organised by the Baptist church. Pupils' personal development is enhanced by their support of charities such as the Cancer and Leukaemia in Childhood trust (CLIC) and by supporting a child in Haiti, for which they organise their own fundraising events.

65. All these good and developing links with parents and the community are having a positive effect on pupils' attainment, progress and personal development.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

66. Leadership and management at the school are good. Most of the issues identified in the previous report have been addressed. Some under-achievement by pupils of higher ability in Key Stage 1 remains. Governors understand their role and the need to focus on raising standards. They fulfil their duties through committees and some are able to visit the school informally to gain a greater understanding of the school's day-to-day needs. Some governors are able to visit the school infrequently, however, and in some areas, notably the provision for pupils with special educational needs, this makes governors over-dependent on the headteacher when evaluating the effectiveness of provision. There has been a change in the governors' understanding of their strategic role in the school since the previous inspection. Whilst maintaining the importance of good relationships, governors are now much more effectively involved in curriculum matters and focused on raising standards. Each

governor is allocated a specific curriculum area, but not all have yet met with the relevant subject co-ordinators. This they need to do to gain a broader understanding of the needs of the school. Governors receive termly reports, but the degree to which they rely on the headteacher to raise issues of concern weakens their effectiveness in acting as critical friend to the school.

67. During his two years in the school, the headteacher has had his sights purposefully fixed on improving the quality of education and standards attained. Through careful analysis of results and of the curriculum, he has effectively identified those areas which need to be addressed and gained the commitment of staff to work on these. The senior management team allows effective two-way communication, ensuring the needs of all stages of the school are met. The structure of the team, with two key-stage co-ordinators, head and deputy, is new. Plans concerning how and whether key-stage co-ordinators are to have a role in monitoring teaching and learning in each of their key-stages are not yet clear.

68. The role of curriculum co-ordinators has been rationalised since the previous inspection, with each having responsibility for the subject throughout the school. They are allocated time away from classroom responsibilities to carry out their duties. They have an impact on standards through attending and sharing the results of training in their subject area, through monitoring planning, and in some subjects they have been involved in work scrutiny. Their subject expertise is under-used, however, in that they do not have a role in evaluating the delivery of their subject within the classroom. This is a weakness which needs to be rectified.

69. The headteacher regularly monitors teaching in accordance with the school's teaching and learning policy, taking into account additional priorities which are current at the time. Whilst the quality of teaching has improved markedly since the previous inspection, monitoring has not been sufficiently focused to ensure that teaching always provides sufficient challenge to move pupils on and achieve the higher levels.

70. There are good examples of the school monitoring, evaluating, supporting and adjusting the curriculum. In science, for example, lower attainment in experimental and investigative aspects led to evaluation of curriculum planning, greater attention being paid to these aspects, and the raising of attainment. Equally in mathematics, the results of teaching pupils in ability groups, have been carefully monitored and evaluated to judge the success of this method of organisation. Having at one stage moved away from teaching lower Key Stage 2 pupils in ability groups, the school's evaluation has led to the conclusion that this arrangement should now be re-introduced.

71. The school development plan has improved since the previous inspection. It now identifies a manageable number of appropriate priorities. The headteacher monitors progress towards these, and reports to governors, but success criteria are not always sufficiently specific to allow governors to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan.

72. Implementation of the school's aims, values and policies is good. The mission statement 'together we do our best' is evident in the life of the school, although in some cases teaching needs further support to ensure the right level of challenge for all. Good management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs contributes well to the school's concern to provide equality of opportunity for all. The school is working to improve boys' attainment. There is a strong ethos for learning. Despite the school's efforts, the accommodation detracts from the effectiveness of the learning environment and the school should continue to strive for improvement. Almost all statutory requirements are met. The exceptions are in not providing a daily act of collective worship for all, since for a small number of pupils the time is used for extra teaching; and in having omitted from the annual governors' report to parents some details which are legally required.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

73. The school is appropriately staffed for the number of pupils and classes. All staff are appropriately qualified for the pupils they teach and within the staff there is a balance of experience, including two newly qualified teachers (NQTs). Learning support workers make a good contribution to pupils' progress. Administrative staff, midday supervisors, kitchen and cleaning staff make a significant contribution to the quality of the learning environment and thus to pupils' attainment.

74. Arrangements for the support of new staff or staff who have new responsibilities are sound. Procedures for supporting NQTs meet requirements. Each has a mentor and time set aside for development needs. The school maintains an appropriate balance between addressing the development needs of staff in the context of priorities identified in the school development plan, and the needs which staff themselves identify. The school is good at ensuring that the knowledge gained by staff through training courses is shared with others, and the effects of training and development has a positive impact on classroom practice. This has been evident in improving attainment in experimental and investigative work, following a course attended by the science co-ordinator.

75. The school provides sufficient space for the number of pupils, with rooms available for the teaching of music and separate infant and junior libraries. The libraries, in particular, represent an improvement since the previous inspection. They have a positive impact on pupils' attainment. As part

of the school development plan, a programme of refurbishment and repairs has been planned. Temporary classrooms identified during the previous inspection as being in a poor state of repair have been improved. Storage of physical education and other resources has improved. The school is working hard to improve its immediate environment. A small courtyard has been painted for the youngest children and pupils have produced novel and interesting ideas for developing another small yard as a quiet area. The members of the 'Watch' club are responsible for developing and tending the habitat environment within the grounds, together with many of the flowers and shrubs around the school.

76. Despite the school's efforts, some shortcomings in accommodation remain. The small size of the hall restricts its use for physical activity, particularly for older pupils. The school makes good use of the sports centre at the local secondary school to compensate for this. Playground space is barely adequate for the number of pupils on roll. Grassed play areas are on a slope and their use therefore has to be restricted to dry weather. Again the school compensates for these restrictions by using an alternative public playing field, but there is a cost in staffing. Accommodation is adequate only because pupils are tolerant of one another. Particular care is taken to ensure their health and safety, and imaginative measures have been taken to compensate for shortcomings. The school is right to continue to press for improvements in accommodation.

77. There is an adequate range of resources for most areas, though there are insufficient large wheeled toys for structured outdoor play for the children in the early years. As at the time of the previous inspection, some computer hardware and software is out of date. Provision is barely adequate, and plans imminently to set up a computer suite are well founded. The school makes very good use of out-of-school resources. Pupils are taken on field trips and on a variety of visits linked to their curriculum studies.

The efficiency of the school

78. The school is run efficiently and the priorities identified in the school development plan are well supported through financial planning. The school has improved its development planning since the previous inspection report, through rationalisation of the number of priorities and a sharper focus on relating staff development to the priorities identified with a consequential improvement in the efficient use of funds.

79. The governors' finance committee, supported by the headteacher, has a good overview of financial resources and their deployment. Members are provided with financial information termly, which allows them to monitor expenditure against forecast. The headteacher and governors have a

realistic long-term view of how the school's finances should be managed to meet the strategic needs of the school and those involved have a clear understanding of how the budget links to the school development plan. Success criteria are identified within the plan, but some are not sufficiently specific to allow governors to evaluate the extent to which value for money has been achieved. Money allocated for specific purposes is appropriately used. Funding for pupils with special educational needs is well targeted to secure their progress.

80. There are very good systems for day-to-day financial administration. These are effective in ensuring close monitoring of the budget and that the right information is available to the headteacher, governors and teachers. The school's finances were audited last year; the minor recommendation has been implemented. The school administration is very well organised, keeping the way clear for teachers to focus on their work with pupils.

81. Teachers are generally effectively deployed. Co-ordinators are released from classroom duties in rotation to monitor the curriculum and a record kept of how they use their time. Their effectiveness is reduced by their lack of evaluation of subject teaching in classrooms. The school sensibly employs a part-time teacher to cover the non-contact time of co-ordinators and newly qualified teachers, rather than relying on supply teachers. Although her teaching timetable is known in advance, she is not expected to plan her own lessons and sometimes has insufficient notice of their content. This reduces her effectiveness. The time of learning support-workers has recently been rescheduled to ensure best use of the expertise of each, but this pattern of working does not allow for sufficient discussion and planning with teachers to ensure best use of their time. The appearance of the involvement of learning support workers on the school's development plan for this term is timely.

82. The school's accommodation has a number of limitations, but it makes best use of what is available, including the use of the two libraries which have been added since the previous inspection. Satisfactory use is made of learning resources. However, the school does not make best use of the teaching time available to it. Insufficient allowance is made for the time it takes for pupils to move from the playground to the classrooms. The nature of the site, with a road to cross to access most classrooms, exacerbates this problem, but it is also a concern on the main site where the playground is adjacent to the classrooms. The school must ensure that pupil movement around the site does not encroach on teaching time, particularly when scheduled teaching time in Key Stage 2 is below that recommended.

83. The school's expenditure is broadly average when compared with similar schools despite the additional difficulties created by the shortcomings in accommodation. Pupils' attainment on entry is

below average, they make good progress in the early years and in Key Stage 2, and by the time they leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2, their attainment is broadly average with the percentage of pupils achieving higher levels increasing. Pupils have good attitudes to their work; they behave well and relationships throughout the school community are very good. Teaching across the school is sound and good for pupils in Key Stage 2. These factors considered together indicate that the school provides good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

84. At the time of the previous inspection, insufficient attention was paid to the needs of children under five. This is no longer the case. At the time of the inspection there were forty-two children under the age of five in one reception and one mixed-age class. The quality of provision for these children is good. Baseline assessment shows that children enter school with levels of all-round development and maturity which are below those found nationally in children of a similar age. This is especially true in the case of their early language skills, several children having difficulties with speaking and listening. By the age of five most children attain all the nationally identified desirable outcomes of learning on entry to compulsory schooling.

85. The majority of children under five settle quickly into their class routines and make good progress in all the areas of learning. Children learn through appropriate teacher directed activities, and strengthen their learning in a free choice of structured play activities designed to enable them to practise and consolidate their skills. Children identified as having special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.

Personal and social development

86. The personal and social development of most children under the age of five is good and they attain the appropriate standards by the age of five. Children are gaining confidence and are well behaved. In play situations they share toys with a ready acceptance of the rules, for example when playing in the class laundrette. They are learning to take responsibility for choosing which activities they will work at and which equipment they will use. Children are taught to take turns when speaking in a group situation, for example when listening to an impromptu story. Relationships between adults and children are good and children appear to feel safe and secure in their new school environment. Teaching of personal and social skills is good in one class and satisfactory in the other. Good teaching is characterised by staff encouraging children to take responsibility for their actions and help keep the classroom tidy. Teaching of personal and social skills is less effective when the teacher has not established classroom routines so that children do not habitually take responsibility for clearing up at the end of sessions.

87. Children take responsibility for fastening their coats for outside play sessions. On entry to school, they hang up their coats and put away their belongings confidently and efficiently, with help

from adults when necessary. They chat together during social activities, and they co-operate with one another well during play activities, taking turns on the computer and helping one another to hold and fill containers when playing with sand.

Language and literacy

88. By the age of five the majority of children meet the expected standards for language and literacy because of the good teaching. Children are encouraged to be keen communicators. They listen well to their teacher and to each other and are beginning to speak confidently in front of others. They listen to stories attentively and can predict what will happen next. They know that words and pictures convey meaning in stories and can confidently and carefully handle books. The higher-attaining children can already recognise and write initial letters in response to the letter sounds. They can recognise their own names and many children can produce a recognisable version of their own name.

Mathematics

89. Children's attainment in mathematics meets the expected levels at the age of five and they make good progress. They can use mathematical language, for example, when talking about shapes. Many of the children can count objects to at least five and they can match objects one-to-one. They are familiar with rhymes, such as 'Five naughty monkeys' and 'When Goldilocks went to the house of the bears' and enjoy saying and singing them. They make effective use of their developing mathematical skills to solve simple problems and enjoy practising their mathematical skills. They can recognise patterns and can sort everyday objects according to their shape or colour. They can sort into pre-determined groups, threading three objects onto a lace.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

90. By the time they are five, children attain standards which are in line with those of other five-year-olds and they make satisfactory progress. They can talk about where they live and their families. They use their developing literacy skills well to talk about their observations and to record pictorially what they have discovered. For example they were fascinated when experimenting with different forms of washing materials.

91. The previous report commented on a limited amount of construction apparatus. Staff have addressed this deficiency fully and good opportunities are provided for children to develop technological skills through their use of construction apparatus to make either imaginative or practical

structures, such as a bed for baby bear.

92. The children show a keen interest in the computer and can use the cursor keys with skill and confidence when using the Teddy Maze program, and when using the mouse control to create shape pictures. The quality of teaching is good. Children are provided with interesting and practical experiences to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Physical development

93. Children under five are developing good manipulative skills, physical control, mobility, and awareness of space. By the age of five the children's attainment meets the expected standards in their general physical development. During a physical education lesson, children demonstrated a good awareness of space and other children, and could successfully control their bodies. The children have good control of writing and painting implements. They use construction materials confidently. They use scissors carefully and confidently, for example, when cutting out materials to make tree houses for an autumn display.

94. Since the last inspection, the provision to promote children's physical development has been improved by the construction of an exciting, secure outdoor play area. Their physical development would be further enhanced by the use of outdoor climbing apparatus and large wheeled toys, neither of which are currently available.

Creative development

95. Children receive satisfactory opportunities to promote their creative development and by the time they are five, achieve the expected standards for children in this age group. They can use dry and wet powder paint and other media to represent in two and three dimensions what they see and their paintings are of a good standard. They have painted some very realistic pictures of themselves wearing their school uniform. The children show an increasing ability to use their imagination and to listen and observe carefully. They enjoy squeezing, squashing and rolling dough to form different shapes.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

96. Since the previous inspection, standards in English have remained broadly in line with national expectations, but there has been an improvement at Key Stage 2 in the percentage achieving higher

levels.

97. Results of the 1998 national curriculum tests indicated that at Key Stage 1 the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level in reading was well above that seen nationally and in similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level in reading was below the national average, and well below that seen in similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in writing in 1998 national curriculum tests was below the national average and well below that seen in similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level was below the national average and below that seen in similar schools. 1999 results show a broadly similar picture of average and above-average levels attained for reading, but an improvement in writing.

98. In Key Stage 2 national tests for 1998 the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level in English was close to the national average when compared to all schools, but below that attained in similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level was above average when compared with all schools and with similar schools. Attainment in English in 1999 national tests is broadly similar to that in 1998.

99. Inspection evidence reflects the national assessments and indicates that pupils at Key Stage 1 attain standards which are in line with pupils of similar age, apart from in writing, where standards are below expectations. Standards at Key Stage 2 are at least in line with expectations with some pupils in Year 6 working at above average levels in all aspects of English. They read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding. Many have neat, legible handwriting and display an impressive interest in words and their meanings. Pupils with special educational needs are appropriately supported in literacy and make good progress. There is no discernible difference in progress made by boys and girls.

100. Pupils make sound progress in the use of literacy skills across the curriculum. Children under five develop their language through role-play and in circle time. In Key Stage 1 they use spatial and numerical language and discuss the characteristics of a friend in religious education. In Key Stage 2 pupils' literacy skills are well promoted and they make good progress. They present work in a variety of ways in science and reinforce constantly their subject-specific language. They make good use of extended writing in history.

48. *Speaking and listening*

101. Pupils attain standards in speaking and listening that are in line with the national average and pupils make satisfactory progress. Children's early communication skills are promoted very

effectively in the reception classes where pupils' opinions and ideas are listened to with sensitivity and interest by all staff, for example, when discussing their special friend during circle time. In the Year 1 and 2 classes pupils make sound progress in developing and extending their speaking and listening skills. They observe the conventions of taking turns in discussions, but have few planned opportunities to practise speaking and listening. Through Key Stage 2 pupils made sound progress. By the end of the key stage, pupils speak clearly, making relevant replies to the question or to the point of view expressed. In all classes, pupils pay close attention to what the teacher is saying and reply to questions with thoughtful comment and detail.

48. *Reading*

102. Pupils' attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the national average and pupils make satisfactory progress. Reading is given a high priority and pupils in all classes demonstrate positive attitudes towards books. Pupils in Year 2 understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and know and use terms such as author, blurb, illustrator and contents correctly. Some higher-attaining pupils are reading books which are too easy, and this limits their progress.

103. Through Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in reading. In Years 3 and 4 they read fluently and with good expression, varying the voice in response to an exclamation mark or to words in capital letters. They recognise words by sight but can skilfully decode unfamiliar ones, using their knowledge of letter sounds and blending them to build the word. Pupils develop a love of literature and pupils in the Year 5 and 6 classes discuss their favourite authors with obvious enjoyment. By the end of the key stage pupils with high prior attainment are attaining levels above those expected for their age. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of authors and stories. Consequently pupils show a good understanding of a range of texts and can refer to passages in books to support ideas. Pupils can use the library classification system to find non-fiction books. All teachers read to their classes from a good selection of fiction, poetry and information books, providing good role models with their own clear diction and enthusiasm.

48. *Writing*

104. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in writing is below the national average. Pupils receive a good start to their writing in the reception classes, where they are encouraged to write independently and to use their knowledge of phonics in their writing. In the Year 1 and 2 classes, pupils' progress slows, their writing is rather limited and they write in a very simplistic style. In some

instances they are not given word books to collect new spellings or encouraged to use dictionaries and so waste time waiting for the teacher to provide the word, instead of developing independence. Occasionally, pupils are given work which does not build sufficiently on their attainment, and they merely practise what they can already do.

105. In Key Stage 2, pupils produce an impressive range of work, which includes fiction, poetry, information and instruction writing and book reviews. The range of material they study and the way they are encouraged to reflect on the meaning and effect of words make a sound contribution to their spiritual and cultural development. At the age of eleven attainment of many is above national averages and they make good progress. Most of their work is of a good standard, and pupils take a real pride in presenting their work carefully. Many pupils are correctly joining their letters and developing a legible style of handwriting. They write correctly in sentences and some use commas, exclamation marks and inverted commas to enhance their work. Vocabulary is often lively and pupils are inspired to learn new words through skilful teaching. In most classes, pupils are acquiring the skills of editing and redrafting to ensure the best end result. Standards of spelling are satisfactory and pupils, who are given spellings learn them conscientiously. Progress is maintained through pupils' ability to check spellings in dictionaries and thesauruses. Handwriting is taught in most classes, and many pupils have neat and well-formed handwriting. However, there is not a consistent approach to handwriting in all classes. The literacy hour is wisely supplemented with other sessions for practising handwriting and reading in some classes. Literacy is well supported in other subjects such as history, and pupils are encouraged to use specific scientific vocabulary when discussing experiments. There are good examples of pupils using information technology, which is an improvement since the last inspection. For example Year 5 pupils have used their word-processing skills to produce an attractive recipe book.

106. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils are enthusiastic and work hard during their English lessons and in the literacy hour. They concentrate well and are very keen to produce good work. They take a real pride in presenting their work neatly and carefully. In lessons they know what is expected of them and their behaviour is always good and supports progress. Pupils listen very carefully to their teachers and are confident when contributing to class discussions. They are very good at listening to other pupils' ideas. They enjoy supporting and helping each other and enjoy celebrating each other's successes. Older pupils can empathise with characters in stories and can express mature emotions. They demonstrate a joy and love of literature.

107. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. In the good teaching, teachers show confidence and good

knowledge and understanding of English. They inspire the pupils and provide good role models with their enthusiasm and story-reading skills. Lessons are planned very carefully to build on pupils' existing knowledge and experiences. Teachers make very good use of question and answer sessions to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. They maintain a brisk lesson pace and keep pupils busy. This is particularly evident in the literacy hour lessons, where pupils waste no time in settling to group activities after sharing a class discussion. Teachers intervene well to consolidate and advance literacy skills. In the less good lessons, work is not planned for pupils' needs and there are low expectations of what pupils can achieve so that progress is limited. The standard of marking varies through the school. Work is usually marked and often supportive comments are written; only occasionally are there pertinent comments that suggest to pupils the ways in which they could further improve their work. Homework set is appropriate and extends pupils' learning.

108. The co-ordinator is competent and makes a significant personal contribution to the subject through her enthusiasm and dedication to raising standards. She has been involved in the setting up of a library for each key stage. These are used well to promote pupils' attainment. This is an improvement since the last inspection. At the co-ordinator's instigation, teachers use the same planning format for the literacy hour which makes it easy to ensure logical progression in what is being taught from one year to the next. Assessment and record keeping are good, with pupils' written work being sampled and assessed frequently. Reading records are satisfactory but do not always indicate individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses. The English policy is due for review. Policies for handwriting and spelling are not yet in place. These, and the monitoring of their application in class by the co-ordinator, are essential to ensure a consistent approach throughout the school.

109. The school has successfully implemented the literacy hour in all classes. It is based upon careful consideration of the pupils' needs. Within the literacy hour due attention is given to reading and writing. The teaching of spelling structures, specific grammar vocabulary and punctuation promotes pupils' progress in reading and writing, particularly at Key Stage 2. A more consistent approach is needed at Key Stage 1 if the standard of writing is to improve.

Mathematics

110. Since the last inspection the school has improved attainment particularly at the end of Key Stage 2. It has also raised the achievement of pupils with high prior attainment at Key Stage 2. Pupils' attainment in mental mathematics has risen and their experience of using and applying mathematics has broadened and data-handling has improved. The quality of teaching has risen and progress has improved, particularly at Key Stage 2. Resources have improved in quality and are more readily

available.

111. At Key Stage 1 the results of the 1998 national curriculum tests showed that the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level was above the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels was well below the national average. Pupils' performance in the mathematics tests was below average in comparison with similar schools. The results of 1999 tests are similar to those in 1998. Evidence gathered in lessons, from discussions with pupils and teachers, and looking at pupils' work indicates that attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with that expected nationally. Attainment is even across the attainment targets. Pupils with higher prior attainment do not demonstrate higher levels of attainment. Most pupils make sound progress through Key Stage 1, though for the more able it is unsatisfactory.

112. Pupils make at least sound progress as they move through Key Stage 2 and for many it is good. Results of National Curriculum tests reveal that attainment at the expected level 4 was in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher scores of level 5 or above was below the national average. Attainment at both levels was below that seen in comparable schools. Attainment in the 1999 tests is slightly higher than for 1998, with a higher percentage of pupils attaining level 5. The school has achieved its stated target for level 4 and above. Inspection evidence suggests pupils are attaining the expected level at the end of Key Stage 2 with some pupils attaining higher levels. Scrutiny of work and interaction with pupils to establish standards indicate that pupils' progress is more rapid towards the end of the key stage. Currently the school sets pupils by ability in the final two years of the key stage. Following review, setting for the earlier years of the key stage is being re-established. Setting is judged to have made a significant contribution to pupils' progress and to the improvement of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, particularly for pupils with high prior attainment. The progress of pupils on the special educational needs register is good. No significant difference in the progress of boys and girls was seen either in lessons or when scrutinising work.

113. Pupils make satisfactory progress in using mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum, notably in science where they use sensors to plot temperature changes and record the results in tabular form, and in geography, carrying out a survey and presenting their findings in graph form.

114. At Key Stage 1 pupils look for different mathematical shapes on a walk around the outside of the school buildings. They are able to use appropriate mathematical language such as circle, square, rectangle to describe these shapes. In number, some pupils are able to recall mentally addition and subtraction facts to ten. Pupils with high prior attainment do not yet know their two-times table.

115. At Key Stage 2, in number work pupils are able to use a range of mental mathematics methods accurately to multiply and divide two digit numbers and they competently explain their working. Higher attaining pupils enter data on a computer database. They use tally and frequency charts to analyse the data to determine the most common shoe size in the class or to rank sports interests. They are adept at selecting data from the database and quickly and competently display the analysis in a variety of visual presentations, confidently flicking between the images to select the one that most clearly demonstrates their findings. They use a range of mathematical language such as median and mode correctly and have a sound grasp of probability. In class debates they ask discriminating questions to refine their understanding.

116. Pupils at Key Stage 1 have satisfactory attitudes to mathematics. They concentrate appropriately on the activities set, co-operate sensibly with each other and contribute willingly to questions asked by the teachers. At Key Stage 2, pupils' attitudes are at least satisfactory and predominantly good. In the top set attitudes are very good and have a significant impact on attainment and progress. In Key Stage 2 pupils are lively and keen when taking part in mental mathematics, speaking out clearly to explain their working, confident that their reasoning, even if erroneous, will be treated with respect by both the teacher and their fellow pupils. In practical work they sensibly cross-check their results with each other to ensure accuracy. Throughout the school, pupils take turns with equipment, for instance sharing shapes and taking turns in using the computer to enter data. Behaviour is very good. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good. Pupils' personal development is enhanced through increased confidence in their personal ability in mathematics.

117. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. In Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching in three quarters of lessons is good, in all other lessons it is satisfactory. In one lesson observed it was the good quality of teaching that, despite low attainment, enabled pupils to make good progress and prepared them for higher attainment in a future lesson. Pupils' learning generally benefits from the structure of the national numeracy strategy, in particular from the balance between whole-class teaching and individual or group activities and a clear plenary. Such a balance is very successful where the lesson starts with rapid mental mathematics and is followed by activities which demand pupils explaining to the teacher or each other the reason for their answers. Where clear concise reasoning and the correct use of mathematical language is encouraged pupils' literacy skills are raised. In less successful lessons the introduction is pedantic and over long and the plenary session insufficiently summarises how far the learning objectives for the lesson have been achieved. In such lessons teaching is not unsatisfactory, but teachers require further support in adapting and maximising the framework of the numeracy strategy to raise attainment and progress.

118. When teachers use their assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding in previous lessons, adapt their teaching plans and present tasks to the pupils that are accurately matched to their prior performance, the level of learning is good and pupils gain in confidence in their work. Individual targets are set for pupils and these are recorded in the front of pupils' work books. The marking of mathematics work is regular and consistent but does not always indicate where or how pupils may improve their work or compare the work to their individual targets. Homework is frequently set and is appropriately linked to class work being undertaken.

119. The curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced and covers all attainment targets. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and the results of such analysis are used well to adapt teaching plans and undertake strategic planning, such as the introduction and extension of setting in Key Stage 2. As a result of these initiatives the levels of attainment of pupils in Key Stage 2 national tests have risen.

Science

120. At the time of the previous inspection experimental and investigative science was a weakness. The school has successfully addressed this issue and standards are now in line with expectations. Progress was then judged to slow in Key Stage 2. Progress is now good throughout the school.

121. Teacher assessments in science at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998 placed pupils' performance slightly above the national average for the percentage achieving the expected level, but well below for the higher level. In comparison with similar schools, attainment is close to average for the expected level, but well below for higher levels. In Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level in national tests in 1998 is close to the national average, with higher levels below average. In comparison with similar schools pupils' results are below average for both the expected and higher levels. 1999 results show improvement in the attainment of higher levels. Inspection evidence reveals that attainment across the science curriculum is in line with national expectations with good progress being made in experimental and investigative work.

122. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn an appropriate range of observational, investigative and practical skills. Through their experience of practical activities, they are beginning to grasp the way scientists go about their work. By the end of the key stage pupils understand scientific principles such as the relation between cause and effect and how to use evidence. They make hypotheses and attempt to predict what is likely to happen. They understand what fair testing means. Most pupils have a good knowledge of life processes and living things, and are increasing their knowledge of physical processes. For instance,

as part of a topic on health and growth some of the oldest pupils in Key Stage 1 learned about the principles of healthy diet and were able to explain clearly what they had learned.

123. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate a growing capacity for experimental and investigative work. Skills of observation and measurement are skilfully developed with the idea of a fair test and how to control variables to achieve it now becoming part of their investigate work. Systematic enquiry is developing satisfactorily. Pupils use their predictions, ask appropriate questions and record in various forms to support their investigation. They know and understand life cycles and can use correct scientific vocabulary well. They study plant biology and are able to identify the names and functions of the parts of flowers. They conduct their own surveys in the school's nature area to investigate varieties of creature and types of habitat.

124. Pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress in lessons and over time. In most lessons they build on previously acquired skills and knowledge. Their understanding of applications of science to everyday life and of scientific methods of investigation is developing well. For example, the series of lessons on health and growth improved pupils' knowledge and understanding of themselves and their bodies. Pupils with special educational needs and other low-attaining pupils work well with other pupils in class and make appropriate gains.

125. Attitudes to learning are good in both key stages. In Key Stage 1 pupils listen attentively to instructions and exposition and concentrate well. In Key Stage 2 they work well together in pairs or in groups, sharing ideas and showing consideration for the needs and opinions of others. By the end of the key stage pupils produce a satisfactory range of carefully presented work. Across the school the majority of pupils are willing, co-operative and well behaved. They show care and respect for each other and for living things in general.

126. The quality of teaching ranges from unsatisfactory to good, but is predominantly good. The good teaching is characterised in both key stages by effective planning of topics, appropriate choice of teaching methods and good classroom organisation. Teachers make appropriate use of opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual and moral development, inculcating a sense of responsibility for the environment. A strength of the teaching is the teachers' ability to use good discussion and questioning techniques. This skill helps pupils of all ages to make progress. Science is well based on practical experiences and using pupils' ideas. Pupils are given many opportunities to plan and record their own investigations. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of science. In less effective teaching the learning objectives were not clearly defined. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, the teacher was not clear about the scientific learning that was expected, there was a slow pace and pupils made

insufficient progress.

127. The policy and scheme of work give sound guidance to teachers throughout the school. The scheme of work is based on a two-year rolling programme which is effectively linked to the programmes of study of the National Curriculum for each year group. The co-ordinator gives good support in curriculum planning as well as practical guidance and demonstration to support others. The school's in-service training programme, together with the co-ordinator's attendance on a science course, has had a beneficial effect on pupils' progress and standards. The subject is monitored by means of scrutiny of teachers' planning, discussion with staff and pupils, and sampling pupils' work to assess standards of attainment and progress. The use of assessment information has been used well to promote attainment, particularly in experimental and investigative work. The school now needs to take the final step of evaluating the delivery of the subject in the classroom by monitoring the teaching of science.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Design and Technology

128. Since the last inspection the school has improved the link between design technology and other curriculum areas.

129. During the inspection limited teaching was observed but from the scrutiny of work and teachers' plans, interviews with pupils and the lessons seen, pupils' progress throughout the school is judged to be satisfactory. They make increasingly complex models and undertake more demanding activities as they progress through the key stages and they build appropriately on previous experiences and skills.

130. In Key Stage 1, pupils design and arrange a decorative topping on Christmas cakes that they have made as part of a food technology activity. They use construction kits to make simple structures and models of moving vehicles. At Key Stage 2, pupils design and make model vehicles from square section batten, wooden axles and cardboard wheels. These they use in science investigations into the effects of friction. They also disassemble previous models to analyse the structure. Pupils prepare Caribbean food as part of their food technology work. Younger pupils consider the purpose of an artefact they are manufacturing, and whether they have succeeded in achieving their original intention. Older pupils carry out evaluations of their products, recording the results on a useful proforma and making notes of improvements that could be made to the process or finished design. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

131. Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory. Where lessons were observed pupils were interested in the activities set, behaved well, worked well together and were willing to express an opinion or contribute sensible comments to discussions. They are enthusiastic when describing their work.

132. The quality of teaching throughout the school is judged to be satisfactory. Teachers' plans take into account appropriate aspects of designing and making and there is sufficient evidence that pupils at both key stages are given appropriate opportunities increasingly to develop their skills in these aspects as they move through the school. Pupils interviewed were aware of appropriate health and safety requirements in respect of using tools for cutting card and wood. Teachers set real activities such as making toys for sale at the Christmas fair, pricing and advertising the items and after the event a marketing analysis of which toys sold the best against price and quality factors. Such awareness contributes well to pupils' literacy skills and understanding of the practical application of mathematics. Currently pupils are carrying out a survey of the play area of the school and drawing up designs for improvement. Such innovations aid pupils understanding of the essential place of design technology in every day life.

133. The scheme of work, organised on a two-year cycle, sets out clearly the skills to be covered, as the pupils move through the school and aid teachers in their planning. The use of information technology to support the control aspects of design and technology is being developed appropriately through, for example, the control of model traffic lights. The co-ordinator is new to the post and has yet to have an opportunity to monitor teaching throughout the school. This needs to be planned. The resources for the subject are adequate, including food technology. There is satisfactory storage of resources and their use is satisfactory.

Information Technology

134. Pupils attain levels in information technology which are appropriate for their ages. This was not considered to be the case during the last inspection and the school has worked hard and successfully to raise pupils' attainment in information technology.

135. Pupils are increasingly confident users of technology. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils produce short pieces of writing using a word processor. They know how to obtain capital letters, how to delete letters and how to produce spaces between words. They often work slowly, as a lack of resources until recently has meant that they have yet to develop sufficient familiarity with the keyboard to locate letters readily. They know when and how to use the mouse and they control

movements with increasing accuracy. Progress is limited in Key stage 1 by computers which are old and unreliable.

136. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make satisfactory progress and their attainment is in line with national expectations for eleven-year-olds. Pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with their peers.

137. A scrutiny of the co-ordinator's portfolio indicates that Year 3 and 4 pupils select icons from menus, open programs, and use a toolbar confidently to select font and change size and colour. They import and centre text and pictures. Pupils in Year 5 successfully follow instructions to create a birthday card using a publishing program. Year 6 pupils understand how temperature sensors work when studying insulators in science. The use of information technology to support learning in other subjects is good and has improved considerably since the last inspection. Pupils use mathematics, comprehension, music and geography programs with confidence and older pupils use CD-ROMS for history, with expertise.

138. The curriculum for information technology is of satisfactory breadth and balance and pupils study all the required elements. The school has recently implemented the national scheme of work and staff are becoming more confident when teaching information technology. There are record keeping sheets for each pupil and benchmarks for each year group. All issues raised in the previous report regarding planning and assessment have been effectively addressed.

139. There was no direct information technology teaching taking place during the inspection. Information from work sampling, discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that teaching is satisfactory. Teachers, particularly in Years 5 and 6, have good subject knowledge and increasing confidence, which enables them to support pupils effectively in their learning and to introduce new concepts and skills with confidence.

140. Pupils enjoy information technology and are enthusiastic about the use of computers. They concentrate well and are keen to practise and solve problems for themselves. Higher-attaining pupils are pleased to help peers to develop knowledge and skills. Information technology makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal and social education.

141. The school has a satisfactory number of computers and an appropriate range of software though some hardware and software are out of date. The school is to be linked to the internet this month and has appropriate plans to replace its out of date computers. The co-ordinator is keen, hard

working and enthusiastic and has increasing personal expertise. Although she has supported colleagues well in giving helpful guidance outside teaching time, she has not had the opportunity to evaluate the teaching of information technology in the classroom.

History

142. Pupils make sound progress in both key stages. Younger pupils are beginning to understand change, for example when looking at a black and white photograph. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 build on this knowledge to discover what holidays were like ninety years ago and compare and contrast the town of Bournemouth with a seaside holiday today.

143. In Key Stage 1, pupils know and have some understanding of significant events and famous people, for example Florence Nightingale. They are beginning to understand the order of events in history. Pupils in Key Stage 2 further develop their knowledge and understanding of historical events and periods by studying Romans, Tudors, and Egyptians. They are able to talk with appropriate knowledge and understanding about the cultures and everyday lives of people in different periods, for example Lord Shaftsbury and Dr Barnardo in Victorian times. They can identify some of the aspects of life then and can compare them with life today, accurately pointing out the differences. Pupils with special needs make similar progress to that of their peers.

144. Pupils are using a sufficiently wide range of sources for research purposes and they are developing an understanding of how to interpret historical evidence. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when there was very limited evidence of historical research taking place.

145. Pupils' responses are good. They co-operate well and listen carefully to their teachers and to other pupils, valuing what is said. They show appropriate levels of concentration and remain on task; this is particularly true of the higher-attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6, who quietly and maturely researched Victorian life in the library. They work well in small groups and often maintain good levels of concentration without needing the direct supervision of the teacher. They are encouraged to think about moral issues and to empathise with folk from other generations when appropriate, which helps to promote their spiritual and moral development.

146. In the few lessons observed, the quality of teaching was satisfactory. Lessons are planned appropriately, with good introductions, well-planned group activities and time at the end of lessons for pupils to share what they have learnt.

147. Provision is appropriately supported with visitors and visits to places of historical interest, for example local museums for Roman and Victorian research. The school has purchased several artefacts and other resources since the last inspection. There is a new scheme of work based on government guidelines and work is planned to ensure that pupils experience a varied and interesting history curriculum. The local environment is used effectively to broaden and enliven pupils' knowledge of history. The co-ordinator has no opportunities to evaluate the delivery of the subject in the classroom, which is a weakness.

Geography

148. Because the focus of teaching was on history rather than geography during the inspection, only a limited amount of geography was seen. However, evidence gathered from looking at planning, records, books, displays and through talking with pupils, suggests that progress is satisfactory. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection. Arrangements for assessment have improved. Younger pupils examine pictures and photographs of their locality and inquire into the various types of activity to be found in and around their local area of Cinderford. They gain knowledge of their locality through first-hand experience and visits. They study the weather and its effects on people and their surroundings. Older pupils studying life in the Caribbean Island of St Lucia learn how climate and physical conditions affect food production. They show a satisfactorily developing ability to use and interpret secondary evidence in the form of pictures and photographs. They have a sound knowledge of the British Isles a European country and environmental issues within the third world. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported.

149. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can describe differences between their own locality and other parts of the world. They have acquired some knowledge of other places and give explanations of key geographical features. They understand simple maps and plans.

150. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show a growing knowledge and awareness of world geography and can identify countries and oceans on world maps. They understand the significance of contour lines and symbols on ordnance survey maps and understand keys to large-scale maps, using them to identify significant features like mountains and rivers. By the age of 11 they also undertake residential fieldwork at field centres in the forest of Dean.

151. When questioned about their studies in geography, pupils show positive attitudes to the subject and are generally enthusiastic about the work they have undertaken.

152. The teaching of geography is satisfactory in both key stages. Teachers' planning shows a sound range of activities set out for the year, with a satisfactory balance between local and worldwide issues. Teachers are beginning to make good use of the school grounds and the local area to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of geographical skills. Environmental studies are supported by the work taking place within the school grounds, by visits to local areas and also to nearby field study centres. Discussions of the issues raised makes a useful contribution to pupils' moral development. Teaching benefits from the provision of sufficient resources and a useful selection of books in the junior and infant libraries.

153. The policy and scheme of work for geography are currently being reviewed in order to provide more detailed guidance for staff, to promote focused teaching of the subject and to maintain a balanced curriculum. At present the co-ordinator does not monitor and evaluate the teaching of geography across the school.

Art

154. Since the last inspection the school has improved the quality of resources. Teachers make appropriate use of teaching time and there is no unsatisfactory teaching of art.

155. Throughout the school pupils' progress, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. At Key Stage 1, pupils make brightly coloured paintings of themselves. They use cut fruit to print repeating patterns. They use art packages on the computer to draw pictures freehand or make lively patterns which they colour using a pour technique.

156. At Key Stage 2, pupils study the work of a range of artists including Van Gogh and Picasso, as well as art forms from ancient Greece. They produce work in contrasting styles drawing on the sombre work of Lowry or the bright bold work of Jane Ray for inspiration. They make charcoal sketches of the built environment, for example A3 sketches following a visit to the local church which show a good attention, and ability, to represent details such as the complex hinges on the church door. They develop painting and drawing techniques appropriately in their sketch books and practise paint mixing on test sheets, prior to application to the finished work.

157. Throughout the school pupils' attitudes are good. All pupils are keen and enthusiastic to undertake the art activities set. Pupils share resources fairly and use them sensibly. Pupils study conscientiously. Where pupils are actively supported by teachers, are taught techniques and their work constructively criticised, they persevere with the improvement of their work and gain great personal satisfaction from their success. Pupils willingly criticise their own work and accept others criticism in the spirit in which it is intended.

158. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers teach pupils appropriate techniques and encourage them in the accuracy of their drawing and painting and clay model making. They link work to well-arranged displays and on occasions use these to catch pupils' attention on entry to the room. For example, a bright display of Chinese art work was arranged as an introduction to a lesson on Chinese lettering. Occasionally a teacher who is to teach a lesson is not given the responsibility for planning its delivery. This strategy did not make best use of the teacher's expertise, and should be avoided if possible.

159. There is an appropriate scheme of work that assists teachers in their planning of their lessons. The subject makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' knowledge of European culture and to a lesser extent cultures beyond Europe. There is an appropriately qualified co-ordinator, who whilst acting as a consultant to assist teachers in the planning of their lessons, has no opportunity to monitor teaching in the classrooms, though such observation was being undertaken at the time of the previous inspection. The co-ordinator usefully monitors pupils' progress, through carefully arranged displays in the school hall which plots pupils' development from the start of Key Stage 1 to the end of Key Stage 2. Accommodation is adequate and provides a satisfactory range of working surfaces and areas of appropriate flooring and sink facilities and includes a kiln. The subject is satisfactorily resourced with an appropriate range of materials and media. Satisfactory use is made of resources, including information and communication technology to support the art curriculum.

160. The school celebrates the achievements of pupils in a variety of ways including large well arranged, attractive displays of pupils' work in all available public spaces in the school, as well as in classrooms and this substantially enhances the ethos of the school. Displays show a good range of work including painting, drawing, print making, collage, pottery and three-dimensional work.

Music

161. As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils make satisfactory progress in music across the school. Progress in singing, performing with instruments and in basic knowledge about music is never less than satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Some pupils learn how to play recorders, guitars and chime bars and make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to sing a repertoire of songs from memory, forming words clearly, understanding when to sing louder or more softly and able to pitch their voices to follow a melody sung or played by their teacher. Pupils can also accompany their singing, using simple patterns played on a range of untuned percussion instruments. Pupils listen quietly to music and offer some good suggestions on mood and style. They show a sense of rhythm and can follow musical sequences and patterns satisfactorily.

162. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils recognise changes in pitch between high and low sounds. They compose short sequences of melody using pitched percussion effectively for the purpose. They clap a series of complex rhythms mainly accurately. They improvise, for example, their own versions of 'Dance Macabre' using a range of pitched and non-pitched percussion instruments. By the age of 11 most pupils sing with an adequate sense of pitch and rhythm but sometimes with a lack of appropriate expression.

163. Pupils are enthusiastic about the musical activities and show obvious enjoyment and pleasure in their learning. Both boys and girls join in singing activities, although the majority attending the extra-curricular recorder clubs and choir are girls. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, cultural and social development through singing in assembly, group music-making activities and listening to music from their own and other cultures.

164. Teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. Lessons are well prepared using the scheme of work as guidance. Activities are well planned for whole-class or group participation. However, across the school, few opportunities are taken by teachers to encourage pupils to pause, listen and identify aspects of composition or performance that need to be improved. Extra-curricular activities for choir, recorders, and hand chimes, support the music curriculum well.

165. Planning for music follows closely the National Curriculum programme of study. The commercially produced schemes of work provide good support and guidance for teachers. The subject is jointly led by two co-ordinators. Neither has had the opportunity to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning, which limits their effectiveness. Older pupils regularly take part in local music festivals and competitions, which has a positive impact on standards. The music room provides good additional accommodation and is used well.

Physical Education

166. The quality of teaching in physical education has improved since the previous inspection, and this has been accompanied by an improvement in pupils' attitudes. Pupils make sound progress in Key Stage 1. They show a growing awareness of space around them and use it appropriately and safely. By the end of the key stage pupils show a range of body management skills in dance and movement lessons and in games activities using small apparatus. Pupils' movements are mostly fluent and controlled and they are able to follow instructions well. The majority are able to think about and plan in order to perform simple skills such as jumping, rolling, and changing direction and shape safely. They can join movements together with control on simple apparatus such as benches, agility tables and mats. However, there are occasions when pupils are not sufficiently challenged to improve the quality of their movements.

167. Pupils make good progress through Key Stage 2. They develop a good understanding of the effects of physical exertion on their bodies. They made good progress in striking and throwing skills. The older pupils demonstrate good progress in creating gymnastic sequences, consisting of take off, balancing and landing, using apparatus. They show good gains in their ability to produce well-regulated

movements in carefully co-ordinated sequences, which show originality and refinement and, by the end of Key Stage 2, show a good range of physical skills which are combined with appropriate understanding. Swimming is taught at the indoor swimming pool at the local secondary school. All Year 5 and 6 pupils are given the opportunity to swim. By the end of Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils acquire technical competence of swimming strokes and a range of survival skills. In games lessons, pupils attain good standards in a range of skills. They show competence and versatility when playing small team games, working to a good standard in skills and performance. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to use the facilities of the local secondary school for gymnastics. These pupils are confident, agile movers with good body control. They plan, develop and perform a sequence of movements with a variety of jumps and travelling skills, sustaining movement for extended periods. They work at improving landing techniques. They evaluate each other's performances and learn from their evaluation. A great deal of effort goes into improving skills and producing quality performances. Physical education skills are enhanced by extra-curricular clubs for country dancing, netball and football.

168. Pupils' response to physical education across the school is good. Throughout the school pupils show good levels of concentration and behaviour. In Key Stage 1, pupils are willing and co-operative. They listen carefully to the teacher and try hard to do their best. They are willing to share and take turns. In Key Stage 2 pupils work with confidence and are alert, attentive and co-operative. They show great enthusiasm and are willing to participate, work hard and practise until they have mastered a task.

169. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is mostly sound and skilful. Lessons are appropriately planned and incorporate a satisfactory range of teaching strategies and activities. However, the guidance given to pupils in mid-task does not always move them forward in their mastery of physical skills as insufficient attention is given to refining of movement. In Key Stage 2 teachers have high expectations of pupils' performance and behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to work alone or collaboratively to produce good quality movement sequences and this allows them to be involved in planning and evaluating as well as performing.

170. Across the school, appropriate attention is given to health and safety issues and the school makes best use of restrictive accommodation. The programme of extra-curricular sports activities, including orienteering and use of facilities at the local secondary school, enhances the opportunities for pupils to further their knowledge, skills and understanding within physical education.

Religious Education

171. Since the last inspection the school has improved the quality of its scheme of work and has improved the provision for pupils' spiritual development. The quantity and organisation of resources have improved and these are used well to support teaching.

172. Throughout the school pupils' attainment is predominantly in line with that expected in relation to the Locally Agreed Syllabus. In one lesson attainment was below expectation. In Key Stage 1, pupils have an appropriate understanding of rules for living and what these may mean for them. They begin to equate such rules to those set out in the Ten Commandments. In Key Stage 2, pupils begin to understand that many religions teach about human beings having stewardship of the world. They look at the way Christians learn about this stewardship from the Psalms.

173. Pupils progress varies, but is satisfactory in the majority of lessons in both key stages. In one lesson observed at Key Stage 1 it was judged to be good. In this lesson pupils developed their understanding that all the people of the world may be considered as their neighbours. In one lesson at Key Stage 2 pupils made good progress where a high level of questioning by the teacher led pupils to a clear understanding of how, in the same way that different shoes are made for different purposes, different human beings have different talents to offer to the world. In one lesson progress was judged to be unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational need make satisfactory progress. Over their time in the school pupils progress satisfactorily in their understanding of religious beliefs and become increasingly aware of some of the customs and traditions associated with world faiths, such as Islam and Judaism.

174. In Key Stage 1, pupils' attitudes towards religious education are at least satisfactory and predominantly good. In Key Stage 2, pupils' attitudes towards religious education are predominantly satisfactory and sometimes good. In one lesson observed in Key Stage 2, attitudes were judged to be unsatisfactory. In lessons where pupils are closely involved in discussion and express often very personal views, attitudes are good. In the majority of lessons throughout the school pupils listen attentively to teachers and are mature, sensible and sensitive in discussion. They show respect for each other's views and those of different religions. Where pupils' attitudes are mature they are a strength of this subject and greatly enhance personal development.

175. The quality of teaching is predominantly satisfactory. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the themes under discussion. Teachers introduce and freely discuss a wide range of issues. In two lessons the teaching observed was good. In both these lessons the atmosphere created by the teachers encouraged open response and frank discussion. Sensitivity to and respect for individual pupil's views

is a strength of the teaching in many lessons. In one lesson observed teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. In this lesson the subject under discussion did not link directly to the Agreed Syllabus and the learning objective was not sufficiently clear. Pupils were not sufficiently interested in the work, made limited progress and did not attain a level of understanding appropriate to the age group. Visits often form part of teaching, and pupils regularly visit the local church as well as a city mosque, and the school encourages visits from members of other faiths.

176. The co-ordinator has devised a useful, well-structured scheme of work which aids teachers in their planning. This scheme ensures an appropriate coverage of the Agreed Syllabus. The scheme is supported by a clear, well-thought-through policy. The ethos of reflection and thought and mutual respect created in the classrooms, makes a very positive contribution to the increased spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. The resources are satisfactory and cover an appropriate range of world religions, they are readily accessible and used well by staff and pupils.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

177. The inspection was carried out over a period of four days by a team of five inspectors, including a lay inspector. During the inspection:

- the written work of a sample of pupils from each class and each year group was examined and evaluated;
- 48 hours of lessons or part lessons were observed, as well as a number of extra curricular clubs;
- registration sessions were observed and assemblies for each Key Stage attended;
- a sample of pupils from each year group was heard reading;
- discussions were held with pupils, teachers, non-teaching staff, parents and governors;
- school policies, teachers' plans and records, registers, reports, letters to parents and minutes of the governing body were examined;
- pupils were observed at lunchtimes, breaks, coming to and leaving school;
- a questionnaire was circulated to parents. 41 responses were received and analysed. Two parents attended the meeting held prior to the inspection to receive the views of parents.

178. 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	289	3	70	34

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	12.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.69

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked each week	60.7

Financial data

Financial year:	98/99
	£
Total Income	438,295
Total Expenditure	454,191
Expenditure per pupil	1,540
Balance brought forward from previous year	20,000
Balance carried forward to next year	4,104

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 219
 Number of questionnaires returned: 41

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	14.6	78.0	7.3		
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	14.5	56.1	2.4		
The school handles complaints from parents well	23.1	51.3	25.6		
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	17.1	63.4	12.2	7.3	
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	24.4	61.0	12.2	2.4	
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	29.3	61.0	7.3	2.4	
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	32.5	52.5	12.5	2.5	
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	19.5	65.9	7.3	7.3	
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	33.3	64.1	2.6		
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	35.0	60.0	5.0		
My child(ren) like(s) school	53.7	41.5	2.4	2.4	

Other issues raised by parents

No more than one response raised any issues other than those above