

INSPECTION REPORT

Walmore Hill Primary
Gloucester

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique Reference Number: 115548

Headteacher: Mrs. L. Lipington

Reporting inspector: Mrs Elizabeth Camplin

Dates of inspection: 27th – 29th September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707341

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

Type of control: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Walmore Hill
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Appropriate authority: Gloucestershire

Name of chair of governors: Mrs. S. Pemberton

Date of previous inspection: January 1996

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|---|---|--|
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| Peter Brown Lay Inspector | | Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources |
| Ken Watson | Mathematics Science Art Design & Technology Geography History | Leadership and management The efficiency of the school |

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- It enables pupils to attain very high standards in mathematics at Key Stage 1.
- It enables children under five to make a very good start to school.
- It enables all pupils to behave and get on together harmoniously in an atmosphere of trust and respect.
- It enables pupils with special educational needs and from Traveller backgrounds to make good progress.
- It provides high standards of pastoral care.
- It makes very good use of support staff.
- It makes parents feel welcome and provides plenty of time for them to discuss their children's learning and progress.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Not all pupils are fully stretched because lesson planning and marking of work is not sufficiently thorough.
- II. Strategies are not effective enough for checking on the quality of teaching and learning to make both even better.
- III. Parents do not get enough information about the work for the term ahead, the purpose and benefits of homework, or about progress in personal development in annual reports.
- IV. Governors are not yet fully effective in making sure plans for school improvement are working properly and providing good value for money.
- V. The school is functioning in a very inadequate building.

The school's strengths outweigh the weaknesses. Its weaker features will form the basis of the governors' action plan that will be sent to all parents and carers.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made satisfactory progress with its action plan following the previous inspection and is now more effective than it was. Standards have been maintained at Key Stage 1 and have improved at Key Stage 2 particularly in mathematics because there is now a much better approach to teaching in this subject. Pupils are making better progress with spelling and writing. Standards in reading are improving though higher attainers are still capable of making more rapid progress. There are better procedures for tracking pupils' attainment, retaining evidence of what they can do and setting future learning objectives.

The presentation of pupils' work is still not as good as it should be and improvements remain necessary in teachers' planning and marking. Governors still lack specific information about standards and teaching quality to be able to confidently judge the success of initiatives in the School Improvement Plan.

The school has set appropriate targets for raising standards and strengthening teaching and learning. It has sound strategies in place to be able to meet them.

Standards in subjects

Where the number of pupils in Year 6 is below five data cannot be published. The grades indicating standards attained by eleven-year-olds in 1998, the last reporting year for which comparative data is available, are therefore not included.

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

Figures published by the DfEE show that over the period 1996 to 1998 standards at Key Stage 2, taking all the subjects together, were well above the national average. Eleven-year-olds performed better in mathematics and science than in English principally because boys were a little below average in reading. Currently standards are still above average overall in the core subjects. They are good in mathematics, science and information technology. Standards are also good in English though there are still relative weaknesses in this subject. They meet the expectations of the agreed syllabus for religious education.

The trend over the same three years at Key Stage 1 has been very good in all core subjects. Standards are still above average and high in mathematics.

Children under five are well placed to reach the expected outcomes for five-year-olds by the end of their reception year. Their performance in mathematics is a strength in their overall attainment.

• **Quality of teaching**

| Teaching in | Under 5 | 5 – 7 years | 7 – 11 years |
|------------------------|------------|---------------|---------------|
| English | Very good. | Good. | Satisfactory. |
| Mathematics | Very good. | Good. | Good. |
| Science | | Good. | Satisfactory. |
| Information technology | | Good. | Good. |
| Religious education | | Good. | Good. |
| Other subjects | Very good. | Satisfactory. | Satisfactory. |

Teaching is good overall. It is at least satisfactory in 96% of lessons and is very good in 12%, all at the under five and lower infant stage. There is less consistency in the quality of teaching in junior year groups, so that although pupils make satisfactory progress it is not as good as that made by infants.

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 | Consistently very good. In their work and play boys and girls from different backgrounds work constructively together, are trustworthy, and care for each other well. |
| Attendance | Satisfactory. Levels are close to the national average. There is no unauthorised absence and there have been no exclusions. |
| Ethos* | Good. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Relationships between pupils themselves and amongst adults are of high quality. The school does not communicate expectations for high standards or celebrate success as much as it could in displays of work. |
| Leadership and management | Sound. The headteacher, staff and governors share a clear vision for school improvement and have set the right priorities. The strategies for monitoring success are not yet secure. |
| Curriculum | The curriculum provides a sound basis for teaching and learning. It is rather more successfully planned at Key Stage 1 than at Key Stage 2. |
| Pupils with special educational needs | Pupils on the register of special educational needs receive a consistently good quality of support throughout the school. |
| Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development | These areas are managed well, with particular strengths in provision for moral development. Pupils are taught to respect values of friendship and fair play, and to distinguish between right and wrong. There is an apt focus on strengthening cultural development. |
| Staffing, resources and accommodation | Sound quality. The best features are sufficiently experienced teachers and very skilled support staff. Accommodation is poor, with an adverse effect on the quality of education. |
| Value for money | The value added between admission at under five and transfer to high school at eleven is 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

- VI. It is a welcoming place. They appreciate the access they have to staff to share concerns or queries.
- VII. It creates a happy atmosphere for pupils so that they enjoy attending school.
- VIII. The liaison with the pre-school group 'Bright Horizons' is excellent.
- IX. It encourages parents to play a full part in the life of the school.
- X. It promotes learning through exploration and investigation.
- XI. It enables pupils to achieve good standards in core subjects.
- XII. It makes good use of visits, visitors and places of interest to stimulate learning.

What some parents are not happy about

- XIII. They want to know more about the topics
- XIV. They do not understand some educational logy.
- XV. They do not have enough information about ports.
- XVI. They want to know more about the way
- XVII. They regret that time for swimming has
- XVIII. They feel that staff and pupils are room, and the inadequate office space for the

The inspection team took full account of parents' views of the school. After consideration of all the evidence obtained during the inspection, parents' positive views of the school are agreed. The school is welcoming. The headteacher, staff and governors are committed to developing the partnership with parents and the community. The team appreciates parents' disappointment about time for swimming, but supports the school's decision to adjust the allocation of curriculum time. The constructive criticisms are valid and fair and will be addressed through the Key Issues for Action.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

- i. Help all pupils to consistently achieve their best personal standard by improving the quality of lesson planning and marking. (*paragraphs:- 10, 13, 20, 31, 32, 36, 39, 42, 54, 108, 114, 132, 137, 169, 174*)
- ii. Identify and put into practice effective strategies for checking on the quality of teaching and learning to make both even better. (*paragraphs:- 32, 34, 106, 110, 127, 173*)
- iii. Consult further with parents to make sure they have all the information they need to enable them to help their children make progress. (*paragraphs:- 43, 60, 61, 62, 148, 153, 175*)
- iv. Make the success criteria in the School Improvement Plan simpler and easier for governors to use to measure the value for money they provide. (*paragraphs:- 69, 70, 71, 82, 83, 148, 162, 174, 175*)
- v. Press the case for radical improvements to the building. (*paragraphs:- 76, 136, 147, 174, 176, 185.*)

Governors should consider for inclusion in the action plan these other areas of relative weakness:- registration procedures; the use of the outdoor environment for children under five and for science; cultural development; the quality of display and the adequacy of resources for history and geography. (*paragraphs:- 26, 51, 56, 61, 72, 95, 114, 125, 136, 154, 161, 169 and 173*)

INTRODUCTION

v. Characteristics of the school

1. Walmore Hill is much smaller than the average sized primary school. It serves boys and girls from four to eleven years of age and is situated adjacent to the busy A48 trunk road on the outskirts of the Gloucestershire village of Westbury-on-Severn. The school draws pupils from a very wide geographical area that is predominantly rural and economically diverse. Most children are brought to school by bus. Pupils come from a broad range of backgrounds, and include 11.5% from Traveller families. The percentage eligible for free school meals is below average. Since the previous inspection entitlement to financial support has almost doubled indicating a downward trend in the socio-economic circumstances of families since 1996.
2. The school policy is to admit children to the Reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. There is an admission level of fifteen. If the number of requests for places exceed the number available, priority is given to children who meet the criteria published in the school prospectus. There are 62 pupils on roll including nine children under five. Most four-year-olds have attended the 'Bright Horizons' group that meets on the school premises and are soundly prepared for school. They are gradually integrated over the first half-term into the Key Stage 1 class. One child is, and will continue to be, part-time until he is five. Almost all pupils are white and English is their first language.
3. Recent assessment information shows a broadly average spread of attainment on entry. Some Reception children have well developed language and social skills and a good understanding of early mathematical concepts whilst a minority are known to have sensory and language difficulties that require special support. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs has grown considerably since the previous inspection and the percentage of pupils now on the special educational needs register is 22.5%. The national average in primary schools in 1998 was 18.3%.
4. The school aims to encourage every child to progress as far as possible in all areas of the curriculum, to make choices, develop self-respect and a respect for others, value and enjoy learning. Priorities for the next three years have been set out in the School Improvement Plan. They focus on promoting literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology skills across the curriculum, through consistently effective teaching and a closer partnership with parents. Key learning targets for this year include raising attainment in English (especially at Year 3), by enhancing the quality of writing, developing pupils' mental calculating ability and enhancing understanding of cultural diversity.

4. **Key indicators**

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year: | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 1998 | 5 | 2 | 7 |

| 4. National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | Boys | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| | Girls | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | Total | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| Percentage at NC Level 2 or above | School | 100(100) | 100(100) | 100(100) |
| | National | 80(80) | 81(80) | 84(84) |

| 4. Teacher Assessments | | Reading | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | Boys | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| | Girls | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | Total | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| Percentage at NC Level 2 or above | School | 100(100) | 100(100) | 100(100) |
| | National | 81(80) | 85(78) | 86(81) |

.....

1

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

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

In view of the fact that there were only three pupils in Year 6, attainment data is omitted. This is the DfEE national reporting policy where the registered group contains fewer than five pupils.

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year: | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

| 4. National Curriculum Test Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above | Boys | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | Girls | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | Total | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Percentage at NC Level 4 or above | School | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | National | N/A | N/A | N/A |

| 4. Teacher Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above | Boys | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | Girls | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | Total | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Percentage at NC Level 4 or above | School | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | National | N/A | N/A | N/A |

4. Attendance

| | | | |
|---|--------------|---------------------------|------|
| Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year: | | | % |
| | Authorised | School | 6 |
| | Absence | National comparative data | 5.70 |
| | Unauthorised | School | 0 |
| | Absence | National comparative data | 0.50 |

4.

4. Exclusions

| | | |
|---|--------------|--------|
| Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year: | | Number |
| | Fixed period | 0 |
| | Permanent | 0 |

4. Quality of teaching

| | |
|---|---|
| Percentage of teaching observed which is: | % |
|---|---|

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| Very good or better | 12 |
| Satisfactory or better | 96 |
| Less than satisfactory | 4 |

.....

2

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

4. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

4. **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

4. **Attainment and progress**

1. In 1998 only three pupils were registered in Year 6. Their statutory assessment results are unreliable as indicators of attainment compared with the national averages or for similar schools. Interpretation of the figures between 1996 and 1998 shows that the performance of pupils in English, mathematics and science was above the national average and taking all the subjects together, well above average. Since its previous inspection the school's results have shown an upward trend. Further interrogation of grades undertaken by the school reveal that over this period the performance of boys was below the national average in reading whilst their writing was average. Data recently published for 1999 show some improvement by boys in reading compared with the previous years, whilst standards in other attainment targets remain similar. Lower attainment is attributable mainly to the percentage of pupils who enter the school with special educational needs in language development but also to a lack of rigour in teachers' planning and marking.
2. Over the same three-year period the performance of seven-year-olds in reading and writing was above the national average, and was very high in comparison with the national average in mathematics. Outcomes of teacher assessment in science were very high in all attainment targets. Compared with results of pupils in similar schools in 1998, the latest year for comparative data, standards were very high in English, mathematics and science. The relative weakness was in reading, where results in tests were average against similar schools indicating pupils could be attaining higher than they were and the school has addressed this. Currently reading is good. There is no comparative data available for results this year. Information provided by the school shows that the gap has widened between lower and higher attainers, with a minority of pupils attaining the level above that expected, and a minority below average. The results are explained by the relatively high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in language development rather than inadequacies in teaching.
3. Attainment overall is currently above the standard expected. Standards at both key stages are above average in English, mathematics and science and good in information technology. Pupils reach the levels expected by seven and eleven in religious education. Pupils' performance in foundation subjects is satisfactory. Standards of literacy and numeracy are good and have improved from a sound base in 1996. After the last inspection in 1996 the school set improvement targets in spelling, writing and the investigative attainment target in mathematics. Attention was also given to addressing weaknesses in art, design and technology and music. The school has achieved improvements in all its objectives, with most success in mathematics. Pupils are much better at investigating, problem solving and mental calculation. Governors have invested in a wider range of resources for mathematics which teachers deploy well. Pupils use their reading reference skills well to help them in subjects other than English, for example, in religious education. Their spelling has improved, as has formal handwriting. The content of creative writing and the way pupils write for a variety of purposes has got better but the quality of presentation is variable and not good enough at Key Stage 2. More able pupils should be achieving higher standards in their reading of fiction and capitalising more on their good oral skills.
4. There are no significant variations in the attainment of pupils from different backgrounds or gender. Nonetheless, the fact that there are a higher number of boys than girls with acute special educational needs means that overall they do not perform quite so well as girls.
5. Children's attainment meets the expectations of their age group at five. They exceed the outcomes described for mathematics and social and personal development. Overall they match expectations in language and literacy and other areas of learning. However, there are strengths in literacy and in the foundations of science and information technology, especially in the way children understand and use subject specific language. There are relative weaknesses in some aspects of writing and use of the outdoor environment.

6. Children start school with knowledge and skills that broadly match expectations for four-year-olds. Within the current group of nine children unmoderated results in early literacy, numeracy and social development baseline tests indicate levels ranging from well below expectation to above with the majority scoring in the middle band. Two reception children are already placed at stages 2 and 3 respectively on the register of special educational needs. The school has evidence to show that over recent years it has admitted an increasing percentage of pupils with sensory and language needs. In this changing context children under five make very good progress in mathematics and in their social and personal development. Progress is good in powers of speech, early reading skills, and in the foundations of science and information technology. Initiatives such as the literacy and numeracy strategies, well adapted for their age group, are having a positive impact upon children's development. Creative writing and handwriting are their weaker skills. The school recognises this and is concentrating on improvement.
 7. Pupils make good progress between the ages of four and eleven. At Key Stage 1 each child makes good progress overall in relation to prior attainment and experience of school and pre-school. Their progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education is closely assessed and monitored by the Early Years teacher and generally these are the subjects in which they make most gains in understanding and skills. They use their early literacy skills well in topic work, undertaking different forms of writing such as stories, recipes, reports, and word lists. They also apply numeracy skills well in science, music and physical education.
 8. Progress in the foundation subjects is satisfactory with evidence of particular strengths in music and dance, and no significant weaknesses. Year 1 and 2 together total less than ten pupils. Half of the rising seven-year-olds have special educational needs associated with language delay and one pupil from a Traveller background has an irregular attendance record. Others in the group have good communication skills and are confident and independent in their learning. The school has taken account of pupils' different rates of progress and supports them well. Higher attainers work with Year 3 and 4 pupils for much of the day. Every pupil has individual targets set for them, and are encouraged to progress at their own pace.
 9. Teaching and learning methods are predominantly effective, but occasionally tasks in English are too difficult for pupils. Sometimes inadequate marking means that errors and misconceptions are not identified and addressed soon enough, so that they are repeated.
 10. At Key Stage 2 pupils make broadly sound progress overall. Though they make good progress by eleven in mathematics, science and information technology their progress in lessons is inconsistent because not all lessons are of high enough quality to meet their different needs. In particular the brighter pupils sometimes find lessons too easy, for example, in reading. At other times such as in English and science they are left to manage independently when they do not fully understand the task set.
 11. Progress in the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills in foundation subjects is sound, though not sufficiently demonstrated in topic books. Older pupils make inconsistent progress in singing and performing when music lessons are inappropriately managed. Overall, the progress of brighter pupils is still not as good as it could be. There was insufficient evidence during the inspection to make judgements about progress in physical education at either key stage.
 12. Pupils with special educational needs know their individual targets and strive hard to attain them. Their progress, and that of pupils from Traveller backgrounds, is good. They are well supported by regular and effective one to one sessions with a classroom assistant, the Traveller Support Service teacher, and classteachers. This enables them to focus on extending their understanding and making better use of phonics and number. Their application of literacy skills is improving across the curriculum, for example, in science and some aspects of religious education. They use numeracy skills well in information technology and special project work but do not practise enough in informal situations such as registration.
16. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

1. Children under five make a very good start to school. They settle quickly and behave very well. This contributes positively to their learning and personal development.
2. Pupils in all age groups display good attitudes to learning. When lessons are well planned and interesting they are highly motivated to participate in discussion and other classroom activities. They want to achieve high standards of attainment. In less well-organised lessons they are co-operative but more passive in their response. They follow instructions rather than initiate their own ideas.
3. Behaviour is very good, with pupils being particularly attentive to the needs of fellow pupils and visitors. When out of school on educational visits they have a reputation for high standards of conduct. Occasionally in lessons there are lapses in pupils' concentration that cause the pace of learning to slow down. This normally occurs when they are not totally clear as to teaching expectations. Relationships between each other and adults are very constructive, providing a sound basis for effective collaboration both in the classroom and elsewhere. Pupils display a proper respect for the beliefs and lifestyles represented in the school and society at large. Those from Traveller backgrounds are entirely comfortable in the relaxed and friendly atmosphere within which all pupils learn and develop as individuals. There is no history of exclusions from school.
4. From Reception onwards pupils learn to take responsibility for the care of their classroom and generally they do this well, even in the difficult circumstances posed by physical constraints in Class 2. At the junior stage pupils help identify their own learning targets and track their progress through various kinds of self-audits. They make good use of 'Compact' folders to retain samples of best work. They can explain how their work has improved over time and can clearly identify areas of potential improvement such as neater handwriting, more accurate punctuation or to get better at fractions or multiplication. However, their targets are not always clearly established in their minds and practised in day-to-day situations. Standards of presentation, criticised in the last report, remain variable and not good enough. Pupils have the potential to make considerable progress with this issue but are dependent upon decisions by the school about the most effective ways of organising workbooks.

20. **Attendance**

1. Levels of attendance are satisfactory. A slightly lower than average rate, compared with national averages, is explained by the uneven attendance of pupils from Traveller backgrounds. Their absence is properly recorded as authorised absence. Intermittent attendance has the effect of interrupting the progress of some pupils, particularly in the advancement of reading and writing skills, and to a lesser extent, their ability to concentrate.
2. Pupils generally arrive at school punctually, thereby allowing a prompt start to lessons. Very occasionally there are difficulties caused by the late arrival of the bus or taxis by which many pupils travel to school.

22. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

22. **Teaching**

1. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. It is most consistently effective at the under-five and infant stages where all lessons observed were at least satisfactory and just over a quarter were very good. Though still at least satisfactory in nine out of ten lessons, the percentage of good lessons fell at Key Stage 2, with none of high quality.
2. The teaching of children under five is a strength of the school. Their needs are very well understood and provision for them is very good especially in the three core areas of literacy, mathematics, and social and

personal development. All areas of learning are carefully planned and purposeful links made between them.

3. The Reception teacher capitalises on the excellent adult:child ratio, working in close and very effective partnership with the classroom assistant. Relationships between pupils and adults are highly positive. Expectations are fair and clearly communicated. A climate for learning is created that all children find safe and welcoming. It is noticeable how quickly children from Traveller backgrounds and with special educational needs settle in this environment.
4. Planning for the use of the outdoor environment is a weaker feature of provision for Reception children and is an aspect to review and monitor in the future.
5. At Key Stage 1 most teaching is still good, though not as consistent in its quality as that found at the under five stage. Practice is most effective in mathematics due to precise lesson objectives that are pitched at a challenging level for all pupils. Questions are probing and reflect the teacher's knowledge of each child's prior attainment. Time is efficiently managed and tasks are varied and stimulating.
6. Teaching in English, mathematics, science, religious education, information technology and health education is effective at the infant level. Again, this is attributable to careful planning and preparation, good use of resources and time, and flexible teaching methods matched to the requirements of these subjects. There is consistently sound teaching in other curriculum subjects. Very occasionally the teacher's high expectations prove to be unrealistic. For example, the progress of a pair of pupils who were working independently on a sequencing task during an English lesson was not checked soon enough. The teacher was perceptive enough to realise this during the plenary session and made a note to remedy this error in planning.
7. At Key Stage 2 there is an almost equal balance between good and satisfactory teaching. A small percentage is unsatisfactory. There is the same shared commitment to fostering critical thinking, creativity and imagination as at the infant stage but teachers of junior pupils are not as thorough in their planning and classroom organisation. This results in inconsistency in pupils' pace of learning particularly with respect to the more able.
8. Teachers are at their best during literacy hour, mathematics, information technology, religious education and personal and social education lessons. Generally these are soundly planned. The most effective focus on needs of the able as well as lower attaining pupils. In these lessons the quality of dialogue is good, with an appropriate balance of careful exposition and questioning. A mathematics session about multiples, factors and square numbers was one such lesson. Teachers also organise effective demonstrations in information technology and devise many interesting opportunities for pupils to practise familiar skills and acquire new ones.
9. The quality of teaching in science and the foundation subjects is more variable in junior classes and silent reading time is sometimes not planned well enough. Though science is usually well taught one lesson was not as effective as it should have been because the methodology was inappropriate. There was too much input from the teacher and not enough involvement of pupils in dialogue. The teacher failed to make the key objectives for each group's practical task clear enough to pupils. At the upper junior stage a request to be prepared to share a favourite paragraph was introduced too late for pupils to make a considered choice. Overall it was inefficient use of time, particularly for the most fluent and confident readers who needed more specific criteria to focus on from the start of the lesson.
10. Teaching of foundation subjects, literacy, numeracy and information technology skills through the medium of cross-curricular topics has some very successful outcomes. A recent investigation of the local Common brought coherently together the disciplines of historical enquiry and the geography of places and people. Pupils were encouraged to record their discoveries by taking notes and jottings; to find their own methods to record their findings using graphs and spreadsheets, and to write reports about their research methods. They also described their feelings about these experiences. In contrast, there is very little evidence in junior

pupils' topic books of good quality work in history and geography. Sometimes significant errors go unchecked and it is difficult to see progression from class to class.

11. In core subjects especially, teachers at Key Stage 2 take close account of the needs of pupils of different gender, age and background. They make good use of classroom assistants in supporting groups or individuals with special educational needs and liaise effectively with the Traveller Support Service teacher. It is noticeable that they reinforce methods of working and provide one to one help when individual pupils need to catch up after being away travelling. A good example at the upper junior stage was when the teacher worked with a lower attaining group and concentrated on improving pupils' ability to evaluate how an author described characters and developed a plot. Another good example in a lesson for lower juniors was the way the teacher fostered the use of more interesting descriptive vocabulary in creative writing, expecting pupils to make use of dictionaries to find alternative words with similar meaning.
12. All teachers are getting better at assessing pupils' progress, and involving them successfully in setting learning targets for themselves. Junior pupils are encouraged to take a pride in their new 'Compact' folders and teachers ensure that the samples selected are truly representative of pupils' best effort. The procedures for daily marking and monitoring of the quality of work in exercise books are not as rigorous and often ineffective.
13. The school makes sound use of homework. Reading practise is organised well, especially at Key Stage 1. There are some good assignments in mathematics that encourage problem solving. The new school-parent contract that came into operation this term should ensure consistency in the setting and monitoring of homework and its outcomes.
14. Overall there has been sound improvement in teaching since the last inspection in 1996. The most significant improvements are in mathematics because of increasing emphasis on an investigative approach that encourages the application of skills in a wide variety of contexts. There is now a need to consolidate the consistency of teaching, for example in science, and strengthen the planning for pupils of higher ability. Written guidance, recommended in the last report, is still necessary to raise the quality of teaching to that of the best.

36. **The curriculum and assessment**

1. The school has a broad and balanced curriculum framework that will serve it well for the future. It meets statutory requirements and is organised in such a way that national initiatives can be properly implemented. After working with the literacy strategy for a year its implementation is increasingly effective. As a result of more detailed long-term planning, pupils' competencies in writing and reading are improving at Key Stage 2. The strategy for numeracy, which is just being introduced, is building soundly on a policy and scheme for mathematics that has been very successful in recent years.
2. Overall strengths in curriculum planning outweigh weaknesses. Since 1996 the distribution of curricular time has improved, particularly at Key Stage 2. Most curricular policies have been systematically reviewed. Appropriate aims and objectives have been set for subject areas, pupils' health and drugs education, and for the support of pupils with special educational needs. The code of practice is applied with care, and Individual Education Plans make a qualitative difference to pupils' learning. Subject policies are satisfactorily supported by schemes of work adapted from the Local Authority Agreed Syllabus for religious education and from commercial and DfEE sources. The equal opportunities policy is not just a set of principles. It is of particular value because it provides many practical ideas for making sure the curriculum embraces social, economic and cultural diversity. A strength is the way in which the school works in partnership with the Traveller Support Service to guarantee the entitlement of Traveller pupils with special educational needs. When circumstances necessitate the repetition of a school year this is managed sensitively and effectively.
3. The arrangements the school makes for putting its policies into practice are broadly sound rather than

consistently good and the school knows there is scope to improve them. They work best for children under five and pupils at Key Stage 1. As one teacher is responsible for almost all pupils within these two stages a consistent approach is easier to manage than at Key Stage 2 where two teachers share responsibility. Fundamentally however, it is the rigour of medium and short-term planning that is impressive in the lower part of the school. At the junior stage, teachers carry a lot of information about teaching intentions in their heads. Written plans for each day, and the week ahead, are often imprecise. They do not make sufficiently clear how objectives and the organisation of groups take account of pupils' differing prior attainment, age and gender. It is usually the pupils capable of higher attainment whose specific needs are under-estimated. Planning to extend higher order speaking and listening and reading skills, for example, is sparse.

4. Extra-curricular provision is sound. A variety of opportunities are open to junior pupils in the summer term that develop pupils' interests and aptitudes in team sports, drama and music. An average of 16 pupils attended them this year. This term lunch-time clubs are organised for stamp collecting, computer skills, and homework. A small number of pupils, mostly girls, support them. Participation in inter-school sports competitions is now minimal. Despite efforts made by staff, transport problems and other pressures on directed time have defeated them.
5. Considerable strides have been made in the development of effective assessment procedures since 1996. A very positive start is made at Reception. Results of baseline tests are analysed to set targets for the end of Key Stage 1. Similarly results at seven are again analysed to identify specific weaknesses, and extra support is provided for those pupils most in need. A Pupil Performance File is used to keep track of each pupil's attainment in core subjects. Its use adds value as targeted pupils progress well and attain results that are better than might be expected at the time of initial assessment.
6. The initiative that involves pupils in setting and reviewing their own improvement targets has positive benefits. It also has the potential to have an even greater impact on learning. Older juniors are proud of their 'Compact' folders in which they store carefully selected samples of their best work. When this work is discussed with them they identify how they have made progress over time. Some can explain how much they have progressed, and what they now need to concentrate on to overcome weaknesses. However, they do not demonstrate in their daily work that they pay sufficient attention to remedying errors or bad practices, such as leaving some work incomplete and undated. Teachers' marking systems let them down in this respect. Additionally, intentions to moderate and annotate work to explain the level against National Curriculum expectations are still not fully realised.
7. Pupils' records are systematically completed and passed on to receiving secondary schools. Parents are happy with transfer arrangements at both ends of the age range. Annual reports to parents are well received but scrutiny of them reveals some shortcomings. They have no space in which to describe pupils' personal development and in some there is no reference to progress in design and technology. Whilst the content of many reports is perceptive and useful the quality is inconsistent and highlights the need for further guidance for teachers and better monitoring procedures. A space for parents and pupils to add their comments would also be welcomed by families.

43. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

1. The school's provision is good overall. The high quality of relationships stem directly from the way staff and governors communicate the importance of family and society values. The staff team successfully nurture a climate that is supportive and welcoming to boys and girls irrespective of background. Traveller children, and those with special educational needs, are well-integrated into the school community.
2. There is a clear and fair code of conduct that parents and pupils have helped to draw up. Its consistent implementation ensures that pupils benefit from a partnership approach to helping them distinguish between right and wrong.
3. Firm foundations for gaining self-esteem, developing respect for others, property and the environment are

laid in the first year at school. High expectations of the very youngest pupils to behave sensibly and gain independence are well communicated by adults. The excellent rapport between teacher and classroom assistant provides children with the example they need to respond appropriately.

4. As pupils progress through the school positive expectations for behaviour are consolidated, and more opportunities provided for shouldering responsibility and exercising choice. There is an emphasis upon pupils evaluating their own conduct so that they can learn to control anti-social impulses and find strategies for helping each other in difficult situations. 'Circle-time' is organised regularly and effectively for pupils to discuss their own feelings and the emotions they observe in others.
5. The school gives high priority to planning educational visits, environmental projects, and inviting visitors to support learning on a regular basis. These are used very effectively to enable pupils to understand from first hand experience school aims and policies. Many good examples were cited by parents at the Parents' Meeting. During the inspection week a parent's talk about the significance of a pilgrimage to her family encouraged pupils to reflect upon the meaning of special places and journeys. The journal produced by older juniors about investigations on the local Common and marshland amply illustrates how they are developing a concern for the environment and its wildlife. The project also provided a very good opportunity for working collaboratively on a worthwhile task.
6. The previous report identified shortcomings in ensuring good habits in personal tidiness and care of the classroom. There has been improvement, and the standard achieved in lower year groups is a strength now. However, teachers are still not setting high enough expectations for care of workbooks and are inconsistent in the way in which they lead by example through marking strategies and their own personal organisation.
7. Gaps in provision for spiritual and cultural development were also identified in 1996. There is plenty of evidence that good practice exists for spiritual development though it is not explicitly monitored or recorded. Collective worship in classrooms is managed well to cater for the needs of pupils of similar ages, and whole-school assemblies consolidate such themes as caring and friendship. Songs and prayers are carefully chosen to show how the concept of a Deity and Loving Father is central to Christianity.
8. There are many strengths in teaching pupils about local crafts and lifestyles, and the contribution of artists, musicians and other performers to English Heritage. The weakest aspect of provision is still the depth with which cultural development is understood and promoted widely. The School Improvement Plan, though recognising the continuing need for better provision, is not very clear on what action will be taken to effect change. There is insufficient evidence of well planned opportunities to understand cultural diversity. Even though, for example, Traveller pupils are well-integrated, the contribution of their culture does not feature strongly in displays around the school.
9. The school now needs to consider how it can make its objectives for all aspects of provision clear. It should decide how it can celebrate success more openly and imaginatively.

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

1. The support and guidance provided to pupils is predominately good. Induction arrangements for new pupils are effective, and an excellent relationship has been established with pre-school providers. Staff, including teachers, classroom assistants and midday supervisors, display care and commitment to pupils. All are aware of children's individual needs and this enables them to implement school policy consistently. Staff are vigilant when taking pupils on educational visits. Adult helpers are well briefed about care arrangements and what to do in an emergency.
2. Health education lessons and lessons that promote personal and social development are regularly timetabled and well planned. Pupils are taught to acquire good habits in personal hygiene and develop a social awareness that prepares them well for their transfer to high school. They are productively involved

in tracking their own progress and in setting improvement targets. However, pupils do not receive sufficient guidance to help them take proper care of their own workbooks and consequently develop ever higher standards of presentation.

3. Behaviour and anti-bullying policies have been adopted that make a positive contribution to the good standards of discipline which prevail throughout the school. Consultation, both with parents and pupils, has enhanced the credibility of these documents.
4. Attendance is closely monitored by the governing body and headteacher. The importance of regular attendance and punctuality is communicated to parents and is particularly highlighted in the new home-school agreements. Parents have also been advised as to the need for prompt notification in the event of absence. The school adopts an effective follow-up procedure when children are absent from school for extended periods of time. It works particularly well with respect to children from Traveller families. Appropriate support is sought from the Traveller Support Service which arranges for pupils to receive Traveller learning packs to supplement what the school provides. There is, however, some inconsistency with respect to registration procedures particularly at the beginning of afternoon sessions and a more clearly defined policy is desirable.
5. A detailed Child Protection Policy is in force that is understood and appropriately operated by staff.
6. The school has effectively implemented a health and safety improvement programme based on a school-wide risk assessment. The issues raised in the last inspection report have been addressed. Through this process the need for a new front security gate has been recognised and the implementation of this measure will significantly reduce the hazard created by the nearby trunk road. A properly provisioned first aid box is available, and accidents are correctly recorded and notified where appropriate.
7. The recently revised health and safety policy provides a good and relevant framework within which health and safety improvements can take place.

59. **Partnership with parents and the community**

1. Links between the school and parents are sound and provide a positive basis on which collaboration can take place. Parents are kept well-informed as to the progress their children are making at school when they attend meetings to review work. The opportunity for parents to meet teachers and discuss their child's progress through the Monday surgeries and family conferences is a particular strength of the school-parent partnership. Annual reports are viewed positively by parents and carers. They are written constructively and, in particular, include some detailed and useful indicators of improvement and areas for development in core subjects. However, there are inconsistencies in the quality of samples scrutinised, and some omit reports of progress in design and technology. This needs to be reported separately from information technology to ensure its inclusion. There is also a lack of space for specific reference to pupils' personal development. Parents would very much appreciate this addition.
2. Written communication to parents, including the prospectus, the annual report from governors, and advice about helping at home, is friendly in tone, informative, and easy to read. However, some parents express the view that they would like more information concerning topic work for the term and also an explanation of new educational terminology particularly relating to information technology. They are also unclear about the time when registers are closed in each session.
3. Parents actively support the school's homework policy and provide appropriate assistance to their children, notably in reading and spelling. However, they express a desire for further clarification of how homework fits into the overall context of the curriculum and how it is marked or acknowledged.

4. Traveller parents are extremely positive as to the information and co-operation they receive from the school. They welcome the informal access they have to staff and appreciate the sensitive way in which their children are integrated at Walmore Hill. This positive level of co-operation between home and school encourages pupils' attendance and contributes positively to children's development both academically and socially.
5. The school positively benefits from parental assistance in the classroom and also from financial donations contributed by the 'Friends of Walmore Hill'. A small group of parent volunteers assist staff with after-school clubs and in the organisation of special events. Without their support many of these extra-curricular opportunities would cease.
6. Involvement with the outside community is good and significantly contributes not only to academic attainment but also to social and cultural awareness. Outside speakers and visiting musical groups extend children's awareness of cultural and religious diversity. The school has also developed links with the local farming community and a fish smokery; these have been effectively used to extend children's awareness of the world of work.
7. Effective communication is established with pre-school providers, secondary schools and other members of the primary cluster group. The location of the 'Bright Horizons' playgroup within the school provides particularly strong links at pre-school level.
8. The school places high priority on developing its partnership with parents and the community and this is soundly communicated in its aims and School Improvement Plan. Governors should continue with their strategy of consulting parents about changes in policy and practice that directly affect them so that progress is made with the improvements identified.

67. **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

67. **Leadership and management**

1. The school benefits from sound leadership and management. Since 1996 the headteacher has developed the school's strong reputation for being a welcoming place that provides a wide-ranging, interesting curriculum for its pupils. The headteacher, staff and governors share a clear idea of the future educational direction of the school and their principles and values are clearly expressed. These advocate the development of an environment where children can flourish, and realise their full potential. Many aims are successfully translated into practice. The school has earned its reputation with parents and the community for being a reliable and caring place in which pupils can grow and learn in harmony. It enables children from Traveller backgrounds to thrive because mutual respect amongst all members of the school community is consistently promoted.
2. The school has made sound progress with the action plan arising from the previous inspection and is now more effective. It has enabled standards to rise since 1996. There is a much better approach to the teaching of mathematics so that standards have risen at both key stages and there are improvements in the content of writing and in the accuracy of spelling. Immediate steps were taken to secure a safe learning environment for pupils. Curriculum time has been increased at Key Stage 2, and throughout the school teaching time is used more efficiently. Roles and responsibilities of teaching staff are soundly delegated and managed. The headteacher and staff support and encourage each other in their leadership roles. Governors are playing an increasingly important part in sharing the workload, particularly through subcommittees that have been set up over the last two years. The governors are meeting their statutory responsibilities. There are better procedures for tracking pupils' progress, retaining evidence of what they can do and setting future learning objectives. However, daily marking strategies are still a weakness and the presentation of pupils' work is still not as good as it should be. There is the potential to organise directed time more systematically to secure further improvement. Though there has been steady progress

there is still more to be done to enable governors to have a secure overview of standards and teaching quality so that they can measure success with initiatives in the School Improvement Plan. The priorities set are the right ones and the school has a sound strategy for future improvement.

3. This strategy incorporates a rolling programme of policy review to which subject managers contribute soundly. Professional dialogue stemming from discussion at staff meetings leads to the systematic identification of areas for improvement in curriculum policy, resources, staff training, classroom organisation and teaching strategies. Some of these, such as the auditing of resources, are being successfully accomplished. Others are well on the way, such as the enhanced use of information technology across the curriculum. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is planned and implemented effectively. There is still room for improvement in the way the headteacher and co-ordinators report to governors' meetings and the way in which the meetings are minuted. At the moment governors lack concise and specific information about progress with current teaching and learning targets.
4. Monitoring is the weakest feature of leadership and management. The headteacher and teaching colleagues have a heavy teaching load, which makes it very difficult for them to find enough time to regularly observe lessons. It is important that in their strategic planning governors can assure themselves that teachers are able to effectively fulfil leadership roles. Since the last inspection the school has produced a useful teaching and learning policy setting out five main aims and clear criteria against which they may be judged. The challenge now is to plan and organise the proper evaluation of success in meeting them.
5. The climate for learning is positive. All staff act as good role-models in the quality of their relationships. Those between pupils are also very good and they are clearly motivated to succeed. Though good, the ethos of the school could still be better. There is a lack of consistency in classteachers' expectations for high standards of work and in the way they celebrate achievement. The quality of work on display is variable and lets the school image down. There is insufficient evidence of striking and well-mounted work to demonstrate sustained continuity and progression in subject knowledge and skills.

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

1. Teaching staff are well qualified in the primary phase with a good balance of subject specialisms. Expertise in English, music, and science make a positive difference to provision in these subjects, and teachers are increasingly confident in their teaching of mathematics and information technology as a result of recent training opportunities.
2. There are sufficient classroom support and administrative staff. All are of high quality. Their contribution to academic attainment and personal development is considerable. A member of staff with responsibility for administrative duties ensures day-to-day communication systems operate smoothly.
3. Professional development of staff is well planned, for which recognition has been given through the 'Investors in People' accreditation. Appraisal is viewed positively by staff. Needs identified through the annual review of job descriptions lead to the systematic planning of individual and shared training which is also matched to priorities in the School Improvement Plan. The impact on the quality of teaching is good.
4. School accommodation is poor and adversely influences the quality of teaching and learning. These deficiencies are not conducive to the development of high staff morale. Classroom size is barely adequate particularly for pupils in Class 2. The hall acts as a thoroughfare and also incorporates the library; because of this private study time is restricted. The lack of a medical room has a negative impact on the welfare of children. Office accommodation is cramped, inappropriately located and storage space is inadequate. Buildings are old and badly in need of refurbishment. Despite the strenuous efforts of the governing body and headteacher, large-scale financial provision has not yet been made available.
5. Teaching resources are satisfactory in terms of quantity and quality. An inventory of resources now exists and redundant stock has been removed. The school uses a wide variety of external resources, including

field and study centres, a local secondary school swimming pool, and the Local Education Authority Resource Centre.

77. **The efficiency of the school**

1. The school budget is ably managed by the headteacher and the finance committee of the governing body. Day-to-day administration is of high quality. The efficiency of school financial systems is recognised in the latest auditor's report. The administrator is very effectively deployed. She monitors ongoing expenditure and alerts the headteacher if any part of the planned budget looks like nearing its spending limit. The allocation of hours for administrative support is generous when compared with similar schools, but as it releases much of the administrative pressure from the headteacher, it represents a good investment for the school.
2. Governors have recognised the growing need to invest more resources into the support of pupils with special educational needs. Education support staff are efficiently deployed in the classroom where their time and skills are used to good effect, including appropriate help for those with special needs. The school also manages the regular visits from the school support services for Traveller education and special needs children efficiently. The tracking of pupils' performance provides the school with specific information about year groups to target for help from classroom assistants. All ancillary and support staff, including the school cleaner and lunch-time helper, are valued members of the team, and this helps with the smooth running of the school and efficient use of time. A recent innovation is the employment of a specialist to help teach music. The aim is to add value in terms of an enhanced curriculum for the pupils and at this early stage requires close monitoring.
3. The School Improvement Plan is used effectively by staff to match spending on educational resources to areas of priority, and appropriate investment has been made in additional resources for reading, literacy, mathematics and information technology. Substantial sums of money are raised by the 'Friends of Walmore Hill' and these funds are put to good use, for example in renewing and updating library resources.
4. Funds for the professional development of staff are generous and are used effectively to support training priorities identified in the School Improvement Plan. Deployment of staff, judged unsatisfactory in the last report, is now sound, as is the organisation of year groups. Staff evaluate the effectiveness of courses and identify where outcomes have a positive effect on teaching and learning. They can demonstrate, for example, how training has had a discernable impact upon standards in information technology.
5. The previous report highlighted a lack of effective procedures for monitoring the use of the broad range of resources available, and doubts about their accessibility to pupils. The school has addressed these problems and the organisation and deployment of resources is now predominantly satisfactory. There is still a problem with accessibility in some areas but this is usually due to the inadequacies of the building and old, heavy furniture. The library and mezzanine areas are relatively underused.
6. The school has identified appropriate targets for improvement and progress has been made in including success criteria in the School Improvement Plan. However, they are sometimes still not specific enough to make evaluation of progress easy for staff or governors. There is a lack of clarity about when, how and by whom monitoring will be carried out or how outcomes will be recorded. Governors and staff must sustain their effort to address this issue.
7. The school is typical of small schools across the country in so far that it receives a relatively high income for each pupil. Where it is not typical is in having to cope with an unsuitable and inadequate building. Taking these factors into account, the average attainment on entry and the mixed socio-economic circumstances of the pupils, the overall value for money when measured in terms of attainment and progress is good.

84. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

84. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

1. There are nine children under five on the school roll, and they are only in their third week at Walmore Hill. They are taught in a class of fifteen, comprising of a further four pupils who have just completed their Reception year, and two pupils just starting Year 2. Judging by the overall attainment of current five-year-olds, standards by five are above average measured against national benchmarks in the core areas of mathematics and personal and social development. Standards at least meet the desirable outcomes in language and literacy and the other three areas of learning. Fundamentally, children in this age group make very good progress in mathematics and in their personal development. They make good progress overall because of the skill and care of the adults who teach them and manage provision.
2. The school has maintained the quality of education described in the previous inspection and the headteacher and governors are committed to providing even higher quality Early Years provision over the next three years.

Personal and social development

3. There is very good liaison between school staff, the leader of the 'Bright Horizons' group, parents, and other agencies, such as the Traveller Support Service, involved with family support. The school learns as much as it can about children's pre-school experiences and lifestyles. As a result the teacher and her classroom assistant know most children before they are admitted, and are well informed about individual needs. The effect on the quality of induction is very positive. Children settle quickly. They are happy and comfortable not only with adults but also with older peers. They respond very well to the consistent way in which staff provide care and guidance. Expectations for high standards of behaviour and taking responsibility are clearly communicated. Children are very well behaved, take a pride in their learning and the part they play in looking after their classroom.
4. Very occasionally children's attention wanders when they are gathered to listen as the teacher manages discussions involving the whole class. Their interest is soon regained by receptive intervention. The youngest children are least confident at whole-school assembly times. They are still learning to be part of a large group, do not always understand the theme and have yet to learn the songs so that they can join in.

Language and literacy

5. Literacy is promoted very effectively. A strong feature of provision is the extent to which the school establishes what children know and can do when they start school, and identify where they have difficulties. This assessment information is used from the start to plan carefully for every child, including those with special educational needs. It is apparent in the way adults develop speaking and listening skills, and children's ability to make connections between talk and print. There are good opportunities, planned and spontaneous, for talk, reading and writing. In the literacy hour, texts such as 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', for example, take account of children's familiarity with characters, encourage repetition of key words and phrases, and foster their interest in counting, comparing and ordering objects.
6. By five children listen well and have a good understanding of how books are organised. They read individually, having acquired the basic sight vocabulary expected of the age group. They make sense of pictures and enjoy re-telling a story. Higher attainers are beginning to recognise the sounds of consonant blends and read with expression. Children use non-fiction books, and some already know how to use a contents page to find information quickly.
7. There is a wide variation in children's range of vocabulary and their knowledge of writing when they start school. The teaching takes full account of this. There is an emphasis in lessons on the precise vocabulary of the foundations for National Curriculum subjects and religious education, and good access to books, comics

and listening tapes. Daily use is made of captions around the room and adults act as scribes for those who need extra help with spelling and hand-control. Most five-year-olds form letters and words legibly and can distinguish between lower case and capitals. They understand that writing has many purposes and some are beginning to write for themselves. The progress they make by five in presenting their work neatly, and gaining independence, is the aspect of their learning where they are least successful. They need sustained support and encouragement to raise early writing standards to above average.

Mathematics

8. Progress in mathematics is a significant strength. Five-year-olds at Year 1 attain standards well above those expected of children at this age. Activities are extremely well planned, and much has been done to ensure there are plentiful and good quality resources. The very favourable adult:teacher ratio means that these young children receive lots of individual help in a wide variety of practical tasks that encourage counting, ordering, sorting, matching, measuring, and comparing things. For example, the new Reception group have extended their understanding of size and length, and correct use of large, middle-sized, and small through joining in counting games and songs such as 'When Goldilocks went to the house of the Bears'. They are also introduced to more formal ways of recording mathematical information, through signs and symbols, wall charts and graphs, made with the teacher. The prominent display of numbers and mathematical vocabulary in the classroom creates a positive ethos for this area of learning. There is scope to enhance this impact even further by gradually adding more examples of children's work.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

9. The school is providing a solid introduction to scientific and technological learning. The area is exploited very well to develop literacy and numeracy. For example, children's use of their senses is being developed through the term's topic 'Ourselves'. Using the 'Goldilocks' story as stimulus, the teacher's plans and records show that children have been taught how to make porridge. They have looked at a recipe, identified the necessary ingredients, weighed them out, mixed and cooked them, and tasted the outcome!
10. Technological devices surround children in the classroom so that they soon learn about the use of tape cassette recorders, computers, printers, cameras and calculators. They are aided in their understanding of the value of word processing and photography by seeing their work published in the delightful class book 'Our Busy Day at School'. Though the foundations of history, geography and religious education are not quite as evident in topic books and display, this big book is a record of children's discoveries about life at school, its special place in their lives, and shows them how to find their way around the building and grounds.
11. Weather prevented the team from observing children experiencing activities that involve exploring the outdoors, pulling, pushing, digging, building, or finding out how things work. Such activities do not feature in medium-term plans for the half-term. In planning how to monitor the impact of the Early Years Policy the use of the outdoor environment could provide a useful focus for evaluation.

Creative development

12. Reports and samples of work from Year 1 pupils indicate attainment in this area is at least satisfactory and progress steady. There are signs already of notable strengths in music making and musical appreciation. Children enjoy experimenting with sound and rhythm, as they join in class singing and percussion work. Boys and girls enjoy role-play that was, for example, used effectively in a religious education lesson. They were able to dress up in a sari, and act out the games played by characters in a story about a Hindu family. Children are given access to a wide range of different media in their art work. Pictures of skeletons made out of straws are proudly displayed showing they can be used to represent shapes creatively.

Physical development

13. Attainment is at least in-line with expectations in this area. The best feature observed was children's interest and creativity in dance. Again, links with literacy helped make the lesson meaningful as it built on discussion about skeletons and the story of 'Funnybones' by the Ahlbergs. Progress is sound in the mastery of tools for art and craft activities, and the control of pencils and crayons. There are some children who have weak fine motor control and who find drawing, and mark-making difficult. Some worksheets are inappropriate for them and it is activities supported by the classroom assistant, such as making patterns in sand, that best meet their needs.
14. The school has recently added to its resources for extending skills using large construction toys and other outdoor apparatus. It has appropriate aims to make more efficient use of the outdoors.

98. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

98. **English**

1. At both key stages the underlying trend in statutory assessment between 1996-1998 is of above average standards. Information about the relative performance of pupils compared with those in similar schools in 1998 is statistically unreliable for the eleven-year-olds, but for seven-year-olds shows that their performance compares very favourably with national averages at both Levels 2 and 3. In particular, standards are high in writing when compared with benchmarks for similar schools whilst reading tests have average outcomes, highlighting potential for improvement with higher order reading skills. National comparative data is unavailable as yet for 1999. However, school comparisons show standards being maintained at Key Stage 2 and a wider gap between lower and higher attainers at Key Stage 1. Boys have improved in reading at Key Stage 2. Inspection findings are that these results fairly reflect pupils' prior learning.
2. The present Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are currently working at levels within the appropriate key stage bands. At both key stages they will exceed the expected standard in statutory assessment at the end of the academic year in all attainment targets. The size of both groups is small, making predicted percentage outcomes unreliable. However, most pupils are achieving at levels well matched to their prior learning. Within both groups there are pupils whose current attainment exceeds expectation. At both key stages there are also at least 25% of pupils with special educational needs, mainly in language development, whose attainment is below expectation. These needs are more deep-seated at the junior stage, where two older pupils, one of whom is from a Traveller background, are at stage 3 of the special educational needs code of practice.
3. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject and they are becoming skilled in their application of literacy skills across the curriculum. This is as a result of sound teaching matched to the National Literacy Strategy Framework. Pupils with special educational needs, and boys and girls from different backgrounds, including some from Traveller families, have a sound understanding of what they need to do to improve in reading, writing, handwriting and spelling. Individual Education Plans contain realistic objectives and are regularly reviewed and updated. Speaking and listening targets are, however, implicit rather than clearly defined.
4. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is better than at Key Stage 2, resulting in good progress at the infant stage and satisfactory progress in the junior years. It is high expectations, organisational ability and expertise in the subject that makes the qualitative difference to the pace of learning between the two stages. Assessment and record keeping strategies are effective. Teaching objectives are focused on assessment findings. Close liaison with the classroom assistant results in staff time being used to the full to meet the objectives set. Opportunities to extend skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing are exploited, not just in English lessons, but in all curriculum areas.
5. Infants who are shy or whose communication skills are basic benefit from activities that build on prior

experience and special interests. They are encouraged to answer very specific questions, share news about their families and explain what they like about school. More confident and fluent pupils are challenged by questions that require considered thought. Pupils' vocabulary is developed well, for example, through lots of shared talk about the characters and events in the story 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. The availability of resources such as three bears of different sizes successfully encourage mathematical language. By seven most pupils develop speech to a good standard.

6. Since the last inspection there has been a concerted effort to make sure pupils have many opportunities for practising different kinds of reading and writing. Relevant skills are carefully extended through, for example, science and technology tasks such as reading and writing about their senses in the 'Ourselves' topic. Knowledge of the names and sounds of letters of the alphabet, the structure of words, and sentences, and an interest in characters and plot is systematically taught during directed reading and writing times. A good choice of fiction and non-fiction books is easily accessible to pupils and reference skills are introduced that enable pupils to use them for information and pleasure. A comfortable script and cursive handwriting is progressively taught through a structured scheme. Standards in reading are good and sound in writing. Higher attainers are reading and writing independently and they join letters correctly.
7. Pupils with special educational needs are not as accurate in their spelling and punctuation, and they are still hesitant when reading aloud. Nonetheless they have acquired early strategies that help them break down words and learn others by heart. They spell phonetically and are writing recognisable phrases and sentences that convey their ideas sequentially. Their best efforts reflect good progress, for example, neatly transcribed self-addressed envelopes.
8. Occasionally progress is impeded by tasks that are not matched to pupils' understanding. Cutting out and sequencing pictures and sentences, for instance, proved too difficult for two Year 1 pupils to manage independently despite their best efforts. The teacher recognised this at plenary time and immediately made a note to remedy the situation.
9. At Key Stage 2, pupils have a good understanding of the many purposes for writing, and their knowledge of standard English is wide-ranging. They apply their literacy skills well in other curricular areas, notably science, information technology, religious education, environmental studies and creative writing tasks in English. For example, they know where to use bullet points, how to sequence instructions, and explain methodology in science. They express views and preferences, and take notes of key points arising from a talk in religious education. Much of their writing is well-organised and ideas are communicated effectively. Some pupils have difficulties with spelling and handwriting but all make a good effort to adapt and improve their writing to meet the objectives of a task. Higher attainers make good use of paragraphs and complex sentences, including clauses, and direct speech. Pupils are aware of what they need to improve and when they concentrate on good presentation, spelling and punctuation, the outcome is good. It is not as consistent in quality in some workbooks. Overall, progress in writing is sound. Attainment is above average though improvement is still an appropriate target of the School Improvement Plan.
10. Standards in speaking, listening and reading are good, with lower attainers making better progress than the more able pupils. Over the key stage they build soundly on their knowledge of literature and their understanding of character, plot and the many different styles of authorship. They read a wide range of modern fiction that they review regularly, orally and in writing, expanding upon the detail and clarity of views expressed as they get older. By eleven most read fluently, and use a range of cues to help them interpret text. Pupils of all prior attainment have been well taught to use referencing books and skills that they apply confidently as they showed in a religious education lesson. Lower attaining boys in particular are interested in information books and show confidence when talking about what they learn from them. More able pupils are not as good as they could be, however, at scanning and skimming text, or explaining imagery and inference.
11. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is sound overall. Pupils are helped by some stimulating and lively teaching, and by the determined effort of adults who support the classteachers. The most successful teaching practice occurs when teachers or other adults are directly supporting a group of pupils of similar prior attainment. For example, pupils with Individual Education Plans for reading, spelling and comprehension were

observed reading a story together. The teacher made sure the pupil from a Traveller background, who had only recently returned to school, was fully involved. She provided a good role-model, reading aloud with enthusiasm and expression. Questions effectively concentrated on exploring the meaning of words. In the lower junior class higher attaining pupils were appropriately challenged to use dictionaries and their knowledge of the story of 'Cinderella' to compose their own fairy tale using interesting descriptive vocabulary.

12. The weaker feature of teaching at Key Stage 2 is the lack of sufficient attention to the progress and needs of pupils working independently. Some errors and misconceptions occur because a new approach to a task is not explained well enough such as when older pupils were asked to record ideas in the form of a web. When evaluating their reading some pupils, especially accomplished readers, are not set challenging improvement goals that fully stretch them. Teachers provide useful comments and feedback on progress during lessons but their marking of work is too perfunctory to have a positive and sustained impact upon the quality of the presentation of pupils' work.
13. Throughout the school pupils generally enjoy lessons and their attitudes are always positive when the tasks set are interesting. Relationships are of a high order and behaviour good. Pupils are courteous and eager to share ideas and support each other at appropriate times. They are also quiet and purposeful during silent reading time. A minority of pupils find listening times demanding so that occasionally their attention wanders. The excitement of collaborative tasks also sometimes leads to a noise level that impedes concentration. Teachers are usually effective in dealing sensitively with these issues. Nonetheless, more careful recording of pupils' personal development would help identify how classroom organisation and management strategies could be modified to improve some pupils' response to learning.
14. The subject contributes strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In all three classes access to visitors, special visits, environmental research projects, and 'Circle-time' activities bring rich rewards. Pupils learn to express feelings and explore issues of right and wrong, inequality and justice, orally and in writing. Older juniors' work about pollution on the local Common is one of many good examples of such outcomes.
15. The curriculum is broad based and relevant, and considerable advances have been made in the development of assessment procedures so that tracking of pupils' progress is improving rapidly. Parents are closely involved in supporting reading and spelling practice. The school is realising more and more how the analysis of test data and samples of work can help set very specific targets for individual pupils. The weaker aspects of curricular provision result from teachers' inexperience in monitoring the outcomes of their teaching methods, and setting improvement targets not just for pupils but also for themselves. They have not yet achieved sufficient rigour in medium and short-term planning at Key Stage 2. The library and display areas of the school are also under-exploited in celebrating pupils' attainment and demonstrating progression from one class to the next.
16. There is real potential to improve provision as the co-ordination of the subject is very appropriately delegated and targets set are apt. There are sufficient resources and information technology is well used and having a very positive impact. Provided time can be found to undertake regular moderation of samples of work, develop further guidance for marking and planning, and to continue the dialogue with parents, the trend in raising standards should be sustained.

114. **Mathematics**

30 ➤ first paragraph

31 ➤ expand as required

114. **Science**

first paragraph

expand as required

33 **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

[**Subject / course title**]

first paragraph

expand as required

[**Subject / course title**]

first paragraph

expand as required

37 **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

37 **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

first paragraph

39 ➤ expand as required

38 **DATA AND INDICATORS**

38 **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 | 62 | 0 | 14 | 7 |

38 **Teachers and classes**

38 **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

| | |
|--|-------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent): | 3 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher: | 20.67 |

38 **Education support staff (YR – Y6)**

| | |
|--|----|
| Total number of education support staff: | 2 |
| Total aggregate hours worked each week: | 19 |

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| Average class size: | 20.67 |
|---------------------|-------|

| | |
|--|---------|
| Financial year: | 1998 |
| | £ |
| Total Income | 118,552 |
| Total Expenditure | 123,192 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2281 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 9348 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 4708 |

Number of questionnaires sent out: 40
 Number of questionnaires returned: 14

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 | 57 | 43 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren) | 79 | 21 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school handles complaints from parents well | 36 | 50 | 0 | 7 | 0 |
| The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught | 36 | 50 | 7 | 7 | 0 |
| The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress | 50 | 43 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work | 64 | 36 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons | 57 | 29 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home | 50 | 36 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren) | 50 | 43 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school achieves high standards of good behaviour | 50 | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My child(ren) like(s) school | 71 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 0 |