

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Oakridge Parochial School**  
Stroud

LEA area : Gloucestershire

Unique Reference Number : 115674

Headteacher : Mr B. Burn

Reporting inspector: Mrs L. Brackstone  
OIN 21872

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707350

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior and Infant

Type of control: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Oakridge Lynch  
Stroud  
Gloucestershire  
GL6 7NR

Telephone number: 01285 760269

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs M. Fern

Date of previous inspection: January 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs L. Brackstone, Rgl	English	Attainment and progress
	Art	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
	Music	Teaching
	Physical education	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
	Under fives	Leadership and management
Mrs S. Hall, Lay Inspector		Attendance
		Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
		Partnership with parents and the community
Mr R. W. Burgess, TI	Mathematics	The curriculum and assessment
	Science	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
	Information technology	The efficiency of the school
	Design and technology	
	Geography	
	History	
	Special educational needs	
	Equal opportunities	

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- ◆.The excellent relationships within the school.
- ◆.The excellent links with the community.
- ◆.The very good provision for spiritual, moral and social development.
- ◆.The very good leadership by the headteacher and governing body.
- ◆.The very good attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils.
- ◆.The very good and effective partnership established between the school and the parents.
- ◆.The very good quality of teaching throughout the school

**Where the school has weaknesses**

- I. The number of pupils achieving above national standards in mathematics and science.
- II. Insufficient depth of multicultural aspects across the curriculum.

**The school has many more strengths than weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be tackled. The plan will be sent out to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.**

**How the school has improved since the last inspection**

The school has improved well since the last inspection. The headteacher, staff, governing body and parents have formed a very good and effective partnership. The school has successfully developed and implemented plans to tackle all the weaknesses identified in the last report. The standards in information technology have risen considerably and the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Provision for physical activities have been made during weekly sessions at the local leisure centre. The curriculum is planned as a whole, to include literacy and numeracy hours and this ensures that skills are progressively taught throughout the school. Great care is taken to ensure that the village green area, which is used for outdoor play, is appropriately supervised during break times. The school identifies clear and realistic targets and is well placed to continue to build on its improvements.

**Standards in subjects**

In accordance with statutory requirements, results of National Curriculum assessments are not reported, as the number of pupils in the year group was less than 10.

The number in each year group varies considerably, also the number of pupils with special educational needs. In this small school this has a significant impact when comparing performance both nationally and with similar schools. The number of pupils undergoing national testing and assessment are too small and variable from year to year to provide a reliable guide to the overall trend of standards throughout the school.

Levels of attainment upon admission to the school are broadly average. By five years of age almost all pupils attain at least satisfactory standards in all the areas of learning. During the inspection standards for the majority of pupils were good in English and information

technology. They were satisfactory in mathematics and science. Progress is good for the majority of pupils, particularly for the pupils with special educational needs.

### Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Very good	Very good	Very good
Mathematics	Very good	Good	Good
Science	-	Good	Good
Information technology	-	Good	Very good
Other subjects	Very good	Very good	Very good

Teaching is very good. It was excellent or very good in nearly half of the lessons observed and good in the rest. It was particularly good in English lessons in both key stages, in art and geography in Key Stage 1 and in information technology at Key Stage 2. Teachers' good subject knowledge and enthusiasm make a strong contribution to the quality of teaching.

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

### Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good.
Attendance	Attendance is very good. The majority of pupils arrive punctually.
Ethos*	The school has a very strong ethos which is widely respected. Relationships are excellent throughout the school. The staff are very hardworking and committed to the care and education of the pupils.
Leadership and management	The headteacher and governing body provide very good leadership and manage the school very well. They have developed a clear sense of purpose and educational direction for the school.
Curriculum	The curriculum is good, being generally broad and balanced. There are good procedures for assessing the attainment of pupils. Provision for out of school activities is good.
Pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Records of progress are clear and are used well for individual education plans.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Provision for cultural development is good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good number of staff to meet the needs of the curriculum, who are well deployed. Resources are good in both range and quantity. The accommodation is unsatisfactory.
Value for money	The school provides good value for money.

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

## The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not Happy about
III.They find it easy to approach the school. IV.Their children like school. V.The school keeps them well informed about their children's progress. VI.The school enables their children to achieve a good standard of work. VII.The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children. VIII.They feel that the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school.	IX. The work that their children are

The responses to the questionnaire sent out to parents and at the meeting with inspectors prior to the inspection indicate a very high level of satisfaction with the education provided and the standards achieved by the school. Inspectors' judgements support the positive views expressed by the majority of parents.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to further raise standards and the quality of education, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

X. Improve the standards of higher attaining pupils in both mathematics and science.

(paragraphs 98 and 110)

In addition to the key issue above, the following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These can be found in paragraphs 47, 134 and 137:

XI. Improve provision for multicultural education so pupils are able to develop a deeper awareness and understanding of the multicultural society in which they live and will work in as adults.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Characteristics of the school

1. Oakridge Parochial School is situated in the Cotswold village of Oakridge Lynch, about five miles from Stroud. The school mainly serves both the village itself and surrounding areas which are generally considered advantaged. No pupils are eligible for free school meals. On entry to school most pupils are of average ability overall. The school operates an annual admissions policy for children to start school in the September, following their fourth birthday. Most pupils have attended a nursery or a playgroup. At the time of the inspection there was only one child who was under five and was accommodated in the Key Stage 1 class. There are 18 girls and 24 boys on roll, aged from four to 11. The school is much smaller than other small primary schools. The school has recognised six pupils as having special educational needs and this is broadly in line with national averages. One pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need. English is the first language of all pupils.

2. The school was originally established in 1837, but the present building dates from 1872. The accommodation consists of two classrooms, a teaching area and library. In addition to the main teaching areas there is an office that is used by both the headteacher and secretary for administration purposes and it also combines as a staff room. There is no outdoor play area. The school has very strong links with the parish church of St Bartholomew's and the Oakridge Methodist Church.

3. The aims of the school are:

- to foster awareness of the arts, music, science, technology and literature;
- to value the individual;
- to develop an understanding of the interdependence of people and their environment;
- to encourage spiritual and moral development and an understanding of other faiths, cultures and societies, as well as their own;
- to support self evaluation by both staff and children;
- to provide the resources required to teach the school curriculum and provide equal opportunities for all children to participate in it;
- to develop a partnership with parents and the community that benefits the school.

4. The school's priorities are:

- literacy – to improve standards in writing at both key stages and implement new plans;
- numeracy – to introduce the National Numeracy Strategy and a published mental arithmetic scheme;
- standardise whole school planning;
- identify a good progression of skills in history and geography;
- develop a home-school agreement;
- restructure teaching groups into smaller groups during the morning session.

## Key Indicators

5. The number of pupils being assessed at both key stages is less than 10 therefore the school is not required to publish its National Curriculum test results.

## Attendance

		%
Percentage of half days (sessions) Missed through absence for the Latest complete reporting year	Authorised	School 3.6
	Absence	National comparative data 5.7
	Unauthorised	School 0.0
	Absence	National comparative data 0.5

## Exclusions

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

## Quality of teaching

		%
Percentage of teaching observed which is :	Very good or better	48
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **Attainment and progress**

6. Most children start school with knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of learning which are about that expected of their age. Baseline assessment, administered soon after children start school, confirms this picture. On this basis, inspection evidence suggests that children make good progress during their early schooling. By the age of five, their attainment is about average. The development of language and literacy skills is good and the children have a sound understanding of number and shape. They also develop confidence in the creative areas of learning. The children enjoy physical activities and participate in physical education lessons with enthusiasm. They attain satisfactory standards in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Reception children work together with Year 1 pupils, but at levels appropriate to their age and prior attainment. Their good progress is helped through planning, careful match of work to their needs and the very good contribution made by support staff. The high quality of teaching has a significant impact on the progress made by the children.
7. In 1998 the number of pupils at both Year 2 and Year 6 was less than five. It is not therefore appropriate to report national performance data for comparing the schools performance with national averages or the performance of pupils in similar schools.
8. When compared with previous results, these show that there has been an improvement in all three core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The numbers of pupils undergoing national testing and assessment are too small and variable from year to year to provide a reliable guide to the overall trend of standards throughout the school.
9. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection at the end of both key stages in English are good. In mathematics and science standards are satisfactory. Due to the small number of pupils in each year group standards do vary from year to year. By the end of both key stages, the pupils attain standards in information technology which are well above those expected for their age and they have very good skills of data handling and communication using information technology.
10. These standards reflect the improvement resulting from the careful planning of skills, particularly in Key Stage 2, introduced since the last inspection. This has resulted in improvement in the quality of teaching. The school has set clear and realistic targets for further improvement.
11. From a broadly average attainment on entry, pupils make good progress in all aspects of English. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, working well towards the clear and appropriate targets set for them. Throughout the school, pupils attain good standards in speaking and listening. By the age of 7, most pupils listen attentively to adults and to each other, expressing themselves clearly. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils confidently share discussions about texts featured during the literacy session. Across the school standards in the basic skills of writing are good. At age 7, pupils are writing independently and legibly and use appropriate vocabulary. Standards of presentation clearly improve as they progress through the school and, by the age of 11, the majority of pupils have acquired good handwriting styles. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are able to write for a range of different audiences and purposes. Older pupils are able to write extended pieces of work, for example, about their topic work. Spelling is generally good. By the end of Key Stage

1, the majority of pupils have developed strategies to work out unfamiliar words and read confidently at good levels. Most pupils are fluent readers by the end of Key Stage 2 and read with accuracy and fluency.

12. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress in the development of mathematical knowledge and skills. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils work satisfactorily with numbers up to 20, use their numeracy skills appropriately and confidently naming two-dimensional shapes. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of arithmetic, area and shape. Most have good problem solving skills and use a variety of ways to organise and record their work. Pupils have good opportunities available to them during the recently introduced numeracy sessions to practise their number skills. This commitment to numeracy means that skills are practised on a daily basis and pupils are able to use and apply mathematical skills to support progress in other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs also making appropriate progress and work well towards the clear and appropriate targets identified for them.

13. Progress in science is satisfactory. Pupils in Key Stage 1 acquire a sound knowledge and understanding and develop good investigative skills. They confidently explain about the needs for living things and use appropriate scientific vocabulary. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils recognise the need to have fair tests. They carry out a wide range of investigations, predict, observe and measure with appropriate precision and record their work well. Pupils with special educational needs also make sound progress.

14. Pupils' attainment in information technology is good and is above national expectations in both key stages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Pupils make good progress in art and design and technology at Key Stage 2. Throughout the school pupils make sound progress in geography, history, music and physical education.

15. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, supported by detailed, high quality individual education plans, which show clear and appropriate targets for learning. The class teacher initially identifies pupils with special educational needs. All pupils on the special educational needs register have individual education plans which set targets for learning and monitoring and give dates for reviewing progress.

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

16. This aspect is one of the schools many strengths and has a positive effect on attainment. Pupils' attitudes to learning throughout the school are very good. They are very eager to learn, interested in their work, and settle quickly in lessons. For example, in a literacy lesson the pupils were keen to start their work on their shared text big book session. They became thoroughly absorbed in the story and enthusiastically acted out the characters. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers, ask relevant questions and make pertinent contributions to class discussions. They follow instructions carefully, apply themselves wholeheartedly to their tasks and persevere with these until they are completed. Concentration is well sustained without constant supervision. For example, pupils frequently organise themselves into groups and work sensibly with each other. Pupils respond well to any opportunities given to work independently and they take a pride in what they have accomplished. This happened during the inspection in a Year 3 and 4 geography lesson where pupils maturely investigated the differences between two-dimensional maps and three-dimensional globes.

17. When children first start school they gain increasing confidence and independence. This means that, by the time they are five, they have developed social skills appropriate for their age. They know the behaviour expected in various situations, they have good attitudes to learning and concentrate well.

18. Pupils' behaviour is very good. They display self-discipline and maturity in their conduct during lessons and around the school. Their obedience in class helps to promote their learning and their orderliness around the building helps the school to function as a happy and harmonious community. Pupils play sensibly and safely together, mixing well and showing consideration for one another. At lunchtime they show good manners and social skills and it is a pleasant and civilised occasion. Pupils follow school rules and conventions, such as their classroom charters. There have been no exclusions in a number of years. The school has maintained the high levels of behaviour and discipline that were acknowledged in the previous report.

19. Relationships in the school are excellent. Pupils get on well with one another and co-operate effectively in class. They offer one another support, for example, where older pupils help care for younger ones. They are also happy to celebrate one another's talents and appreciate the achievements of others. For example, this frequently happens at Key Stage 2 in information technology lessons when pupils work in pairs and then eagerly share each other's work. Pupils are trustworthy and treat their surroundings with respect. They are polite and courteous to adults and engage confidently in conversation with them.

20. Pupils respond well to opportunities to take responsibility and make a contribution to the life of the school. Members of all year groups willingly undertake tasks to help their class, such as taking the registers to the office or collecting up books. Year 6 pupils happily and effectively take on a range of duties, such as library monitoring or helping staff at playtime. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously and carry them out with enthusiasm.

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## **Attendance**

21. Pupils' attendance is very good, and has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be good. Parents say that their children enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in the attendance rate for 1997/98 of 96.4 per cent which was well above the national average. There were no unauthorised absences and parents ensure that their children arrive at school on time. Pupils' attendance rates and punctuality have a beneficial effect on attainment and progress.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

22. The quality of teaching is very good overall. It was very good or excellent in nearly half of lessons seen and good in the remainder. It was particularly good in English sessions in both key stages.

23. Teaching of children under five is very good. There is detailed planning and careful consideration has been given to planning for the transition into the National Curriculum. The staff have excellent relationships with the children and are calm in their approach. They are well organised and encourage both independence and initiative. Good teamwork and

communications are a strength of the provision for these young children and promote good standards. All staff have a good understanding of how young children learn. They effectively monitor the children's progress and use the results of assessment effectively to inform planning.

24. The very good lessons in both key stages have suitable learning objectives. These are clearly stated in the teachers' planning and carefully match to the pupils' prior levels of attainment. Lessons proceed at a good pace and a range of teaching strategies are used to good effect. Skilled questioning techniques ensure that all pupils are challenged and teachers monitor pupils' progress carefully during the lesson. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 enthusiastically responded to a geography session that focused on the world as a sphere. The lesson was very well planned, carefully explained and delivered with appropriate encouragement and interaction.

25. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in the classroom as individuals or in groups. Special support assistants work very effectively under the direction of the class teachers. Pupils are also withdrawn for teaching sessions of short duration for work linked directly to their individual education plans. Monitoring and assessment of targets set are good.

26. Teachers' medium term planning is generally detailed and follows National Curriculum programmes of study. Individual lesson plans clearly identify learning objectives. The planning effectively covers the programmes of study of the National Curriculum and teachers work hard to prepare lessons that are well organised and set in contexts that engage pupils' interests and enjoyment. There are good examples of appropriate and effective teaching where resources are used well. This results in challenging work and pupils making good progress. Teaching is particularly effective in lessons where there is good subject knowledge and enthusiasm. In these lessons, expectations are high and there is good use of resources. This happens in information technology lessons at Key Stage 2 where very good use is made of teacher expertise and high quality equipment. Throughout the school, teachers are successful at creating an orderly, working atmosphere that ensures that there is little or no disruption. Expectations of good behaviour are high.

27. Teaching is effective in all areas of the curriculum. Teachers give clear instructions and explanations and pupils know what is expected of them. There is an appropriate balance between the use of whole-class, group and individual teaching in most lessons. Questions are used effectively to assess understanding and help progress. Throughout the school there are good examples of teachers providing useful comments to pupils about their progress and how they might improve further. Relationships between pupils and teachers are excellent and make a significant contribution to pupils' standards of attainment and the quality of education provided.

28. Pupils' work is marked regularly; comments are used to provide challenge and motivation. Pupils are encouraged to take reading books home and work is given which is linked to the work in school. For example, pupils in Key Stage 2 undertook comprehensive river studies during the summer break as a result of their school visit prior to their holiday. At the meeting for parents held prior to the inspection, some parents expressed a concern about the inadequate level of provision of homework but the inspection team do not support this.

29. Individual education plans for pupils identified as having special educational needs are in place. These are of a high quality, set realistic and careful targets and state how they should be achieved, with reports to record the outcomes. Plans are reviewed regularly and targets adjusted to ensure that pupils achieve success and continue to make appropriate

progress.

30. The very high quality of teaching throughout the school makes a positive contribution to the standards attained and the quality of education provided.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

31. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. The framework for the curriculum for the whole school ensures that it is broad and balanced and fully covers all current requirements. The provision to cover all the areas of learning for children under the age of five is effective. The time allocated to the statutory curriculum is appropriate. The school provides appropriately planned programmes for both literacy and numeracy, based on national initiatives. Sensible alterations have been made to the school day to allow for an increase in the amount of time required to teach literacy and numeracy and still provide sufficient time for the teaching of other subjects.

32. The curriculum planned for children under five is of a good quality and includes the appropriate areas of learning. The curriculum planned for the younger children effectively prepares them for the National Curriculum. The children's attainment, academic, physical and social development is assessed well on admission to the school and the results are used to plan their work effectively. Good use is made of early assessment results in order to identify appropriate learning objectives to be used in planning work for groups and individual children. The teacher makes good provision for the development of the children's literacy skills and takes many opportunities to extend their skills in reading and writing.

33. Throughout the school, the taught curriculum promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. There are good policies and schemes of work in place for the all subjects. These take account of recent educational developments such as the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. At both key stages there is a co-ordinated long-term plan to identify what pupils are expected to learn in each year. This ensures that pupils are provided with sufficient challenge, developing skills and knowledge progressively and systematically. Teachers work from their own medium-term plans as part of a systematic structure. Teachers' short-term planning recognises different age and ability groups within the class, ensuring that pupils are provided with opportunities suited to what they should be achieving by the end of each key stage. The use of a systematic plan to provide for developing each pupil to their highest potential contributes effectively towards pupils' equality of access and their opportunity to learn.

34. The school provides appropriate time for the study of all subjects of the National Curriculum in both key stages. The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides appropriate opportunities for the pupils to develop their social, academic and personal skills. It successfully meets the aims of the school by providing opportunities for the pupils to become self-confident, with an informed interest in their own learning and personal target setting. All the pupils have equal access and opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in all areas of the curriculum.

35. Provision for extra-curricular activities to support the curriculum is good and pupils benefit from taking part in competitive sport. Included in this provision are clubs run by staff at lunchtime and after school, such as the computer club and recorders club; these foster pupils' developing interest in these subjects. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in a wide range

of activities and they achieve good success in competition both locally and nationally, for example, in the Junior Engineers competition. Other activities include music tuition, information and communication technology and French. All activities and clubs are open to both boys and girls.

36. The curriculum is enriched by good educational visits, carefully matched to the age and interests of the groups of pupils making the trips, as well as by meeting visitors who bring special insights and skills into the school. The school makes appropriate provision for the development of the creative arts. There is an appropriate programme of sex education and thoughtful teaching about the harmful effects of drugs.

37. The school's good provision for personal and social education, both formal and informal, makes a significant contribution to the pupils' self confidence and to improved standards of attainment and progress. Many of the lessons successfully encourage pupils to accept responsibility for areas of their learning.

38. The planning of work for pupils with special educational needs is good. The carefully constructed individual education plans provide an effective and balanced curriculum for these pupils. Their attainment is assessed, recorded, reported to the parents and used in planning future work. The school implements the Code of Practice successfully, regarding identification, assessment and monitoring of pupils with special educational needs. The early identification, assessment and monitoring of pupils with special educational needs are very effective, and this ensures their equal access to the curriculum. The school provides good support for the development of literacy, numeracy and communication skills of these pupils. Teachers take account of the needs of these pupils in planning their daily lessons. Regular reviews of pupils' progress are held. A very good curriculum is provided for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need.

39. Each subject in the curriculum has a policy statement of satisfactory quality and there are comprehensive schemes of work in English, mathematics, science and information technology. The planning of other subjects is taken from the topic cycle from which the medium and short-term plans are derived. The planning also incorporates opportunities for the assessment of the pupils' work. Additional time not allocated to the National Curriculum is used effectively to teach moral education and interpersonal skills.

40. Homework is used well at both key stages and pupils regularly take spellings and times tables home to learn. Pupils are encouraged, through homework, to read regularly and they take home both their reading and their library books. They research information for history and geography topics, for example, their work on rivers, which further benefits their skills in literacy, particularly reading. Work undertaken at home, inspired by lessons, adds to the quality of learning and makes a good contribution to pupils' progress.

41. Assessment of the levels of attainment of children under five is good. A very good system has been established for recording children's attainment on admission and during their time in the Reception class. The information is shared with parents. Links with the local pre-school groups ensure that the teacher has good knowledge of her future pupils before they start school. The assessments are accurate and used effectively as a basis for the planning of activities for children. This results in work that is matched effectively to their abilities.

42. The school has good procedures for the assessment and recording of pupils' progress and attainment. Significant features of this are the targets set for individual pupils and the comprehensive portfolios of moderated work in English, mathematics and science which act as



a good reference against which individual levels of attainment can be matched. Marking of pupils' work is usually effective in improving performance, not least because of the frequent comments encouraging improvement. Parents are included in the process of improvement of pupils' performance through the clear and informative annual reports.

- **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

43. Overall the school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Provision for cultural development is good. The vast majority of parents acknowledge that the school's values and ethos have a positive effect on the pupils' learning.

44. Provision for spiritual development is very good and is focused in religious education and collective worship. Pupils have the chance to learn about some of the festivals of major world faiths and to respect the beliefs of others. Collective worship successfully promotes the values of the school and includes the chance for pupils to reflect. Pupils also experience a sense of wonder in subjects such as art, music, science and history. For example, during the inspection the youngest children were observed enthusiastically making patterns on paper with paint using their fingertips. The school also works hard to maintain the self-esteem of the pupils and this is particularly evident with the pupils who are annually involved in the Gloucester Dance Festival.

45. The provision for moral development is very good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils know the school rules and parents are effectively encouraged to support the discipline policy. They respond well to the praise that is frequently given and to the sanctions that are occasionally required. Teachers monitor behaviour and pupils are taught to distinguish between the principles which separate right from wrong. Pupils quickly learn what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The school fosters values of honesty, fairness and respect for truth and justice and provides a moral code as a basis for behaviour.

46. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to work in a range of social groups and with different adults. They are offered appropriate responsibility, for example, they return the register to the office and undertake jobs within the classroom. The use of discussion time in class is effective in helping pupils to take turns and to listen to the view of others. They are also encouraged to raise funds for charities such as Children in Need. The school takes a full part in the immediate community by involvement with local dance festivals and sporting competitions. The adults within the school provide good role models and experiences are enhanced by visits from church officials and local volunteers.

47. The pupils cultural development is promoted well through a range of visits. For example, pupils have been to the theatre to watch both pantomimes and ballets and have visited the Black Country Museum in the Midlands and studied different types of bridge structures in the Bristol area. Pupils share in the celebrations of different cultures in religious education and music from other countries is appreciated by visits made to the school. For example, an African musician has performed in front of the pupils and involved them in music making and dance. However, there are insufficient opportunities for the pupils to develop a deeper awareness and understanding of the multicultural society in which they live and will work in as adults.

48. There has been a significant improvement in provision for the spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils' since the last inspection.

## **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

49. The school's support for its pupils and its arrangements for pupils' guidance and welfare are good. The school is a caring community and pupils are well known and valued by staff. Relationships through the school are excellent and pupils feel happy and safe. The main responsibility for providing support is conscientiously undertaken by class teachers; other adults working in the school also make significant contributions. Supervision at playtime and lunchtime is good. New pupils are sensitively introduced into the school community through a series of visits and induction is tailored to suit individual circumstances. Support for pupils with special educational needs is also good.

50. The school's procedures for monitoring academic progress and personal development are good. Teachers keep detailed records of pupils' attainment and monitor their social and personal development. Very good systems are in place to monitor and promote good attendance. Teachers generally know why pupils are absent and the school is effective in following up unexplained absences. However, the school has no procedures for recording pupils who leave the premises during the day, for example, for medical appointments.

51. The measures for promoting discipline and good behaviour are good and the school operates as an orderly community. The high expectations and ethos of good behaviour are reinforced in lessons and by the example of adults working in the school. They are underpinned by a clear behaviour policy that emphasises positive behaviour management. Both teachers and lunchtime supervisors give rewards for good behaviour. Pupils are presented with these certificates in weekly celebration assemblies. Sanctions are rarely needed. The school has no policy on anti-bullying and has not yet formulated a policy on the use of force to control or restrain pupils.

52. The school's arrangements for promoting the health, safety and general well being of the pupils is generally good. The headteacher is the member of staff with responsibility for child protection. He has had no recent training, nor has the school drawn up its own policy. The school pays good attention to health and safety and all members of the school community are vigilant of hazards, especially at playtime and lunchtime. A key issue in the last report was for the school to review the use of the village green and road, and the level of lunchtime supervision. Lunchtime supervision has increased and gives appropriate coverage of the outside area. The school has sought advice about a new sign system around the village green, but no action has yet been taken. The health and safety policy is useful and informative and governors undertake termly checks of the premises. Some teaching staff are qualified in first aid. The library serves as a medical room and good procedures are in place to care for pupils who are ill or injured.

## **Partnership with parents and the community**

53. The life of the school is greatly enhanced by its relationships with parents and the community. These links make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning and are major strengths of the school.

54. The quality of information which the school provides to parents is very good and this helps parents to take an active part in their children's education. There is an 'open door' policy, and parents feel able to come into school to discuss their concerns. New parents are well informed through visits to the school and helpful booklets. The prospectus and annual

governors' report to parents are clear and informative, but have minor omissions of statutory information. Parents receive written information about future events and the school celebrates the school's successes through articles in the village magazine. After requests from parents, the school now sends parents helpful information about the topics that their children will be studying each term. Pupils' annual reports are of a good quality and contain some information on how pupils can improve their work. Consultation evenings are held twice a year and provide valuable opportunities for parents and teachers to discuss pupils' progress. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed about the pupils' progress through regular reviews.

55. Parents' involvement in pupils' learning is very good and their contributions are highly valued by the school. This reflects the findings of the previous report. A good number of parents have volunteered to help with swimming, extra-curricular activities and with school productions. The active parent and teacher association organises social and fund-raising events. Parents made significant contributions to the drafting of the home-school agreement and in revising the format of pupils' annual reports. The majority of parents are satisfied with the level of homework and the school has drawn up its own policy. Parents are involved in the home-school reading scheme and this has a beneficial effect on pupils' learning.

56. The school's partnership with the community is excellent; this judgement is in line with the previous report. These links enrich the pupils' experiences and make a significant contribution to pupils' attainment and personal development. The school has strong links with the Methodist and parish churches in the village. Local clergy take acts of collective worship,

and the pupils visit the parish church and the cathedral for special services. Members of the community support school appeals and events and some assist with termly nature walks and reading. The life of the school is enriched by the significant contributions made by the Oakridge Parochial School Trust. The school arranges a very good range of visits. For example, pupils have visited the Holst Museum to study the Victorian era. Visitors, such as actors from a local theatre and a dance group, make valuable contributions to pupils' learning. The school works closely with other schools in the area and pupils have attended joint activities such as music and sports days. Pupils have recently taken part in a dance festival, literacy competition and various sports competitions. The school raises pupils' awareness of citizenship through raising money for charity and through attending events organised by the public services. The school has made useful links with the world of work through connections with a computer company and a local blacksmith.

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

### **Leadership and management**

57. The leadership and management of the school is very good. The headteacher, staff and the governing body have developed a clear sense of purpose and educational direction for the school. This promotes an ethos for learning which is widely respected.

58. The school produced a clear action plan in response to the last inspection report and has successfully addressed all the issues raised. It has monitored progress in these areas and is continuing to develop some aspects, such as making appropriate provision to ensure that athletics and outdoor activities are fully covered and maintaining the very good teaching and learning standards.

59. The headteacher provides very effective and enthusiastic leadership in order to realise the school's aims. The school has appropriate and well-defined aims, which are being met. The headteacher involves all staff in management issues and there are very good links with the governing body. The skills and experience of staff are employed to support developments in curricular, administrative and pastoral aspects of the school. Subjects are led by suitably qualified co-ordinators.

60. The governing body operates effectively. Minutes of the full governing body show that the governors play a clear role in the management of the school. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities and work in conjunction with the staff to ensure that the results of their decisions can be traced throughout the school. They have set targets in relation to school management and the curriculum.

61. There is a comprehensive system in place involving all staff and governors in establishing needs for inclusion in the school development plan and identifying priorities. The published plan is an appropriate planning document which links actions with desired learning outcomes or the means to judge success through learning. It is a costed, effective action plan with valuable, achievable goals, which outline the main needs for development.

62. The leadership and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs are good. The Code of Practice is fully complied with. Regular targets are derived from individual education plans and are evaluated appropriately. Annual reviews for children with Statements of Special Educational Need are properly managed by the school and they meet statutory requirements. The special educational needs co-ordinator arranges regular meetings

with staff. There is a designated governor for special educational needs and the governing body is kept fully informed about issues. The governors meet their statutory reporting obligations.

63. The school's aims, values and policies suitably influence the work of all staff and there is a shared sense of purpose. Parents fully support the school's aims, as reflected in the questionnaire and at the parents' meeting prior to the inspection. Their views are valued and used to improve the quality of education, such as in the school's recent plan to improve contact between home and school. The school meets statutory requirements for the recording and publication of National Curriculum assessments and other requirements, including those for collective acts of worship and sex education.

64. The management of the school is very good, with effective systems in place to implement planned development, control day-to-day matters and to provide accountability. The pervading ethos in the school is very good and reflects its commitment to quality education.

### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

65. There is an appropriate number of teaching staff, reflecting the governing body's objective to focus resources on ensuring appropriate provision for the range of ages and attainment, particularly at Key Stage 2

66. Teachers have appropriate levels of qualifications in the subjects and this makes a significant contribution to the pupils' progress. Job descriptions have been provided for teachers. Responsibilities for co-ordinating subjects are still being developed, following the

recent appointment of one member of staff. Arrangements for the induction of staff are informal, but all staff are well supported by colleagues. The priorities for in-service training are linked appropriately to the school development plan. The school has good arrangements for staff development to benefit and extend expertise. Good use has been made of training days to address some issues through effective liaison with other local schools, such as familiarising teachers with newly acquired equipment for information technology. Staff make good use of their training and share expertise with their colleagues. There is an appropriate appraisal system.

67. There is a good level of classroom support for children under the age of five and for pupils with special educational needs. The assistants make a valuable contribution to supporting pupils' learning. Lunchtime supervisors are fully involved in school life and ensure that lunchtimes are well organised and harmonious. Administrative staff provides good support to the school and contribute effectively to the smooth running of the school in an unobtrusive manner. The school is kept clean and tidy by conscientious cleaning staff.

68. Staff working with children under five make a good contribution to the children's development. They are suitably qualified and they foster positive working relationships with the children. The accommodation for these children is satisfactory. There is sufficient space in the classroom but insufficient area and resources for outdoor play. The resources for the teaching of the areas of learning are satisfactory, with the exception of large apparatus for physical development. There are sufficient computers and books. The staff make good use of the locality to extend the opportunities for learning.

69. The school is well cared for and the classrooms are of a suitable size for the current numbers in the classes. In spite of recent improvements to the school, the overall standard of accommodation is unsatisfactory. The accommodation has many steps and different levels within the building, which may present some difficulties to any members of staff or pupils with physical disabilities. The lack of outdoor facilities hinders play and other activities. The small outdoor area available to them limits older pupils in Key Stage 2. The school has no hall although it benefits from the use of the local leisure centre for some physical education activities.

70. The provision of resources for most subjects is satisfactory. Resources for information technology are very good. There is a good range of books to support the literacy hour, including big books and group readers, suitable for different age groups. Money for books is used well to support the teaching of literacy. Resources for children under the age of five are satisfactory, but there are no large outdoor toys. Regular visits to places of interest stimulate pupils' interest and enjoyment of their work.

### **The efficiency of the school**

71. Financial planning is very good, the headteacher and the governors exercise effective budgetary control and they make well-informed decisions about the use of resources available to the school. Careful financial planning ensures that the annual budget expenditure is focused to support educational developments and priorities which are reviewed each year. The governors' long-term planning enables them to plan strategically for changes in income caused by fluctuating declining pupil numbers and to take sensible decisions when employing staff to maximise financial resources. The finance committee meets regularly and has acted decisively and in the school's best interest, for example, through increasing teaching hours to enable Key Stage 2 pupils to be taught as two groups for the morning sessions. Additional

funds allocated to support pupils with special educational needs are used effectively to provide good support. The school development plan includes appropriate priorities that are costed and linked to the school budget, although strategic plans lack focus and sufficient success criteria. The school plans ahead for financial contingencies effectively. The governing body receives regular financial reports from the school and uses the information effectively to plan.

72. Day-to-day financial control and administration are good. The part-time administrative assistant deals very capably with the day-to-day finance. The local education authority offers adequate support and training to assist the headteacher. The governing body monitors the procedures and regularly receives a financial summary and statement which gives up to date information clearly. Specific funding for staff development and special educational needs is spent appropriately; funds spent on improving the learning resources are adequate to maintain educational standards.

73. The accommodation is used well; some interesting displays of pupils' work and information in a range of forms enhance the environment and provide stimulation and interest for pupils and parents. The library also provides an information technology area where classes can be taught throughout the day and has a significant influence on improving both pupils' reading and computer skills. The available storage space is organised well and resources are easily accessible.

74. Teachers and learning support assistants are deployed efficiently and financial resources are used effectively to maintain provision and fund new developments. Resources are used well to support learning. For example, the number of computers has a positive effect on the attainment and progress of the pupils. Good use is made of visits into the community and visitors to the school and these enhance and enrich the curriculum. Time is mostly used efficiently; lessons usually start and finish punctually and little time is wasted in getting down to work. Overall efficiency in all aspects of school management and provision of education is good.

75. The school makes good use of funds raised to supplement resources. Funds provided to extend the provision of books for the National Literacy Strategy have been used well. The school makes prudent use of money from outside agencies and a charitable trust following a bequest from a member of the local community.

76. In terms of the good progress pupils make by the age of 11, the educational standards achieved and the good attitudes which pupils have to their work this school provides good value for money. This value is also evident in the very good quality of teaching, the very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development, the effectiveness with which the resources are used and the significant strengths in the leadership and management of the school.

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

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

77. Children enter school at the beginning of the academic year in which they will have their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection there was one child under five who was accommodated in the Key Stage 1 class. When children start school they attend on a part-time basis and are gradually introduced to full-time attendance. The overall attainment of children on entry to school is about that normally expected for their age.

78. Children come to school happily and respond positively to the provision in the Key Stage 1 class. They are generally confident, motivated and behave appropriately. Opportunities are given for them to organise their own time and resources and to operate independently within the secure environment. The younger children learn to work well together and are encouraged to treat each other fairly. For example, the literacy sessions are enjoyed and the children readily become involved in role-play with the older pupils. These activities provide opportunities for them to develop sustained concentration, fairness and a willingness to take turns. The under-fives are actively involved in the school celebrations of harvest festival and Christmas and enthusiastically join in with grace just before lunch each day. They are also given opportunities to respond to other cultures and have enjoyed making three-dimensional ceramics in an African style.

79. By the age of five, standards attained in language and literacy skills are generally appropriate for their age and good progress is being made. The children speak appropriately and they listen attentively. Reading related opportunities are provided for children to gain early skills. These include sessions where teachers share big books with the whole class and opportunities for children to enjoy books on an individual basis. They are encouraged to recognise their own names which have been written on both their coat pegs and drawers. Children also know a good selection of nursery rhymes and songs, handle books well and enthusiastically talk about the pictures. One example of language development was observed when the big book "Owl Babies" was read during a literacy session. The main characters in the story were identified, careful observations from the pictures were made and repetitive words recognised. Opportunities are provided to experiment freely with writing and discover ways to communicate on paper. They are encouraged to understand that print carries meaning and activities to identify the letters of the alphabet are provided.

80. Attainment in mathematics is appropriate for children by the time they reach the age of five and progress is good. Much of the provision for early learning in mathematics is concerned with developing awareness of number through sorting and matching, group games, counting and activity songs and rhymes. Children are beginning to recognise colours, match shapes using wooden jigsaws and order objects by size. They carry out activities that involve mathematical language and children name shapes such as circles, squares, rectangles and triangles. Children under five gain experience copying patterns and become familiar with money through play.

81. By the age of five, attainment in knowledge and understanding is about that expected for their age and the stimulating experiences that are provided enable good progress to be made. Opportunities are given to explore and identify the features of a variety of different objects. For example, a collection of different shells was displayed in the classroom and encouragement was given to look closely at similarities and differing patterns. Questions were also asked about their observations. The youngest children are also regularly taken out to visit both the nearby woodland and local farms and are encouraged to talk about their local environment.

Construction toys are used well and the children enjoy creating villages using a large road and wooden bricks. Activities promoting sticking, cutting and joining skills are carefully monitored by

adults. Appropriate opportunities are given to develop basic computer skills and they are learning to develop the use of the mouse as a control panel.

82. Children's attainment in physical development by the age of five is appropriate and progress is satisfactory. Adequate opportunities are provided for children to handle small objects accurately in construction and play activities, such as sorting and threading. Pencils, crayons and paintbrushes are used with varying degrees of success. Play dough and wet sand are also used to develop manipulation and control. Co-ordination is encouraged through the use of small apparatus such as balls during physical education and swimming sessions at the local leisure centre.

83. By five, the children's creative ability is about that expected for their age and progress is good. Provision for the development of creative skills is evident through the use of role-play facilities. For example, an opportunity for well structured talk, play and social interaction to develop is made possible by the provision of a "cafe" role-play area where children are also encouraged to play in a home corner. They sing with confidence and opportunities are provided for pupils to express ideas and communicate feelings through a wider range of musical activities, as for example, listening to music which sounds like the movement of the sea. Provision for the aesthetic development of the under-fives is developed through paint, sand and water play with children talking eagerly about their experiences. Painting, drawing and model-making activities also stimulate their imagination and encourage responses to patterns, colours and their surroundings.

84. Children under five receive a wide range of experiences and have a good start to their education. They work in a caring environment with adults who interact appropriately together to provide a curriculum that includes provision for the areas of learning. Staff respond well to the children, follow through activities and encourage them to achieve their best. Teaching for the under-fives is very good overall and characterised by the use of effective teaching strategies and well prepared follow up activities that focus on small groups and meet the specific needs of these young children.

85. The curriculum planned is generally broad and balanced and based upon the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children under five. It offers a good range of experiences that interest and stimulate children's learning. The assessment of pupils' achievements is good. Children's abilities are assessed on entry to the school and good records are kept of their progress. The progress made is good and the majority of children are ready to start the National Curriculum by the time that they are five. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and fully integrated into group activities.

86. There is a good induction programme for the children. Positive partnerships are encouraged between home and school and this helps the children settle quickly.

## **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **English**

87. The performance of the pupils at Year 2 and Year 6 in the 1998 National Curriculum



assessments cannot be reported and compared to national averages or those from similar schools due to the small numbers of pupils taking the tests. Taking the three years together from 1996 to 1998, attainment at both key stages can be seen as good. Standards of attainment in both key stages have been maintained since the previous report.

88. Speaking and listening skills are soundly developed before they come to school. At Key Stage 1, pupils listen attentively to each other and very confidently ask about things they wish to know. Pupils are keen to share their news, talk about their work and use their oral skills well throughout the curriculum. At Key Stage 2, pupils speak with clear explanation and also listen well. They develop their ideas and confidently communicate their findings to each other. Pupils use Standard English appropriately and accurate vocabulary is used well within all subjects. They also listen to each other in discussion, and ask and answer questions maturely.

89. At Key Stage 1, pupils are able to read competently a range of books from the school's reading materials. By the age of 7, the majority of pupils are able to read with developing confidence, fluency and expression. The youngest pupils use picture or contextual clues appropriately, have a basic sight vocabulary and use their phonic knowledge to attempt unknown words. Reading is systematically taught through a reading scheme. Pupils read regularly in school and those who experience difficulties are supported well. The help of parents through practice at both home and in school is a strong contributory factor to the achievement of these good standards.

90. Reading at Key Stage 2 is good. Pupils read from a range of both fiction and non-fiction books. The majority of pupils read accurately, fluently and with expression and understanding. Those who are less fluent use appropriate strategies to help them understand the meaning. Higher attaining pupils can discuss characters and select main features from text. Pupils can use reference books successfully to research information for other subjects and also know how to retrieve information from the school library.

91. Systematic attention is given to handwriting and spelling throughout the school and this is reflected in the good quality of pupils' work. The youngest pupils write simple words accurately and unaided with good formation of letters. Older pupils make good use of dictionaries and are acquiring skills in the construction of sentences. The pupils respond well to opportunities to write for different purposes and in a variety of styles in subjects across the curriculum. Pupils engage in letter writing, accounts of observations, poetry, news and stories, all of which is of good quality. Pupils' imaginative, expressive and argumentative writing is well developed.

92. Pupils are making good progress in English throughout the school. They make good progress throughout Key Stage 1 as a result of a suitably challenging curriculum, and appropriate expectations by the teachers. By the end of the key stage, pupils have made good progress in learning the technical skills of writing and reading. At Key Stage 2, pupils also make good progress in oracy, in reading and in their skills in writing within the subjects of the curriculum, particularly in science, history and geography. They are also developing their ability in considering the audience when writing and this is promoted well by exciting and challenging teaching.

93. Throughout the school, teachers also keep informative reading records that enable pupils' levels to be continually monitored. Good progress is also maintained by careful targeting and regular assessments. Pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils also make good progress.

94. Pupils' attitudes to learning English are very good throughout the school and this contributes significantly to the standards they attain. They concentrate well, use discussion and questioning at a good level and are generally keen to learn. Pupils work well together in groups, persevere and complete tasks well. For example, pupils in a Year 5 and 6 group were observed maturely responding to each other as they discussed their work.

95. Teaching at both key stages is very good overall. Teachers have a good subject knowledge, lessons are well paced and a very good range of styles are used. The best teaching is based on good relationships, high expectations of the pupils and good management of the pupils in their sets and groups. Very good teaching was observed in both key stages when challenging questions were posed and the pupils' answers were valued. Teachers focus well on the learning skills and provide good opportunities for pupils to explore imaginative and creative ideas. For example, scrutiny of English activities at the end of Key Stage 2 indicates that some of the pupils extended writing has been centred on a variety of traditional children's literature. This meaningful approach promotes high standards of discussion and stimulates mature and sensitive responses about the various characters and authors in their written presentations. This good practice is shared amongst all the staff to raise the quality of teaching overall.

96. Teachers to guide their planning effectively use a clearly presented English policy and comprehensive scheme of work. Careful monitoring of teachers' plans and classroom practice have had a positive effect on raising the standards of teaching. Assessment is used very well to inform future planning and consistency of standards, throughout the school, are maintained by regular work sampling. Resources are good, meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and are appropriately deployed to support teaching and learning. The library is well stocked and organised and provides pupils with opportunities to enjoy quality literature.

97. Considerable work has been put in by the school, to raise pupils' standards of attainment and the implementation of the literacy strategy is well managed and consistently good throughout the school. Pupils' ability in reading, writing and speaking and listening contributes successfully to the standards of learning in other subjects.

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## **Mathematics**

98. Due to the small number of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 in 1998, it is not appropriate to report pupils' attainment against national averages and those for similar schools. However, a study of results over the previous three years indicate that although there was a dip in standards in 1997, attainment is broadly satisfactory. The majority of pupils achieve the nationally expected levels of level 2 at Key Stage 1 and level 4 at Key Stage 2, but few achieve above. Progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, in all aspects of mathematics is satisfactory. The school has set realistic targets for improvements in pupils' attainment and has developed strategies, particularly in numeracy, to help achieve these targets.

99. Levels of attainment upon admission to the school are broadly average. During the inspection standards for the majority of pupils were judged to be satisfactory and in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages. Progress is satisfactory and is consistent between key stages. Progress of pupils with special educational needs is good as they are set clear targets and monitoring of their progress is carried out. The school successfully follows a

well-planned and balanced programme which covers, and regularly reinforces, all the required areas of mathematics. It effectively meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs.

100. At Key Stage 1, pupils work is close to the levels expected of their age. Most pupils have satisfactory numeracy skills; they read, write and order numbers to 20 with accuracy. They count forwards to 20 and back to nought. Higher attaining pupils have quick recall of addition and subtraction number facts to 10, although most average attaining pupils, whilst accurate, are slower and use their fingers to help them to calculate. Most pupils transfer their competence with simple number facts to appropriate problems involving money. They have a satisfactory understanding of place value. Most pupils recognise odd and even numbers and complete simple number sequences. Higher attaining pupils identify numbers that are ten more or 10 less than a given number. Pupils are beginning to understand multiplication when they group objects in sets of twos. A few pupils still do not write their numbers correctly. Most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the names of two-dimensional shapes but are unsure of properties of solid shapes. They have an appropriate understanding of halves and quarters. They begin to use symbols and simple diagrams in their work and construct block graphs. Pupils are able to order objects by describing them as shorter or longer than an object such as a felt pen. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to use standard units of measurement to measure lengths or weights.

- 101. By the end of Key Stage 2, most higher and average attaining pupils have secure numeracy skills and develop their own mental strategies for solving number problems, for example, they know how to round up numbers and explain other strategies competently. They add and subtract numbers greater than 100, but there is little evidence of pupils working with higher numbers. They practise mental recall of numbers but lack speed in their response and are unsure about calculations involving larger numbers. Most pupils have a good understanding of place value and add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers to one thousand with a good degree of accuracy. Higher attaining pupils explore regular number patterns, familiar sequences and square numbers, when asked. Through calculations using money, pupils become familiar with decimal notation and by recording temperatures they become aware of negative numbers. Lower attaining pupils do not always add accurately when applying their number knowledge to solving problems. They are beginning to understand multiplication as equal groups. They successfully investigate number sequences. Their skills in data handling are above average. They collect data accurately and use it draw conclusions and to form hypotheses. They know how to construct line and scatter graphs and extract information from spreadsheets competently. Pupils use standard units when they compare objects longer or shorter than a metre or heavier than a kilogram. They are beginning to measure accurately using centimetres and metres. They know about area, shape and volume and correctly use terms such as perimeter. The pupils successfully calculate the perimeter and area of regular and irregular shapes. Most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of rotational symmetry and classify both two- and three-dimensional shapes according to various appropriate criteria.

- 102. Regular mental mathematics sessions result in good progress in the development of quick mental recall and in the ability of the pupils to look for different approaches to solving problems. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress. Where there is additional and well targeted support, they make good gains in their knowledge. Specific mathematics targets set in individual education plans impact well on progress for these pupils. Pupils use their numeracy skills appropriately in other subjects. For example, they tabulate the results of science investigations and record their findings using the computer. In art they apply their knowledge of pattern to produce accurate and well presented work.

- 103. Pupils have positive attitudes towards mathematics and respond well to the good teaching they receive. The pupils settle quickly to their work and sustain good levels of concentration. The interest pupils have in their work means that they often work with minimum need of adult supervision. Pupils willingly offer explanations about how problems could be solved and test out their ideas in a practical task. When given the opportunity, they co-operate well on tasks and take turns at using equipment, for example, when using control technology to measure and record temperatures. They check each other's calculations sensibly and help each other when difficulties arise. There is a good working atmosphere in lessons and pupils persevere with their work and show enjoyment in investigation work. The pupils are eager to answer questions in whole class introductions and recap sessions and in mental mathematics activities. Behaviour in lessons is good and the pupils show care and consideration for each other and the resources they use.

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104. The quality of teaching is good overall at both key stages with some very good teaching at Key Stage 1. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and plan their work to include suitable emphasis on the development of numeracy, while including appropriate blocks of work to cover all the attainment targets of the National Curriculum. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a beneficial effect on the organisation of lessons and the emphasis given to mental arithmetic. Where the teaching is most effective, there are well paced introductions which feature good questioning to test pupils' understanding of the mathematical concept being covered. There are good recap sessions and opportunities are taken to talk to pupils as they work in order to assess their understanding. In the older Key Stage 2 class, time is spent well discussing how answers are arrived at and sharing these with the rest of the class. Visual and practical teaching aids are used effectively to assist understanding of concepts, for example, in a lesson on equivalent fractions for Year 5 pupils. Computers are used well to extend the pupils' understanding of data, for example, at Key Stage 1 through making graphs of how many people live in pupils' houses.

105. Planning takes account of pupils' differing levels of attainment, particularly those pupils with special educational needs. Lessons are well organised with resources readily available for pupils. Explanations are clear and effective use is made of questions to revise previous work and extend pupils thinking to new topics. Lessons proceed at a good pace and pupils are often given a set time to complete tasks. Good use is made of discussions at the end of activities to consolidate what pupils have learned.

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106. Expectations of behaviour are high and lessons proceed at a satisfactory pace, although in some lessons more could be expected of the higher attaining groups. Relationships and discipline are good and the teachers use praise and encouragement well to motivate the pupils. Work is marked regularly and the teachers often discuss the pupils' work to help them improve. There is satisfactory use of homework to learn multiplication facts and impacts well on this aspect of their work.

107. The mathematics curriculum meets all statutory requirements. There is a good policy and scheme of work that effectively meets the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and pupils with special educational needs are identified and given support in the classroom. Planning for continuity throughout the school is good. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are good, using a range of tests and teacher assessments and collecting samples of pupils' work.

108. The subject is well co-ordinated and the documentation is of a good quality, providing a firm basis from which to develop further. There is clear understanding on how information technology can be used to support mathematics and this is an ongoing development. There are enough good quality practical resources and these are used very well throughout the school to develop understanding through first-hand experience.

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## **Science**

109. Due to the small numbers of pupils in Year 2, whose performance in science was measured by teacher assessments, and those in Year 6, who sat the national assessments, results cannot be published. However, taking results over the past three years, attainment can be seen as satisfactory. The majority of pupils attain the expected level 4 at Key Stage 2 but few achieve above this.

110. The attainment on entry to the school is broadly average with some variations either side. Evidence gained from lesson observations, from scrutiny of work, displayed work and teachers planning, shows that attainment in science is satisfactory. Progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, in most aspects of science is satisfactory at both key stages. The school successfully follows a well planned and balanced programme of science which covers and regularly reinforces all the required areas. It meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs.

111. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know about the needs of living things. Through growing hyacinth bulbs they understand that plants need water for growth. They know the five senses and understand that animals and man need these senses to be aware of the world around them. Pupils use their own senses such as smell and touch to identify items which they cannot see. They know that some foods help make a healthy diet. They know that exercise makes the heart beat faster. They name important parts of the body such as head, arms, legs, eyes and mouth. They identify the location of some of these on a diagram of a skeleton. Pupils classify different animals following a visit to Butts Farm and study the change from caterpillar to butterfly.

112. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a sound understanding of the characteristics of human beings. They identify the main organs of the body, such as the heart, lungs and brain and understand that the skeleton acts as a protection for these organs. They know how organs work, for example, the role of the lungs in the circulatory system. Through experiments pupils know the conditions plants need for healthy growth. When looking at materials, pupils describe them as organic or non-organic. They know that some materials change when added to water and that some of these changes cannot be reversed. When conducting experiments pupils make simple predictions. For example, when investigating whether more breath is used in resting or exercise, pupils made simple predictions, carried out tests and drew simple conclusions before recording their results.

113. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in most aspects of the subject. There is evidence of improvement in standards. They make satisfactory progress in their scientific knowledge and understanding and in their ability to conduct fair tests with the minimum of teacher direction. They improve their skills in working collaboratively and are reasonably good at individual research. The links made between subjects often enhance pupils' understanding and improve their rate of progress.

114. Pupils' attitudes to work in science are good throughout the school. They listen attentively and concentrate well and are well behaved. Most pupils are enthusiastic, motivated and respond to a challenge. There are good relationships between pupils and adults. Most pupils co-operate effectively in investigative work. Pupils enjoy their lessons and like to work independently on tasks. They respond well to personal development opportunities which they receive such as getting out and putting away equipment responsibly and carefully.

115. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In the lessons observed, the introduction was well planned to create a realistic task and the activity was very well described. Teachers use questions effectively in introductions to revise pupils' previous experience or in group work to extend pupils' thinking. Relevant vocabulary is introduced appropriately. Successful use is made of short discussions to summarise what pupils have learned during the lesson. Teachers are well organised and make good use of resources and time. Lessons are usually well paced, with clear objectives. Lesson planning is appropriately detailed. There is ongoing assessment of work with the pupils in the classroom that helps pupils to evaluate and improve in an informal but usually effective way. Planning is sound and takes account of the different age groups and

attainment, including pupils with special educational needs, in the classes, particularly at Key Stage 2. The experiments are well chosen by the teachers, pupils are given the opportunity to organise investigations for themselves and to find their own ways of recording results.

116. There is an appropriate science policy and long term-plan for the subject. Medium-term planning is detailed and informative although there are no schemes of work which have been adapted to suit the pupils in this school. The school uses national materials as the basis of its science programme. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator who undertakes some monitoring of the implementation of science teaching throughout the school and gives feedback to teachers. There are regular curriculum meetings with all staff contributing. The quantity and quality of resources for the teaching of science throughout the school is adequate and they are easily accessible. The accommodation is adequate and is used effectively.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **- Information technology**

117. The school has improved the standards of attainment in information technology since the last inspection. All aspects of the curriculum are covered and pupils have good levels of knowledge and understanding at the ages of 7 and 11. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good and sometimes very good progress throughout both key stages. The most significant area of improvement has been in pupils' confidence to use computers to organise and represent data.

118. By the end of Key Stage 1, appropriate use is made of the computers to support pupils' learning in other subjects, particularly English and mathematics lessons. They develop their letter and word recognition skills and their hand/eye control, for example, when the youngest pupils drag images on the screen to dress a teddy. Higher attaining pupils use the word processor with increasing confidence. They draft their stories and use paint and draw programs effectively to create pictures. Pupils effectively learn to use information technology to organise and represent data about the number of people living in their house.

119. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their communication skills and to handle information. Pupils edit, draft and save work and most are confident and skilled in using technology to support their work in other subjects. The oldest pupils use CD-ROM effectively to study the human skeleton and to name the major bones of the body. They also use spreadsheets effectively and confidently use the Internet.

120. Progress in the use of information technology to solve problems, to research information, to communicate information or practice, reinforce and develop skills in other subjects is good. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in controlling programmable toys, and this aspect of information technology is developed and improved upon consistently through the school. In Key Stage 2, they make good progress in drafting and editing their work using the computers' tools. In Year 6, they improve their skills rapidly and gain confidence in using complex operations. For example they develop good skills of data handling and using spreadsheets.

121. The pupils have good attitudes towards the use of information technology. They talk enthusiastically about the opportunities they have to use computers and are sufficiently

confident to work together without the direct supervision of their teachers. Pupils respond well to information technology throughout the school. They are interested and as a result their behaviour is good. Less confident pupils have the assurance of appropriate support from teachers and other non-teaching staff.

122. The quality of teaching in information technology is good and sometimes very good. The school recognises the need to develop teachers' confidence in the subject. This is effectively

addressed by focused training for the teachers and the continuing support of the co-ordinator. The co-ordination of information technology is good and this has resulted in improvement in the use of computers in each class. Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs to develop their skill of information technology, and where necessary, it is included in their individual education plans. The subject documentation is clear, thorough and provides good guidance for teachers. The assessment of the pupils' progress is well developed and they are encouraged to complete assessments of their own work. Resources are good and sufficiently accessible.

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## **Art**

123. Work on display, folders submitted for scrutiny and artwork in other subjects gives a clear indication that progress is good throughout the school. Pupils paint and draw to a good standard and observational skills are well developed. Most represent their ideas in visual forms in a variety of media and in two- and three-dimensions. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of artists' work and talk well about work they have seen. Pupils consistently improve their skills in drawing and in using colour and they develop skills in a variety of media. Pupils with special educational skills are well supported and also make good progress.

124. Pupils respond well to art. They enjoy their lessons and persevere with their tasks. Behaviour is good and pupils of all ages concentrate well. Tasks set in the subject enable pupils to take initiatives in their work and to make artistic decisions.

125. The quality of teaching at both key stages is good. Planning is of good quality and lessons have clear aims. Relationships are good and teachers value pupils' efforts and provide positive support. Lessons are well paced and teachers use appropriate methods. Teachers' skilfully set tasks and usefully assess the pupils' work to inform their planning.

126. Pupils work with a good range of media and the school is well equipped with resources for art. The subject is well led and there is a comprehensive policy and scheme of work, which provides appropriate guidance for the teachers.

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## **Design and technology**

127. Few lessons were seen during the inspection. However, evidence from lessons observed, scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and staff, indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress. Design and technology is taught as a separate subject, which is linked to the current topic if possible.

128. At Key Stage 1, pupils design and make beds linked to their study of homes. From the



earliest stages in the school, pupils learn to use tools and materials appropriately, folding, cutting and sticking pieces together. Most pupils begin to evaluate their products appropriately and make suggestions about ways in which to improve their work.

129. At Key Stage 2, plans show appropriate progression and content, relating to the national programmes of study, evidence shows a wide range of tasks are undertaken. Emphasis is placed on design, for example, of costumes for a modern ballet linked to work on the ballet Coppelia. Pupils have designed a stained glass window which they then used as a greetings card. They consolidate and practise relevant skills as well as refining their design ideas and

evaluating more constructively. They explore and use with increasing skill different techniques for cutting, joining and shaping materials. As pupils get older they become more aware of the suitability of the materials they select for their models.

130. Pupils respond well to their work. They show interest and can discuss methods they have used with appropriate vocabulary. Pupils enjoy solving problems created by design and technology tasks. They collaborate well, valuing each other's ideas. They work independently with the minimum need for supervision. Pupils take pride in their achievements and suggest some ways in which their ideas could have been improved.

131. Evidence from lessons observed, pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils indicate that the quality of teaching is good. Teachers ensure that resources are easy for pupils to locate. Opportunities to extend pupils' vocabulary are taken and appropriate terms explained. The long-term plan identifies the focus of a topic and plans for each term provide a sound base for pupils' work. Teachers maintain records on the work pupils have covered but there are no systematic procedures for assessing pupils' progress. Resources are adequate, used well and easily accessible for pupils. There is an adequate range of books and a good variety of materials and equipment.

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## **Geography**

132. The lessons observed in both key stages, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their work, including classroom displays, and discussions with teachers indicate that by the time pupils' leave the school they have made satisfactory progress.

- 133. At Key Stage 1, all pupils make satisfactory progress in developing geographical skills and knowledge. By discussing things they see on their way to school they begin to develop an understanding of how maps are used to record places. They identify a map of the British Isles and have sufficient knowledge to locate the countries of the United Kingdom and where they live on a map of England. Although pupils' knowledge of other areas is enhanced by visits to places of interest, there is little evidence of their having studied another locality.

134. At Key Stage 2, pupils, including those with special educational needs, continue to make satisfactory progress. They develop an understanding of different features in the course of a river and make good comparisons between different rivers. For example, after a visit to the River Severn, they made comparisons with the River Nile which linked to their work in history. There is little evidence of a study of life in other countries or opportunities to develop an insight into the cultures of other countries. Through their study of the locality, pupils develop their skills in map work. They know how to use a key on an ordnance survey map and the significance of grid references. They have an appropriate knowledge of other countries

through the study of maps of Europe and the world.

135. Pupils enjoy learning about other places. They listen carefully to visitors and ask many thoughtful and perceptive questions. Older pupils at Key Stage 2 have produced good work during their holidays of rivers they have visited linked to their previous study of the Severn and Nile.

136. The quality of teaching is very good. Lessons are well prepared with resources available for pupils to use. In the best lessons activities are carefully timed so that pupils' attention is held and they are involved throughout the lesson. Good use is made of resources such as a CD-ROM to research for information. This is then used effectively to revise and further develop work. Teachers' enthusiasm for the topics is transmitted to pupils who share the interest in the lessons.

137. An outline of topics identifies which areas of the programmes of study of the National Curriculum will be taught. Topics on other localities are not sufficiently focussed on locations of a similar size to help pupils make relevant contrasts between their lives and those of other people. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. There is effective monitoring of teachers' planning. Resources are satisfactory. Good use is made of visitors to enhance lessons by giving pupils contact with people from other places. Visits to places of interest extend pupils understanding of the world.

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## **History**

138. During the inspection, few history lessons were seen. Discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their work, including classroom displays, and discussions with teachers indicate that by the time pupils leave the school they have made satisfactory progress.

139. At Key Stage 1, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in developing a sense of history. They study the differences between schools now and in the past. They begin to understand about the past when they visit a museum as part of their study of a Victorian Christmas. They develop a sense of the passage of time through identifying important events of the year on a calendar. This links to their developing knowledge of historical events when they learn about historical characters such as Guy Fawkes.

- 140. At Key Stage 2 all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge of the past. They know about different historical eras, such as the Victorians and Ancient Egypt. They develop a sound understanding of how people lived in the past. For example, they know about the clothes, food and schools of the Ancient Egyptians and the difference between the lives of the rich and the poor. They are beginning to use information to compare their lives with those living in the past. Pupils improve their knowledge of life in Victorian times, for example, through their visit to the Black Country Museum. They know how to find out about the past through using books, visits and people's memories.

141. Pupils enjoy learning about the past. Younger pupils carefully look at artefacts and make sensible suggestions about their use. Older pupils are interested in the way people used to live and continue to research information for their topics at home. Through looking at pictures they are prepared to make sensible suggestions about how people lived.

142. Teaching is good overall and is characterised by good planning, rigorous pace and

careful use of questioning. Very good use is made of resources and during the inspection, a clip from a recent film was used to illustrate the differences between seaside holidays nowadays and in the past.

143. An outline plan indicates when pupils will study the different eras identified in the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. Teachers plan for the systematic development of the skills and ideas relevant to developing an understanding of the past. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. There is effective monitoring of teachers' planning. Resources are satisfactory. Good use is made of visits to enhance pupils' experiences and skills of historical investigation.

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## **Music**

144. By the end of both key stages pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils develop good skills in listening to recorded music, are able to follow a clapping rhythm and standards of singing are good for their age. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils enjoy the opportunities to compose short musical sequences, using tuned and untuned instruments and are able to use sounds to create musical compositions. Pupils confidently sing from memory, rehearse and improve on their performances. For example, they successfully achieve good standards in productions and events.

145. In both key stages, the pupils' response is enthusiastic and when they have access to the instruments their concentration is good. They have positive attitudes, are highly motivated when devising their own music, approach tasks with enthusiasm and take pride in performing. The pupils listen attentively to instructions, work co-operatively in groups, treat instruments with respect and show sustained concentration.

146. The teaching of music is good throughout the school. Activities are well planned, learning outcomes clear and the pace is good. There is secure subject knowledge, appropriate expectations and emphasis on practical skills. In both key stages there are good opportunities to make efficient use of the good range of musical instruments.

147. There is a policy document and a commercial scheme of work is used to promote continuity and progression. The curriculum co-ordinator has a secure subject knowledge and plans effectively for both key stages. Resources are appropriate, readily accessible to pupils and carefully stored. There is a range of music to listen to and pupils receive the opportunity to hear examples of music from other countries. This contributes appropriately to their cultural development.

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## **Physical education**

148. By the end of both key stages pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know the importance of warm up at the beginning of lessons and the necessity to respond to commands for their personal safety. In dance, they develop co-ordination, balance and poise to represent appropriate dancing movements. In games, they begin to develop and practice bouncing large balls. Pupils are able to learn to swim safely and develop confidence in the water.

149. Most pupils participate enthusiastically, including those with special educational needs,

and generally enjoy their lessons. They respond quickly to instructions and work hard during lessons. Pupils persevere well to refine and develop skills and work effectively together.

150. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and often good. Lessons are usually well planned with a suitable pace. In most lessons, appropriate attention is given to safety issues and effective use is made of available resources. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and confidence. They control pupils well, make good use of praise where it is deserved and intervene appropriately. The school follows a comprehensive scheme, which provides guidelines to help teacher's plan their work effectively.

151. Although there is no school hall with gymnastic equipment, appropriate opportunities for physical education indoors is provided at the local leisure centre where the pupils attend weekly. This has improved the provision for physical education since the previous inspection.

## PART C: INSPECTION DATA

### SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

152. A team of three inspectors carried out the inspection. A total of six days was used in the collection of evidence around the school. During the week, 21 lessons or part lessons were observed with over 11 hours spent in the classroom. All teachers were seen teaching. Assemblies, pupils' arrival and departure from school, registration and recreation periods were also observed. Discussions were held with the headteacher, teaching and non-teaching staff and the governing body. In total, about 10 hours were spent in meetings during the week. Informal discussions were held with parents and pupils in all classes. Before the inspection 11 parents attended a meeting at which their views on aspects of the school were invited. Fifteen parent questionnaires were returned by parents, which represented about 45 per cent of families. A table of the findings and results is included.

153. A range of documentation and information supplied by the school was studied, including the prospectus, policy documents, the school development plan, budgetary information and minutes of meetings. The inspectors scrutinised the current and past work of all pupils in the school and heard a cross-section of pupils, from all age groups, read. Attendance records, the records kept on individual pupils and teachers' planning documents were examined. Health, safety and security procedures were scrutinised.

### DATA AND INDICATORS

#### 154. 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	42	1	6	0

#### Teachers and classes

##### Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

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

3.2
13.1 : 1

##### Education support staff (YR – Y6)

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

3
30.4

#### - Primary schools

Average class size:

14
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## Financial data

Financial year: 

1998/99
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	£
Total Income	107,321
Total Expenditure	110,923
Expenditure per pupil	2,264
Balance brought forward from previous year	12,000
Balance carried forward to next year	8,398

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 

33
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 Number of questionnaires returned: 

15
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### Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	27	66	7	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	47	53	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	0	73	20	7	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	7	60	26	0	7
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	33	60	0	7	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	7	86	0	7	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	13	67	20	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	13	47	20	20	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	20	60	20	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	0	66	20	7	7
My child(ren) like(s) school	13	87	0	0	0