

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST. BRIDGET'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND
VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Brigham

Cockermouth

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112271

Headteacher: Helen Mumby

Reporting inspector: Peter Kerr
23583

Dates of inspection: 5th–8th June 2000

Inspection number: 187319

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brigham Cockermouth
Postcode:	Cumbria CA13 OTU
Telephone number:	01900 325936
Appropriate authority:	Cumbria LEA
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. Stewart Swift
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd – 25 th January 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Peter Kerr	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Art Music Physical education Religious education Under fives Equal opportunities	Standards Teaching and learning
Jon Vincent	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development The care of pupils Partnership with parents
Neil Wales	Team inspector	English Information technology Design and technology History Geography Special educational needs	The Curriculum Leadership and management

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This small village school serves a rural catchment area catering for 126 children between four and 11. Overall, the children's social and economic circumstances, and their attainment on entry to the school are above average, but with a wide spread. The number of pupils who claim free school meals is below the national average. There have been significant changes to the school since the last inspection. The number of pupils on roll has increased, extra classrooms have been built and new teachers have been appointed. A nursery has also been established, catering for up to 26 children part-time. Children transfer from the nursery to the reception class during the year of their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection there were two pupils still under five. The numbers in each year group vary considerably and there are slightly more boys than girls in the school. There are 23 pupils on the register of special educational needs. Four of these have a statement of special educational needs. This is well above the average number expected for a school of this size and a marked increase since the last inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that enables the pupils to achieve above average standards in numeracy, literacy, science and information technology. It provides a happy, caring environment for learning and promotes very positive attitudes and high standards of behaviour. The nursery provides a very good standard of education for children under five, and the quality of teaching throughout the school is good. The school benefits from good leadership and management from the headteacher and governing body. Parents are very supportive of the school and contribute well to their children's learning. The areas for improvement identified in this report have already been recognised by the school and some are included in the governors' development plan. The school gives good value for money despite the high costs of educating children in a small school.

What the school does well

- The pupils achieve above average standards in English mathematics and science. Their attainment in information technology is above expectations, and they use their skills effectively to improve their learning in other subjects.
- The pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They behave very well and enjoy excellent relationships and very good personal development.
- The standard of teaching is consistently good throughout the school.
- The nursery is a very effective learning environment for children under five.
- The headteacher works very closely with the governing body to provide good leadership and to maintain a happy working atmosphere.
- The school has very good procedures for child protection and welfare and for promoting good behaviour and pupils with special educational needs are well supported.

What could be improved

- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in each subject.
- The use of assessment information and marking to guide planning and to set individual and group learning targets.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1996. Since then it has made good progress. The quality of teaching has improved, particularly for the under fives and in Key Stage 1, and is now consistently good throughout the school. Standards have steadily improved in English and are beginning to do so in mathematics. These improvements reflect the school's successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. The pupils' attainment in information technology has improved significantly to above national expectations, reflecting very good recent improvements in provision. Standards in science are also above average and improving. Education for children under five has been greatly enhanced by the recently established nursery and is now very good. Health and safety and child welfare procedures have improved and are now very good. The three key issues have been addressed successfully. Satisfactory schemes of work are in place, younger Key Stage 1 pupils, and those with higher than average attainment make appropriate progress for their abilities. The school is committed to providing the best possible education for its pupils and has a good capacity to improve further.

STANDARDS

There were too few pupils entered for the national tests for eleven-year olds in 1999 for the results to be published here. The inspection findings are based mainly on the evidence gathered during the inspection and confirm the school's assessments of the pupils' attainment in the 2000 tests. Standards are above average in reading, speaking and listening, mathematics and science at both key stages. In writing, standards are average, and this is something the school recognises it needs to improve. In information technology, pupils reach higher than expected standards at each key stage, reflecting the good progress they have made as a result of recent improvements. In all other subjects, standards are in line with expectations, except in religious education and physical education at Key Stage 1, where pupils show higher than expected attainment. Children under five make good progress and when they enter the main school, most of them have achieved all the early learning goals. The standards reached by the end of Key Stage 2 reflect good progress over time.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Very positive attitudes to learning are established in the nursery and maintained throughout the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The pupils' behaviour is very good, both in lessons and around the school. This contributes to the good progress the pupils make and is appreciated by parents. There have been no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils enjoy excellent relationships between themselves and with all staff. Their personal development is very good. They show initiative around the school and undertake a range of routine tasks responsibly.
Attendance	Attendance and punctuality are good. There is no unauthorised absence.

No anti-social or oppressive behaviour was observed during the inspection and it was noticeable how the older pupils care for the younger ones.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

From the lessons observed, all of the teaching was satisfactory or better, 57 per cent was good, 29 per cent was very good and 3 per cent was excellent.

Teaching is consistently good throughout the school and is often very good in Key Stage 1. The standard of teaching in English and mathematics is consistently good, and is very good or excellent towards the end of Key Stage 1. All the teachers teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy very effectively. They manage the pupils very well and enjoy excellent relationships with them. Their expectations are high, both for behaviour and effort, and they plan and deliver their lessons with care and skill. Lessons are planned to include challenge for all groups of pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs. The pupils respond very positively to the high expectations that are set. They work hard, behave well and make good progress. The teachers know the pupils well and keep good records of their attainment in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology and mark the pupils' work conscientiously. However, they do not always make the best use of assessment information and marking to improve standards.

The standard of teaching was at least satisfactory in all of the lessons observed during the inspection. It was good or better in nine out of ten lessons and very good or better in one third of lessons. This is an exceptionally consistent level of good or better teaching.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. Broad and reasonably balanced. Very good for English, mathematics and information technology and for children under five.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with statements of special educational need are supported well by learning assistants. Other pupils are given adapted tasks to suit their individual requirements, but their learning targets are not always specific enough.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good in all respects. Good opportunities for reflection and for taking on responsibilities and showing initiative. Members of staff set an excellent example and encourage harmonious relationships. There is good provision for cultural development, including efforts to make the pupils aware of cultural diversity.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall, with very good child protection and welfare procedures. Very good procedures for promoting good behaviour and minimising bullying and good monitoring and support for personal development. The use of assessment information to guide curriculum planning is satisfactory, and is an area identified for improvement.

The school's links with parents are good and parents make a good contribution to their children's learning and the life of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher successfully establishes a happy and open atmosphere in the school in which the staff and pupils feel valued and want to give of their best. There is a strong team spirit and clear sense of common purpose. The management of individual subjects, however, is not as effective as it could be.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors work very closely with the headteacher in managing the school. They fulfil all but some very minor statutory duties and play a full role in monitoring the school's development plan.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school keeps a good track of the pupils' performance in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The headteacher is aware of the main strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning, but there are no formal procedures for monitoring and evaluating this.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The budget is well managed to serve the school development plan. The school effectively applies the principles of best value in the purchasing of goods and services.

The school is well staffed with suitably qualified and experienced teachers and learning support assistants, and there are adequate resources to support learning in all areas of the curriculum. There are some shortcomings in the accommodation, however, that hinder the pupils' learning. Library facilities and the space available for physical education in the hall are inadequate; the playing field is not used consistently to benefit all the pupils; the junior classrooms are too small for the numbers of pupils in them and the playground is cramped following recent building extensions. The school has plans in hand, however, to remedy most of these problems.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel confident approaching the school. • The teaching is good and expectations are high. • The school is well managed and helps the children to become mature and responsible. • The children like school, behave well and make good progress. • The school provides a high standard of care and promotes good attitudes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of extra-curricular activities supported by staff • Communication with parents and the information they receive about their children's progress

The inspection supports all the positive views expressed by parents. The criticisms that were raised represent the views of a minority of parents, and the inspection found no serious weaknesses in these areas. The range of extra curricular activities is reasonable for such a small staff to maintain and although some improvements are planned in communications, current arrangements are judged satisfactory,

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The numbers of pupils taking the national tests for seven and 11-year olds has usually been too small in recent years for firm conclusions to be drawn from them about the school's performance. However, in 1998, when there were enough pupils for the results to have some meaning, standards were above average at Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science. Results in the English tests have been consistently above average and getting better, whereas results in the mathematics and science tests have been very variable. However, the provisional results of the 2000 national tests show an improved consistency between subjects, with a greater proportion of pupils reaching Level 5 in mathematics and science than in 1999. In English, the results in writing are consistently lower than in reading.
2. At Key Stage 1, the number of pupils taking the national tests in 1999 was also too small for the results to be statistically significant. However, the results for speaking and listening and reading were better than or writing. The provisional 2000 results show an improvement in all subjects, but with writing still weaker than reading. Addressing this disparity, which is confirmed by the inspection evidence, is recognised as a priority by the school.
3. The inspection findings rely on observations of the achievements and performance of the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils and the provisional results of the 2000 national tests. The National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy have been effective in raising standards in these two key areas throughout the school. The school has set appropriate targets in these areas and is making good progress towards achieving them. Higher attaining pupils are catered for more effectively than they were at the time of the last inspection and achieve appropriate standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well in relation to their individual learning targets.
4. Standards are above average in speaking and listening and in reading, with examples of well-above average attainment at both key stages. In writing, standards are only average at both key stages. A contributory factor to this relative under-achievement is insufficient provision of opportunities for pupils to engage in extended writing for different purposes across the curriculum
5. In mathematics, pupils are reaching above average standards at both key stages, especially in the basis skills of numeracy. They are learning number facts and using them effectively to solve problems mentally, using their own strategies. Pupils are using their mathematics skills effectively in other subjects, for example to plot graphs in science experiments.
6. Attainment in science is above expectations at both key stages, improving on the standards reported by the last inspection. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding, but their experimenting and investigating skills are not as good as they should be by the end of Key Stage 2. Attainment is above expectations in information technology, reflecting recent improvements in provision. Improved planning and teacher expertise have led to pupils mastering skills in all areas of the subject from word-processing to data-handling and applying these skills effectively in other subjects.
7. In all other subjects of the National Curriculum, standards are in line with national expectations at Key Stage 2. In physical education, standards are above average at Key

Stage 1, reflecting very good teaching. In religious education, pupils reach the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in their understanding of religious ideas and how they affect people's lives at Key Stage 2, and exceed them at Key Stage 1.

8. Since the last inspection, standards have improved throughout the school in English, mathematics, science and information technology. They have improved in Key Stage 1 in physical and religious education.
9. Attainment is above average in the nursery and on entry to the reception class. However, the school has only been collecting reliable data for a few years. There is no data, for example, to show the attainment on entry of the current or recent Year 6 pupils in order to track their progress. As year groups vary a lot, just a few pupils with special educational needs on any one group can have a significant impact on its performance in national tests. Therefore it is not safe to assume that because recent intakes have been above average, then each year group was above average on entry to the school. Overall, the evidence suggests that the pupils make good progress from whatever their starting attainment is.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Children who are under five are keen to come to school. They settle in quickly and are eager to learn. The children thrive in the happy and secure environment and relate well with adults and each other. The imaginative tasks set for the children ensure that their interest and concentration are maintained at a high level. During their time in the nursery they learn to co-operate and collaborate and to take turns. The development of these important skills ensures that the children can take full advantage of learning opportunities as they move through the school. Throughout their time in the nursery and reception the children have positive attitudes to school, to learning and to each other.
11. The pupils' very good attitudes to work and learning are a strength of the school and have improved since the last inspection. Throughout the school there is a calm and happy atmosphere providing an environment that promotes pupils' learning. The positive relations between pupils and staff noted in the last inspection report have strengthened and are now excellent. Most pupils are well motivated, proud of their achievements and keen to share their successes with others. The majority work sensibly when unsupervised, stay on task and collaborate and co-operate well with each other, their teachers and other adults when necessary. Pupils with special educational needs have very positive attitudes. They work hard, enjoy their successes and have excellent relationships with their helpers.
12. The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is very good and parents appreciate the standards of conduct promoted by the school. Teachers and ancillary staff are excellent role models and lead by example. As a result relationships between pupils and all staff are excellent and continue to be a strength of the school. There have been no exclusions. No anti-social or oppressive behaviour from pupils was observed during the inspection and it was noticeable how the older pupils cared for their younger peers.
13. Personal development of pupils is very good. Apart from taking responsibility for routine tasks, pupils use their initiative when they notice a need and act accordingly. An example seen during the inspection was when older pupils gave up their lunch break to organise library books in the nursery, and set out the various equipment needed for the next morning session. These tasks were carried out quietly and efficiently with very little supervision required. Pupils also take total responsibility for organising the annual sports day and summer fair. Opportunities are taken to widen pupils' outlook and foster

personal development by visits ranging from the Millennium Dome to a local farm. The school also enjoys visits from theatre companies and puppet makers and the whole school undertook resuscitation training by paramedics. All these extra activities aid pupils' personal development by adding to their general knowledge and broadening their outlook.

14. The school's attendance levels are good. There is no unauthorised absence and punctuality continues to be good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. From the lessons observed, all of the teaching was satisfactory or better, 57 per cent was good, 29 per cent was very good and 3 per cent was excellent. Teaching is of a consistently good standard throughout the school. It is often very good and sometimes excellent in Key Stage 1. This is a big improvement since the last inspection, when teaching in Key Stage 1 was judged to be weaker than in Key Stage 2. The standard of teaching was at least satisfactory in every one of the 35 lessons seen during the inspection, and was good or better in nine out of ten lessons. In nearly one third of lessons the teaching was very good or better, with one excellent lesson. The bulk of the very good and excellent teaching is in Key Stage 1.
16. Good planning, excellent relationships and continual self-evaluation are key attributes that help to maintain the good standard of teaching. The teachers have good subject knowledge in most curriculum areas, and where they need support, this is easily obtained from colleagues. They also have a good understanding of how the pupils they are teaching learn best. They use a good range of methods, mixing whole class discussions, group activities and individual work to suit the requirements of lessons. They set high expectations for behaviour and endeavour, and keep lessons moving at a brisk pace.
17. Elements that make lessons very good or excellent include a sharper eye on opportunities to make the pupils think for themselves rather than giving them answers, and high expectations for independent working. Excellent classroom organisation and very effective use of classroom assistants also help to ensure that the pupils are kept working productively for a high proportion of the time in very good lessons. An excellent mathematics lesson included a period of choice for the pupils. The fact that some pupils think of extension work for themselves during this period reflects the high motivation that has been achieved and the good awareness the teacher has of how the pupils learn best.
18. All the teachers teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy well. They have understood the purpose of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and have incorporated them effectively into their teaching. In lessons, teachers encourage pupils to express and listen to ideas, developing good speaking and listening skills. Reading is encouraged at home, but the library facilities are inadequate for the task of improving higher reading skills. Handwriting is taught well, but pupils are not given enough opportunities to write at length across the curriculum. The teachers use the numeracy hour well to encourage mental computation and flexible approaches to problem-solving and parents comment on their children's improved skills and confidence in these areas.
19. In the lessons observed, the quality of the teaching was very good in religious education, good in information technology, science, music and physical education and satisfactory in geography. No lessons were seen in history, art or design and technology. The teachers have gained sufficient knowledge and confidence in information technology under the skilled guidance of the co-ordinator to enable the pupils to develop and use their skills across the curriculum. In religious education, the very good teaching encourages reflection and awareness of different faiths and cultures. In physical education, teachers

make the best use they can of the accommodation within the school to develop the pupils' games, gymnastics and dance skills.

20. The quality of teaching for pupils with a special educational need is good overall. Pupils with a statement of need who receive individual help often make good progress. Other pupils also benefit from the effective and efficient use of support staff, who are skilful at helping them with their individual learning targets. Sometimes, however, the targets in the Individual Education Plans are rather general, and not broken down into smaller achievable short-term goals. This limits the use that teachers can make of them in their daily planning and the ability of the pupils to see the progress they are making. Teachers and support assistants show patience and very effectively promote the welfare of the pupils and encourage their self-esteem.
21. The teacher's use of assessment to inform planning is satisfactory. The teachers know their pupils well, and therefore keep a good informal track of their achievements and progress. They use this knowledge to ensure that their lessons build on previous learning. In English and mathematics, the assessments are more regular and more formal, and are used more effectively in planning than in other subjects. The teachers set tasks for at least three attainment levels in these lessons, ensuring that all groups have interesting and challenging work to do. However, the planning is based on general rather than specific learning targets, and so the assessments are also general. There is the possibility, therefore, that some pupils may be working well within their capabilities in some lessons because the assessments may not have identified the threshold of their knowledge and understanding. The marking of pupils' work is consistent, but does not often include comments designed to take individual pupils further in their work.
22. The pupils respond to the teachers' high expectations with consistent effort and application. When given the opportunity, they undertake group and individual work unsupervised in a mature and responsible way. The teachers are skilled at getting all the pupils to express themselves confidently in class and group lessons, and in taking their thinking further with good questions and comments. The pupils learn at a good rate in the vast majority of lessons, and gain confidence in applying their skills across the curriculum.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

23. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory overall, and are very good for children under five. The school provides a broad curriculum, which meets the needs of all its pupils. The curriculum meets statutory requirements to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The recently established nursery provides a very effective environment in which the children make good progress towards all the early learning goals and are very well prepared for full-time schooling.
24. The school has concentrated its efforts recently on establishing the national literacy and numeracy strategies. Planning and teaching of literacy and numeracy take appropriate account of the recommendations both for lesson format and content. Science, religious education, music, physical education and information technology are taught regularly each week. Less emphasis is placed on art, history, geography and design and technology and this leads to an imbalance in the curriculum. One consequence of this is that pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to develop their extended writing skills in other areas of the curriculum and this has a negative impact on the standards they attain in writing. Another is that lessons seen during the inspection, for example in geography, had to be rushed in order for the teacher to cover all the

planned skills and knowledge in a limited amount of time. This leads to some aspects of the subjects not being covered in sufficient depth.

25. The key issue of the previous inspection report regarding curriculum planning has been successfully addressed. Teachers now plan from schemes of work in each subject, ensuring full coverage of the full National Curriculum Programmes of Study.
26. The school offers a sound range of extra-curricular activities including the band, two recorder groups, netball and an after school club. Soccer on Saturday morning and cross-country running are organised by parents. The school also offers a successful 'After School Club'. Visits are arranged to places of interest in the immediate locality and further afield. These include the Millennium Dome in London, Trotters Farm, a Toy Museum, Allenby, Silloth and Carlisle. Visits are used as an integral part of work that is being done in school. Visitors to the school contribute well to studies in history, art and physical education.
27. Overall, the provision for pupils with a special educational need is good and enhances the pupils' access to the full curriculum. There is a strong commitment to providing for the needs of these pupils. As a result, the provision for pupils with a statements of special educational needs is very good in respect of support staff. They are set appropriate targets in their individual educational programmes, but these are not consistently broken down into short-term goals that the pupils can see themselves achieving. Good links are maintained with the schools to which the pupils transfer and their needs are discussed prior to their arrival.
28. The school does not have a written sex education or drugs policy. However, the school's approach to sex education is stated in the Prospectus, and these arrangements are satisfactory. The school promotes a caring and positive learning environment within which the concepts of equality of opportunity for all pupils, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity and social background is well established.
29. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Daily assemblies include a corporate act of collective worship and time is always provided for reflection and prayer. The themes chosen for assemblies effectively support pupils' moral and social development. For example, stress is placed on caring for and helping others. Whilst acknowledging the importance of worship and prayer, these occasions are also happy events in the life of the school and promote the community spirit that is obviously present. Prayers are said before lunch and at the end of the day. Close links are maintained with the church and the vicar, who holds confirmation classes for Year 6 pupils, is a regular visitor to the school. Though this has not been done in the past, there are plans to visit a Roman Catholic Church, a Synagogue and a Temple in the future.
30. The school's provision for the pupils' moral development is good. It promotes an understanding of moral principles that allow pupils to tell right from wrong. It provides a clear framework in which pupils develop values of fairness and honesty. Each class negotiates its own Code of Conduct with the teacher and there are Good Manners and Behaviour records in each class. Any discipline problems are dealt with through discussion. Members of the teaching staff are consistent in their approach and ensure that pupils are aware of what is acceptable behaviour in classroom situations. The school succeeds in helping pupils appreciate the world around them, to care for their environment and show respect for people and property.
31. The provision for social development is good. The headteacher and staff provide good role models. Teachers provide suitable opportunities for pupils to work together in large and small groups and pupils are encouraged to interact with adults. This has the

positive effect of developing both their confidence and their speaking skills. Appropriate opportunities are provided for pupils to develop responsibility both in classrooms and around the school. For example, individuals are chosen to lead prayers at lunchtime and at the end of the day. Through activities such as involvement in charities, extra-curricular events, visits, concerts and coffee mornings, the school develops pupils' awareness and understanding of the wider community.

32. The school's provision for the pupils' cultural development is good, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. An appreciation of British traditions is developed well through visits to places of interest and visitors who come into school to talk to pupils. Work in art, music, religious education and history provides a good introduction to a range of customs, traditions and styles of life and pupils have opportunities to learn about religions and beliefs other than their own. Care is taken to ensure that books and displays around the school reflect the multicultural nature of British society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school treats the safety and welfare of pupils as a priority and this aspect has been strengthened since the last inspection. Teachers and other members of school staff know the pupils very well. This ensures a very high standard of pastoral care. There is a dedicated health and safety governor who continually updates health and safety procedures, adding to the wellbeing and safety of pupils. All members of staff have received the appropriate training in emergency first aid. In addition, as a result of a visit from a paramedic trainer all pupils have been trained in resuscitation techniques.
34. The school has adopted the local authority child protection policy and the headteacher has received the appropriate training. All members of staff are well aware of the procedures and it is planned that they will also receive training in child protection matters. Attendance registers are marked neatly and are kept in accordance with statutory requirements. There is a self-registration system for the nursery children which also promotes their personal development. There are procedures in place for investigation of unexplained absence or lateness. A satisfactory home/school agreement is in place.
35. Pupils understand what is expected of them under the comprehensive behaviour policy and the code of conduct. Recognition and praise encourage good manners and good behaviour standards and each class benefits from a simple reward system. Charts showing progress to these rewards are displayed in each classroom. These simple but effective methods ensure very good behaviour standards. Procedures for supporting the personal development of pupils are good and monitored informally, although formal procedures for recording progress in this area have not yet been developed. All these procedures ensure that the well being, safety and personal development of pupils in the school is paramount. The school knows and looks after its pupils very well.
36. The school has a positive approach to furthering the development of pupils with special needs. The provision for their care, welfare and health and safety is good and effective strategies have been established to identify their needs and support their learning. The special educational needs Code of Practice is well implemented through the school. In the sample of lessons seen, provision generally matched that recommended by the pupil's statements of special educational need. Individual Education Plans drawn up and reviewed each term and are of satisfactory quality. The learning targets are appropriate, but they are not always attainable over a short time-period and specific enough to give sufficient guidance to pupils, teachers and support assistants.
37. The school has satisfactory procedures in place for assessing pupils' attainment. These include statutory and optional National Curriculum tests and reading, spelling and

science tests. However, the school has not developed rigorous enough procedures to ensure that the recording of assessment information is becoming a natural part of teaching and learning and is used consistently to guide lesson planning. There is no firmly established process of recording progress against the specific skills and knowledge pupils are expected to attain, from year to year, in each of the subject areas. Any records kept refer to general levels of attainment (e.g. Levels 1,2,3,4) rather than the skills and knowledge within those levels. Teachers have assessment files in which they track the progress of pupils, but there is a lack of whole school consistency in the use of this information to inform future lesson planning. As a result, particularly in mixed age and ability classes, the work set for groups of pupils does not always accurately meet their needs and abilities. Similarly, targets are set, but these are of a general nature, (e.g. 80 per cent at Level 4) and do not refer to the progress that can be expected of individuals or groups of pupils in particular subjects. There is no specifically appointed assessment co-ordinator.

38. Useful collections of samples of work have been assembled to show a pattern of development for individual pupils throughout the school. Pupil's records are suitably passed on to the next teacher and the results of National Curriculum tests are analysed in order to determine strengths and weaknesses. The scrutiny of pupils' work carried out during the inspection indicates that the teachers' use of marking is inconsistent across the school. Marking is often brief with few comments about how the pupils' work can be improved in the future.
39. Teachers and members of the support staff know their pupils well. They display a high level of care and concern for their pupils and enjoy excellent relationships with them. Pupils feel safe and happy in the school and have the confidence and independence to raise any queries and concerns they have. The personal development of the pupils is monitored well, albeit informally, on a day to day basis.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. Parents' links with school are good overall, and they express overwhelmingly positive views about most aspects of the school's work. This is a similar judgement to the one made in the last inspection. Many parents make themselves available to help both in school and outside. They run school clubs and accompany pupils on the various school trips. The Friends of St. Bridget's raise considerable funds each year through various initiatives. These funds provide valuable additional resources that further enhance the pupils' learning and personal development. The parents' commitment to the school is exemplified by their recent repainting of a classroom and the school hall. This support from parents contributes well to their children's learning. However, some of the parents involved in running extra-curricular activities would like more support from the school.
41. The school provides satisfactory opportunities for parents of pupils with special educational needs to maintain links with the school and to follow their children's attainment and progress. However, parents are not usually involved until Stage 3 of the Code of Practice. The school could usefully consider involving parents more closely in the drawing up of the individual education plans by inviting them to the termly meetings. In this way some parents might be encouraged to actively help their children at home. The teachers are readily available to talk to parents informally each day, however, and parents express their appreciation of the support their children receive.
42. Information for parents is satisfactory. Parents are kept informed through annual reports that give good details of pupils' progress and of the curriculum. There are two formal parent meetings a year, which are well attended, but some parents would like more detailed information about their children's progress. Newsletters are sent on a

regular basis. There are parental notice-boards inside and outside the school containing both curricular and social information. Many parents make use of the homework books to comment on their children's work. An effective home/school agreement is in operation. Many examples of pupils' work and successes are displayed in school for parents to enjoy.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The school benefits from good leadership and management. The headteacher sets a good tone for the school. The atmosphere is welcoming and all members of staff are seen to be working together towards the common purpose of raising standards and maintaining a thriving community. The school is successful in these aims. It provides well for the pupils' personal development, care and welfare as well as working for better educational performance. The pupils and staff feel valued and respected. In this environment they give of their best and continually strive to improve, giving the school a good capacity to succeed. The good opportunities for reflection that the school provides and its attention to the importance of religious beliefs enable the school to fully reflect its Church of England status.
44. The headteacher works closely with all the staff in planning and supervising the delivery of the curriculum. Subject co-ordinators have a whole-school view of their subjects and give good support to their colleagues. In the case of information technology, this has had a big impact on standards. However, the co-ordinators have not fully exploited the management aspects of their role, for example, in formally monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and teaching and learning in their subjects. This limits their effectiveness to some extent in helping to raise standards, and may hamper their future professional development.
45. The governing body fulfils its obligations well and has an efficient and effective structure. It gives good support to the headteacher and the school. Governors accept guidance in educational matters from the headteacher, but are also vigilant in holding the school to account for all aspects of its work, and they play their full part in shaping its direction. They are aware of the main strengths and weaknesses of the school, and are persistent but realistic in their quest to improve provision. For example, they are aware of the need to delegate management responsibility more effectively, but also know that there are limits on the work-load that can be placed on individual teachers. A reflection of their good grasp of the school's position is the fact that most of the areas for improvement identified by the inspection team are either already in the school's development plan or have been discussed at governors' meetings.
46. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching are satisfactory at an informal level, as the headteacher has a good overview of practice throughout the school. There is no policy and no formal procedures to guide this aspect of the school's work however. As a consequence, the agenda for monitoring and evaluating is not clear, and the focus not as sharp as it could be in order to identify and spread good practice and help to prioritise areas for improvement.
47. The school has good procedures for appraisal and performance management. The headteacher has taken the initiative to maintain informal appraisal meetings for all staff in the interim between local procedures lapsing and new government initiatives coming on stream. The governors have also introduced effective and efficient procedures for setting targets for the headteacher in implementing the school's development targets and monitoring progress towards them.
48. There is a good system in place for the induction of new staff to the school and the

strength of the current teaching team is a testimony to its effectiveness. The school is also an effective provider of initial teacher training. The school is well staffed with teachers and classroom assistants. The classroom assistants are particularly effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs, giving good value for the money invested. Good use is also made of students and volunteer helpers.

49. There are significant deficiencies in the school's accommodation. The upper Key Stage 2 classroom is much too small for the number of pupils currently accommodated, making it very difficult to undertake a range of learning activities. Part of the hall is used for storage and other purposes, reducing its effectiveness for physical education. The school playground is very cramped following the building extensions, and the playing field is not used to benefit the whole school because it is too far away. However, the governors have plans in hand for practical improvements. For example, they have purchased adjoining land to create a playing field, and this will allow more creative use of the other outside areas. The cleaner in charge keeps the school very clean and tidy, and the cheerful and helpful manner in which she carries out her duties adds further to the school's community spirit. Displays of pupils' work enhance the learning environment by encouraging interest and effort.
50. There are adequate resources to support learning in all subjects, and the teachers supplement these with good quality home-made equipment and teaching aids. The new computers have been used very effectively to improve standards in information technology, and good resources have contributed to the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.
51. The school identifies appropriate targets for development and takes effective action to meet them. For example, standards in information technology have dramatically improved following the specific measures the school has taken recently to achieve this end. All areas of the life of the school are included in the development plan. Long-term objectives are broken down into achievable short and medium term measures that are costed.
52. The governors manage the budget very efficiently in support of the school development plan. Tight control in recent years has reduced the deficit substantially and the school is now working towards a reasonable surplus for contingency measures. Governors understand and apply the principles of best value when purchasing goods and services from the very limited funds available. The secretary oversees the day-to day administration of the school very effectively, releasing the headteacher to concentrate on educational matters. Her efficient but friendly manner gives visitors and callers a very good first impression of the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to sharpen the focus of it's work and further improve standards across the curriculum, the school should:

Improve monitoring and evaluation by:

- Clarifying and extending the role of subject co-ordinators in the management of the curriculum.
- Introducing formal monitoring and evaluation procedures to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning in each subject.
(Paragraphs 44, 46, 70, 78, 84, 88, 93, 98, 106, 112)

Improve the impact of assessment and marking on the pupils' development of skills by:

- Tying assessment to the progressive development of skills in each subject for each year group.
- Setting more specific learning targets for individual pupils and year-groups.
- Involving the pupils in setting their own targets and monitoring their own progress towards them
- Making better and more consistent use of marking in the pupils' books to set specific goals for improvement based on the progressive development of skills in each subject.

(Paragraphs 21, 37, 38, 69, 70, 77, 78, 81, 84, 88, 89, 93, 98, 102, 106,)

In addition to the key issues, the following areas for improvement are identified in the report and the governors should consider including these in their action plan.

Standards of writing are not as high as standards of reading and speaking and listening. (Paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 18, 24, 61, 65, 83, 98)

Library skills are not as good as they could be. (Paragraphs 18, 36, 63)

The targets in individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are not always specific enough. (Paragraphs 20, 67)

The governors are aware of the need to improve writing and assessment procedures and to find ways of more effectively delegating management responsibilities, and have already incorporated some measures towards achieving these goals into the school development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	29	57	11			

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	5	116
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		23

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	4	5	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89	78	100
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89	100	100
	National	82	86	87

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	1	9	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100	60	90
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90	90	90
	National	68	69	75

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	121
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.8
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	160

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	10

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	16

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	2239121
Total expenditure	227408
Expenditure per pupil	1880
Balance brought forward from previous year	-16025
Balance carried forward to next year	-4312

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

121

Number of questionnaires returned

85

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	35	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	36	2	1	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	35	2	1	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	36	8	2	7
The teaching is good.	71	22	1	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	51	8	6	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	19	5	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	24	2	1	7
The school works closely with parents.	41	42	8	7	1
The school is well led and managed.	66	28	1	4	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	31	2	1	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	42	14	5	14

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

The parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They appreciate the good teaching and management and the welcoming atmosphere.

Other issues raised by parents

Some parents feel dissatisfied with the quantity and quality of the information they receive about their children's progress. Other parents feel there is insufficient support and encouragement from staff with extra-curricular activities.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

53. The recently established nursery provides a very good learning facility for children under five. The teacher and nursery assistant work very closely together as an effective teaching team. They are both very knowledgeable about the needs of young children. They provide a very stimulating and well ordered environment in which the children learn through play and structured activities. Parents are very closely involved with their children's learning. They come into the nursery to settle the children into the routines and play with them and their friends in the early stages. The room is very effectively laid out to cater for all the children's learning needs. The children register themselves in a morning by selecting their own name from coloured containers and fixing them to the appropriate board, helped by their parents. This is one example of the many ways in which the staff use daily routines to reinforce a range of skills such as colour recognition and one to one matching. The whole morning is structured so that the children move from one enjoyable learning activity to another. The teacher keeps very good records of the children's progress and knows exactly what their current needs are. When it is time for the children to transfer to the reception class, this information is used to make the transition as smooth as possible, with provision for children who are not quite ready for the transfer to stay on in the nursery until they are. Children are also prepared well for starting the nursery. There are good links with the local playgroup, including planned opportunities for children to visit the nursery with their parents on a number of occasions prior to starting.
54. The children enter the nursery with a wide spread of attainment, but are above average overall in terms of the early learning goals. The standard of teaching is consistently good and sometimes very good, and the classroom organisation is excellent. This ensures that the children make good progress in all the areas of learning and enter the reception class with above average attainment for their age overall. This sets a challenging benchmark for the rest of the school to build from. However, the nursery provision and baseline testing have not yet been in place long enough yet for the children's progress to be tracked from here to the Key Stage 2 national tests.

Personal and social development

55. The excellent classroom organisation and the skill of the teacher and nursery nurse in interacting with the children facilitate good progress in their personal and social development enabling them to meet the early learning goals before they are five. High expectations are set for social responsibility within the group, for example tidying away after activities and setting out the tables for snack-time. The clear class routines give the children a strong sense of belonging to a community and sharing responsibilities as well as privileges. They take turns and are taught to accept disappointments when they do not get their own way. The children relate well to each other and learn to play together for some of the time. The teacher sets realistic but high expectations for individual personal responsibility – for example, the children are expected to put on their own coats before asking for them to be fastened. As a result, the children feel secure in asking for help but strive to be more independent. By the time they are five, most of the children are confident in themselves and their environment and are ready to meet the challenges of full-time schooling.

Language and literacy

56. Most of the children have an above average vocabulary for their age and are very confident speakers. They recognise their names, and some of them know the sounds made by individual letters. The higher attainers use this knowledge to help them read simple labels like 'dog'. They listen well to instructions and actively participate in role-play activities. For example, they act out the story of Mr. Gumble's ride in the car with all the animals, changing their voices to suit their characters. Some of the children show exceptional language and 'acting' ability in these activities. They remember what they have to say and mimic grown up expressions exactly. The standard of teaching is very good in this area of learning. The teacher and classroom assistant are both very skilled at getting the children to express themselves freely and confidently. They are successful in this with all the children, including those whose development of speech and language is slower than average. The children are also given a very good preparation for learning to read and write. They experience stories regularly, and are learning how the pictures in a book relate to the written words and symbols. They have lots of opportunities to share books with each other and to familiarise themselves with the process of reading. Imaginative pre-writing opportunities are also provided, for example in the class office. Most of the children have attained the early learning goals in language and literacy well before they are five.

Mathematics

57. The children's attainment is above expectations in mathematics. They have a good awareness of mathematical ideas and words. They see and continue patterns, for example by placing model ladybirds and bees in order, and use terms like next to and before correctly. All but one or two lower attaining children use one-to-one correspondence to help them to count accurately. They use numbers with confidence, for example when singing a song about the farmer's ducks disappearing as the fox makes off with one each day. Most of the children associate the correct symbol with each number to ten. The higher attainers count confidently past ten when, for example, they want to find out how many shoes there are altogether in the class. The teaching of mathematics is good. The teacher and nursery nurse take every opportunity to get the children to use mathematical vocabulary and learn new words and ideas. The classroom is rich with opportunities to apply mathematics in enjoyable ways, for example by setting enough plates on the table for each child at snack-time or making a graph to show the different ways in which the children get to school. The children learn quickly and most of them achieve the early learning goals before they are five.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

58. The children have a good knowledge and understanding of the world, and most fulfil the early learning goals in this area well before they are five. The higher attainers describe the world around them in exceptional detail, for example by relating a train journey between two local towns and describing exactly how the train turned round. Their scientific understanding is also very good. For example, one child explained that a ladybird is a special kind of insect because it can fly – 'it must be a flying beetle!' and that bees have a special job to make honey. They understand how familiar things in their immediate environment change with time and that plants grow from seeds when looked after properly. The teaching is very good in this area too because nothing is overlooked in the classroom organisation. The children learn how to describe and explain the world around them using an ever-increasing vocabulary through the many planned structured activities. The computer table is well organised and the children have technical toys to play with. For example, they use suction pumps in the water tray and use everyday

objects like telephones and cookers in imaginative role-play to familiarise themselves with the technical aspects of everyday life.

Creative development

59. The children respond very positively to the very good opportunities they are given to develop their creative talents. They make good progress and achieve the early learning goals in this area by the time they are five. They choose to do creative activities such as painting and collage, and develop good skills with the tools and materials they use. The higher attaining children know all their colours and use them appropriately to paint familiar things like fields and vehicles. Their observational skills are above average, as is illustrated by the paintings of their wheeled toys that they produced during the inspection. The clay models of dinosaurs on display and other models made from bits and bobs reflect above average skills in three-dimensional modelling also. They sing songs and nursery rhymes, with a good sense of timing, and use simple percussion instruments appropriately to make the sound effects for stories. The teaching is very good in this area. The adults provide a very good variety of stimuli for creative work and a good range of well-organised resources to support all the activities.

Physical development

60. The children's physical development is well catered for and they achieve the early learning goals in this area before they are five. In the classroom the children can develop all their fine motor skills by supervised use of a wide range of tools and equipment from glue-spreaders to telephones and computers. They demonstrate above average development in this area of learning. They are also confident when using the wheeled vehicles, balls and hoops in the outdoor play area, showing good awareness of the other children around them. Unfortunately, the children were not observed using the climbing equipment in the hall, but they do this on a regular basis and it is safe to assume that their skills in this area are at least in line with expectations. The teaching is good because the teacher and nursery nurse are aware of the children's needs and make sure that they have regular opportunities to develop and practise their skills.

ENGLISH

61. Overall, standards of work seen during the inspection show that pupils, including those with special educational needs, attain levels that are above those expected nationally. This is an improvement on the previous inspection report. Compared with their attainment on entry to the school, the pupils make satisfactory progress. Due to the small number of pupils in Years 2 and 6 during the last school year (ten or under) it is statistically unsafe to make any comparisons with either all schools nationally or similar schools. It is, however worth noting, and inspection evidence supports this view, that standards in reading and speaking and listening are higher than those in writing, as was the case at the time of the last inspection.

62. Throughout the school standards in speaking and listening are above what might be expected. A large majority of pupils have good listening skills. They listen carefully to their teachers and show that they have understood instructions. Only on a few isolated occasions, when teaching lacks stimulation, do the pupils do not give their full attention to the teacher. Many pupils make valuable contributions to class discussions. They speak clearly and coherently and answer questions readily. They are also developing the ability to speak clearly and with confidence on more formal occasions, such as assemblies and debates. For example, in a debate in the Year 3 and 4 class about lunchtime arrangements, the pupils discussed the issues maturely and sensibly with adults. They demonstrate the confidence to challenge and question others and to express their own

opinions. Most pupils can retell stories and explain their preferences. They sequence events in order and respond appropriately when asked to describe characters from stories. All pupils are polite and courteous in their speech and understand the difference between formal speech used in the classroom or when talking to visitors and informal speech with their friends in the playground. Progress in speaking and listening is good. Many pupils are developing a good technical vocabulary in subjects such as mathematics and information technology.

63. Standards in reading are above those expected nationally at the end of both key stages and a few higher attaining pupils attain well above average standards. Progress is generally good in both key stages and pupils read with fluency and accuracy. They develop good word recognition skills and advance well in their ability to use the sounds of letters to help them read new words. In both Key Stages average and higher attaining pupils are reading with good levels of understanding. Many pay attention to punctuation and are attempting to read with good levels of expression. Higher attaining pupils try to use a different voice to illustrate different characters in a story. Pupils have reasonable reference skills, but do not have sufficient opportunities to use and extend them because of the limited library accommodation. Although some pupils compensate for this by regular use of the local library, many do not, so this shortcoming in the accommodation has a negative impact on standards.
64. Most pupils at both Key Stages know the difference between fiction and non-fiction material and between authors and illustrators, and many are able to accurately explain the purpose of the content and index pages and the glossary of a book. Teachers use 'Big Books' effectively and supplement these with home-made materials of a high quality to further the pupils' progress in understanding grammar and punctuation. Pupils are encouraged to take a reading book home and those parents who regularly listen to their child read make a valuable contribution to the progress they make.
65. Standards in writing are in line with national averages by the end of both Key Stages, and the quality of handwriting is good throughout the school. Pupils write a range of narrative and descriptive pieces. For example, they write instructions on how to make a cheese and pickle sandwich and complete reviews of books. They plan and draft their work, and realise that the stories they write should have a structure. The imaginative quality of the pupils' work is enhanced by opportunities to write about first-hand experiences. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils use good imaginative language to describe aspects of their visit to Loweswater. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing skills of grammar and punctuation. Many pupils are able to write in paragraphs and higher attaining pupils develop the correct use of speech, exclamation and question marks. Dictionary skills are developed well and this has a good effect on progress in spelling and the use of vocabulary. However, the pupils are not given enough opportunities to write creatively or technically on a regular basis across the curriculum. Due to the lack of time spent on history and geography, for example, and the lack of attention to presentation in science, pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to develop their extended writing skills in these curriculum areas.
66. Good use is made of information technology in English. During many of the lessons seen, group work involved some pupils working on computers and this is having a beneficial effect on the pupils' reading and listening skills and in their ability to compose written sentences.
67. Pupils with special educational needs make generally good progress in all aspects of the subject especially when helped by support staff or by the class teacher in lessons. They practise their reading skills regularly and this has a positive effect on their overall progress and boosts their confidence. However, their individual learning targets are not

always specific enough or achievable over a short-enough time span, and they are not consistently incorporated into lesson plans.

68. The pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good. Throughout the school they are enthusiastic about their work during the literacy hour. They listen well and enjoy contributing to discussions by answering questions. They share ideas well during group reading sessions and are helpful and supportive of each other. In the large majority of lessons pupils settle quickly to their work and maintain their interest. They are quiet and attentive and show good levels of perseverance.
69. The quality of teaching is good overall and very good in Key Stage 1. Teachers have a secure subject knowledge and work is usually matched effectively to the needs of the pupils. They have a high expectation of pupils' behaviour and expect them to be fully involved in activities. The planning for the literacy hour is effective and includes all the necessary elements. Teachers often inform the pupils about the lesson targets at the beginning and good use is made of the plenary session when the whole class discusses what has been achieved. Marking is thorough, but is not consistently used to identify specific areas for improvement. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils and the most effective lessons are marked by a sense of humour and a relaxed atmosphere. This transmits well to the pupils who respond accordingly. Pupils are encouraged to read at home and this has a good effect on their progress. Computers and listening centres are used well to support pupils' work and teacher-produced resources are always of a good quality.
70. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The guidelines provided in the literacy strategy are being well used and teachers have had the opportunity to watch other colleagues teach. However, though it is planned for the near future, there has been no effective monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning and insufficient emphasis is placed on the development of writing skills across the curriculum. Though sound assessment procedures are in place, the information gathered is not used as effectively as it could be. For example, portfolios of work and records of achievement are not systematically used across the school to track pupils' progress or to set appropriate individual targets for future improvement.

MATHEMATICS

71. In most years the number of pupils taking the national tests have been too small for the results to be meaningfully compared with other schools. The trend in the school's mathematics results at Key Stage 2 has been generally lower than in English. However, in 1998, when more than ten pupils took the tests, the mathematics results were well above the national average along with the English results. Teacher assessments of the pupils' performance in 2000, when more than ten pupils took the tests, suggest a marked improvement on the 1999 scores. Over 80 per cent of the pupils achieved at least Level 4 and 24 per cent Level 5. If the test results reflect these predictions, standards will go back up towards the good 1998 level.
72. The numbers of pupils taking the tests for seven-year olds has also been too low for meaningful comparisons to be made with other schools. The trend in mathematics results at Key Stage 1 has been variable, but has mirrored the trend in reading quite closely. There are no significant differences in trends between girls and boys at either key stage.
73. The inspection finding is that attainment is above average at both key stages, and improving. This reflects the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and is a significant improvement since the last inspection. At Key Stage 1, there is a

wide spread of attainment, with very good knowledge and understanding of number among the higher attainers. For example, they use their understanding of place value to work out that ten times 500,000 is 5,000,000 and use fractions when necessary, such as when working out that 4 divided by 2 is $\frac{1}{2}$. The average attaining pupils are very confident using numbers to one hundred and use the four rules of arithmetic – adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing – to achieve target answers. The lower attaining pupils in Year 2 sometimes need support when ordering numbers within one hundred. The pupils have a good understanding of shape and measurement and are beginning to use the metric system appropriately. They represent data using block graphs and group numbers and shapes in sets according to their properties. Pupils of all attainment levels make good progress because of the challenging and innovative teaching.

74. There is a wide spread of attainment at Key Stage 2, but the standard is above average overall and pupils make satisfactory progress over the key stage. Most pupils use their knowledge of multiplication facts to solve mental problems. They understand fractions and decimals and use appropriate mathematical vocabulary such as 'square numbers' and 'factors'. The average and below average groups are not very confident, however, in applying their mathematical knowledge to new practical problems. For example, they require a lot of support to work out how to divide the axes of a graph into suitable units. Higher attaining pupils – about a quarter of the Year 6 cohort - have Level 5 knowledge and understanding of number, shape and measure, reflecting the provisional results of the 2000 tests. They used decimals and fractions confidently, multiply or divide numbers by 100 or 1000, use inverse operations to check results and apply their knowledge confidently to new practical problems. For example, they use their understanding of angular measure to work out the interior angle of regular polygons from tile patterns. The work in their books shows that they have covered the full programme of study in sufficient detail. They use clear formal procedures for computations and use the full range of metric units when working out weights and measures problems. They do not always, however, set their work out clearly to show their methods and thinking, or label graphs and charts sufficiently.
75. The pupils have very positive attitudes towards mathematics. They love the challenge of the mental sessions at the beginning of each lesson and strive to get answers right and think of their own ways of working out problems. A very good example was seen in which a group of Key Stage 1 pupils tried their hardest to think of more mathematical facts using the numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4 than they had in the previous session. They were genuinely thrilled to meet their target and think that they might be able to challenge the lower junior class. The pupils generally behave very well in lessons because of the level of interest and motivation. They become restless and inattentive, however, if the teacher spends too much time explaining particular methods instead of involving them in the discussion. Once assigned to their tasks, the pupils work hard. They relate well to one another and work co-operatively when required.
76. The standard of teaching is good in both key stages. It is never less than satisfactory, and is sometimes excellent in Key Stage 1. In an exemplary lesson in Key Stage 1, the teacher got all of the pupils on the edge of their seats from the word go with a challenge to think of as many different sums as they could in a set time using certain numbers and signs. The main lesson on measuring capacity then achieved learning objectives for each attainment group in the class across the two-year age spread. Year 1 pupils learned to estimate and measure the capacity of containers, using non-standard units in the water-tray while higher attaining Year 2 pupils applied their knowledge of litres and millilitres to practical problems. The classroom assistants were fully involved throughout the lesson and a full range of well-prepared resources, including computers, were deployed effectively. A very effective plenary recapped the learning and set the pupils a simple but relevant task to do at home. The pupils respond extremely positively to the highly stimulating and challenging teaching in this very well organised classroom,

sometimes taking the initiative in their own learning. For example, when given free choice, some pupils decided to challenge others to guess how many cubes it will take to fill a container.

77. All the teachers plan their lessons effectively from the National Numeracy Strategy and assess the pupils' progress using the key learning objectives. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the strategy and implement it well, sometimes making imaginative use of resources. For example, in the reception class, the teacher uses cut-out figures of characters from the story of the Gingerbread Man to teach ordinal numbers, making a very effective link with the pupils' work in literacy. Teachers set high expectations for learning and behaviour, but do not always use the most effective strategies to achieve their aims. In particular, there is a tendency in Key Stage 2 for the teachers to over-direct the pupils, giving them insufficient opportunities to explore, discuss and compare their own methods and thinking. The teachers mark the pupils work conscientiously, but do not always make the best use of this exercise to offer guidance and suggestions for improvement or set individual challenges. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons, either by being given suitably simplified work or by support from classroom assistants with their individual learning targets, and they make good progress.
78. There have been substantial improvements since the last inspection, when standards were average and the teaching sound overall. Standards are now above average and teaching is much better, especially in Key Stage 1. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has brought a clearer focus on the systematic teaching of skills, which is reflected in the pupils' growing confidence with numbers and willingness to tackle problems. Opportunities are taken to teach and use mathematics in other areas of the curriculum, though this is not a planned and co-ordinated feature of the school's strategy for numeracy. The co-ordinators have a sound overview of the subject in their key stages, but there is no formal monitoring of provision and outcomes across the school. The pupils' progress is tracked and good records kept of their achievement, but the targets that are set are general. There is little target setting for individuals and groups, and the pupils are not involved in setting their own targets or in monitoring their progress towards them.

SCIENCE

79. Over the last four years, the number of pupils taking the national tests for 11-year olds has usually been too small for the results to have statistical significance. The teacher assessments for 2000, when more than 11 pupils took the tests, predict an above average overall score. At Key Stage 1, the 1999 teacher assessments indicated well above average overall attainment, but again the numbers are too small for this to be significant.
80. The inspection findings are that the pupils' knowledge and understanding are above average at ages seven and 11. This is an improvement on the average standards reported by the last inspection. The pupils' experimental and investigative skills are in line with expectations for their age at Key Stage 2 and above expectations at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, the pupils demonstrate a good understanding of forces, using appropriate terms like air resistance and gravity, and explain that an object will remain stationary when the forces acting on it are balanced. They understand the basics of the human life and can describe the functions of the main organs of the body such as the heart and lungs. Their knowledge and understanding of materials is good, including how to differentiate between reversible and irreversible changes, and they can apply their knowledge to everyday life. For example, they explain that metals are suitable for making electrical cables because they are conductors whereas plastics are used to cover the cables because they are insulators. In conversation, pupils describe how they would

carry out a fair test, for example to decide which of two materials is the better heat insulator. They discuss which factors to keep constant and how they will measure what is changing. They do not, however, recall many investigations or experiments, and the recorded work that was available for scrutiny did not contain evidence of consistent development of investigative and experimental skills.

81. The pupils make good progress in each class in their knowledge and understanding. For example, in the reception class the pupils classify leaves according to their visible properties such as shape, and learn that seeds will grow better if they are watered. In Year 1 and Year 2, the pupils begin to discuss how they would test the effects of things like light and water on the growth of plants. They demonstrate a good grasp of the experimental process for their age at this stage. They make predictions about what will happen and know that they can test their predictions against the outcomes of the experiments. In the Year 3 and Year 4 class, the pupils gain confidence in suggesting experimental techniques, and begin to relate their observations to scientific ideas. For example, they decide that splitting the stem of a plant and putting the bottom sections of each half in water dyed with different colours will demonstrate if there is one big tube or many little tubes inside the stem. However, the pupils do not build systematically on their experimental skills to a sufficient extent as they move through Key Stage 2.
82. The pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy discussing experiments showing confidence in making suggestions, and are responsible in their use of equipment. When given opportunities, they use their initiative well, and they can be trusted to work sensibly unsupervised. This contributes to their learning, especially in the top juniors, where there is insufficient room in the classroom and so pupils have to work in other areas. They behave very well in lessons and collaborate effectively.
83. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages and is never less than satisfactory. It was good in three-quarters of the lessons seen, which is a good improvement on the sound standards reported by the last inspection. Teachers plan their lessons very carefully, providing all the equipment that will be needed for demonstrations and experiments. Classroom assistants in the infants make a valuable contribution in guiding activities and discussions. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use questioning well to judge the pupils' understanding and to help them to learn. In the most effective lessons, the pupils are challenged to think for themselves about how they would test their ideas. When they are given the opportunity to follow their ideas through, the quality of their learning is greatly enhanced. Pupil management is very good. The teachers expect and get good behaviour and co-operation from the pupils. Expectations for standards of presentation are not consistently high enough, however, especially for the older pupils. For example, they do not always clearly label diagrams, graphs and tables and explain exactly what they have discovered and how. This limits the effectiveness of the pupils' written work as the basis for further discussion and exploration, and the contribution the subject makes to the improvement of writing across the school.
84. The curriculum is now planned effectively from government guidelines, and this ensures that all the areas of knowledge and understanding are covered. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, it is not clear how the pupils will acquire and use their skills in each year group. This limits the use to which the assessment information that is collected can be put. For example, it is not used to set specific targets for individual pupils in terms of their investigative skills. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy full access to the curriculum and good support. They make good progress along with their peers. Where necessary, instructions and tasks are simplified and support given. There are sufficient resources to support learning across the programmes of study and they are used efficiently. Management of the subject is sound. The co-ordinator has an overview of the subject across the school from discussions with

teachers. However, there is no consistent monitoring of outcomes to ensure that the work done is appropriate in each year group, or of teaching methods to ensure consistency, for example in the teaching of investigative skills.

ART

85. No art lessons were seen during the inspection, so judgements rely on scrutiny of planning, the work on display and on discussions with teachers and pupils.
86. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout the school and reach standards that are broadly in line with expectations for their age at each key stage. The work on display reflects attention to a range of media and ways of working, including collage and clay-modelling as well as drawing, painting and printing. Pupils use their skills effectively to illustrate their work in other subjects and their drawings reflect good observational skills.
87. There is insufficient evidence to make judgement about the quality of teaching or pupils' response. The standard of work on display suggests positive attitudes and good application by the pupils. The planning for the subject indicates satisfactory coverage of the National Curriculum, and the way teachers display work reflects the way they value the pupils' efforts.
88. The subject is co-ordinated by the headteacher, who has maintained provision and standards at the same level as was reported by the previous inspection. There are no procedures in place to assess and record the pupils' attainment and to set them new learning targets, and this may be limiting the pace at which they develop and refine their skills. In the absence of formal monitoring procedures, the school does not have a clear picture of how well the subject is taught and how effectively the pupils learn in each year-group.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

89. No design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection in either Key Stage 1 or 2. Evidence from samples of completed work on display, photographs and discussion with the co-ordinator and class teachers suggests that pupils, including those with a special educational need, undertake a satisfactory range of activities in the subject and make satisfactory progress. This indicates similar standards to the previous inspection report. Design and technology is not taught on a regular weekly basis but is emphasised during one week of every term and occasionally when 'Challenge Activities' relate specifically to the subject. There is evidence that the skills of planning, designing, making and evaluating are taught but this is done infrequently so the processes involved do not become sufficiently familiar to the pupils.
90. At Key Stage 1, pupils have design and making skills that are in line with expectations for their age. For example, the design and make simple puppets following the visit of a puppeteer and make decorated eggs for a school competition. They use computers appropriately, for example when designing paintings for Easter cards, and use their scientific knowledge to use circuits as part of their design for a lighthouse or doorbell.
91. At Key Stage 2, standards are also in line with expectations. Pupils consider the problems they face in producing a design and how these might be solved. They research their designs well, including the use of computers to explore different ideas. They evaluate completed models and decide how they might improve them. For example, pupils are given the task of making a 'moon buggy' to transport water from a rocket to a moon base. They decide whether to use a push or pull force and consider the

suspension of the vehicle. A track is set up resembling the surface of the moon on which all the models are tested. Consideration is given to health and hygiene when preparing food products, for example in the use of both white and wholemeal flour when making biscuits. In this topic the weighing aspect of mathematics is also incorporated.

92. As no teaching was seen during the inspection it is not possible to make a judgement as to its quality. Discussions with pupils indicate that they enjoy the practical nature of the subject and are able to work together and independently. The finished models show that care and effort has been put into their work.
93. The co-ordinator has only recently been appointed. There is a policy for the subject and government guidelines are used to help and support staff. Due to the recent developments in literacy and numeracy little emphasis has been placed on design and technology. There is a need now to develop the monitoring of teaching and learning and to develop assessment procedures. In mixed age classes the school should establish more precisely the skills that should be developed from one year to the next. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

94. No lessons were observed in history and only two lessons were observed in geography, both in Key Stage 2. The other evidence available indicates that the quality of teaching and learning and the standards achieved are at the same level as they were at the time of the last inspection in both subjects. All pupils, including those with a special educational need, are reaching appropriate standards for their age. However, the time that is allocated to both subjects is insufficient following the recent emphasis on literacy, numeracy and physical education. Though there is evidence in teacher's planning that there is adequate coverage, the time allowed does not enable aspects of the subjects to be considered in enough depth and this is apparent in the work that pupils produce.
95. By the end of Key Stage 1 in history, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the passage of time and consolidate this by highlighting special events in their lives. For example, they make a study of seaside holidays from 1800 to the present day. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 have developed an appropriately wider historical perspective. They know, for example, about the different peoples who have invaded this country and compare different aspects of our culture that derive from them such as trade, money, language and literature. They cover a long time-span, from ancient civilisations to modern times, and incorporate local studies. For example, they investigate how events and trends such as unemployment, inventions, and the Second World War have changed life in Brigham School over a period of 125 years. They make increasing use of a variety of sources for their research, including first-hand evidence and information technology. For example, they question local people about the Victorian era and the Second World War and use the Internet and CD-ROMs to access information. These study skills are in line with expectations for 11 year old pupils.
96. At Key Stage 1 in geography, pupils identify buildings in their locality such as shops, houses and the church. They are aware of the difference between their village and a town. They know their own address and learn about different types of homes such as a caravan, igloos, castles, flats and a tent and begin to draw simple maps. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 have knowledge, understanding and skills in line with expectations for their age. They know about the oceans and continents of the world, mountain ranges such as the Himalayas and the Andes and major rivers such as the Nile and Mississippi. They learn to read detailed OS maps of their own locality and to use map keys. As a result they know about footpaths, rivers, towns and roads. They know the difference between a physical and political map and are aware of latitude, longitude and time differences.

97. In the geography lessons seen the quality of teaching was satisfactory overall. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and plan their work carefully. The resources used are always appropriate and of good quality. In mixed age classes they differentiate the work given to pupils so all are working to their level of ability and appropriately challenged. Due to the constraints of time however, there are occasions when too much is packed into one lesson in order to complete the coverage of the particular aspects. As a result the work is not covered in enough depth and explanations tend to be rushed. In the lessons observed, pupils enjoyed the subject and showed an interest in working with OS maps. The relationship between pupils and teachers is always very good and there is a mutual respect between the two. Pupils, including those with a special educational need, usually show good listening skills, are attentive when the teacher is speaking and listen courteously when their peers are talking. When the lesson is rushed, however, and instructions and explanations are not sufficiently clear, the pupils become restless and their behaviour suffers as a result.
98. The use of information technology is developing soundly in both subjects. However, not enough opportunities are given for pupils to develop their extended writing skills, partly due to time restraints. There is a co-ordinator for both subjects but their roles are not sufficiently developed. There is no monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning and neither co-ordinator is really aware of what is happening in their subject in other classes. There is a policy and government guidelines have been adopted, but these have not yet been 'customised' to meet the needs of the school. In mixed age classes insufficient attention is paid to the skills different age groups are expected to attain from one year to the next. Considering the attainment of the pupils on entry to the school, the progress they make in both subjects is only just satisfactory. Apart from placing one piece of work in each pupil's Record of Achievement there are no formal assessment procedures in place, tracking of progress or target setting. Resources for both subjects are satisfactory.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

99. Standards in information technology are above those expected at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. This is an improvement on the previous inspection report and reflects the emphasis, thought and effort that have been put into the development of the subject during the past year. The use of computers across the curriculum is developing well. Skills are progressively taught on a planned and regular basis and pupils are then given the opportunity to practise them. The teachers have developed their own skills in the subject and, with the support of a very knowledgeable co-ordinator, are confident in the use of computers and able to teach the necessary skills very effectively. This is having a positive effect on the standards achieved by the pupils.
100. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils' have good computer skills, which they use effectively to enhance their learning, especially in literacy and numeracy. During the literacy hour, for example, pupils enter text, using capital letters and full stops and add descriptive words to make their stories more interesting. They open and edit files and print out their own work. In mathematics, they collect data, enter it into the computer and produce simple graphs. They are then able to interpret the graphs. For example, one pupil predicted that Grand Prix was the favourite type of racing. He collected data and produced a graph that he realised proved him wrong. Speedway and not Grand Prix racing was the favourite. The pupils also use computers effectively to develop their creative ideas in art and music. Though they still need help, the pupils access the Internet and are aware of the use of e-mail. All pupils have the opportunity to program a short series of instructions to make a robot move in a pre-determined direction.

101. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have developed their skills well and are growing in confidence when using computers. Most pupils are able to access and search the Internet. They use this skill to aid their studies in a variety of subjects, for example by accessing information about Hitler and Buddhism or by practising standardised test papers. Some pupils use email confidently and have sent files attached to messages. They develop their ability to use databases and begin to use a range of symbols correctly. Most pupils are able to change fonts, use italics, underline, cut and paste and move pictures round the screen to illustrate writing. All pupils save to the hard disc and a majority can save to a floppy disc, enabling them to engage in extended study if they so wish.
102. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in both key stages. They have regular opportunities to learn and practise specific skills and technical language. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages due to the teachers' good subject knowledge and their use of government guidelines. This results in the pupils remaining attentive and usually listening with concentration. When working either individually or in groups, pupils do so with enjoyment and effort and show that they are able to co-operate. The school is well equipped with computers, though the constraints of the accommodation results in a lack of space to use them effectively, especially in the Key Stage 2 classes. The school is fortunate in having a knowledgeable co-ordinator and staff who have been willing to develop their own skills. The result has been a very impressive improvement in the use of technology across the curriculum and a corresponding progression in the skills and confidence of the pupils. There is an appropriate ICT development plan in place, but an area for improvement that has not yet been successfully addressed is how the pupils' skills should be assessed and how this information should be best used to set new learning targets.

MUSIC

103. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school and reach standards in line with expectations for their age at both key stages. They sing enthusiastically in assemblies, keeping in tune. The only evidence for attainment in other aspects of the subject at Key Stage 2 was one tape of compositions on the theme of space. The pupils' efforts here demonstrate expected levels of skill in putting together a series of sounds to create a desired effect. They collaborate effectively, listening to other parts as they play their own parts competently. They use percussion, with one or two examples of simple repeated tunes being introduced.
104. The only lesson observed was in Key Stage 1, and here the teaching was good. The lesson was based on a tape-recording, but was made lively, interesting and relevant. The pupils demonstrate a good awareness of the appropriateness of different kinds of music for different occasions, such as a carnival. They are very enthusiastic about singing. They listen attentively, recognise musical interludes between verses of songs and come in on time. The teacher encourages the children to express their ideas, and they know that what they say will be valued. The songs they learn also re-enforce positive messages, for example about personal responsibility towards animals. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, for example in the learning of new words, and they make good progress.
105. Music makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal development. Recorded music is used effectively to set a reflective atmosphere for assemblies and songs are used well in some classes to enhance the end-of-day reflection and prayer time. The range of music that the pupils listen to widens their cultural awareness.
106. The curriculum is planned around a published scheme of work that ensures coverage

of the National Curriculum. The school band is a valuable extra-curricular activity for the pupils involved. They play their instruments competently, and are kept in time by an enthusiastic and accomplished drummer. The level of provision has been maintained at a satisfactory level since the last inspection, although there is no monitoring of teaching and learning or assessment and recording of the skills the pupils develop in each year group.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

107. From the limited observation of pupils at Key Stage 2, it is evident that the sound standards reported by the last inspection have been maintained. At Key Stage 1, the standards observed were above expectations, representing an improvement since the last inspection.
108. At Key Stage 2, the pupils have a good range of skills to enable them to participate effectively in team-games. They collaborate well to produce co-ordinated movements in groups using a variety of equipment including skipping ropes, hoops and balls. Their hand-eye co-ordination and awareness of space around them are in line with expectations. The pupils make good progress early in the key stage with games skills through enthusiastic and well-organised teaching. No gymnastics or dance was seen to make judgements on this aspect of their performance.
109. At Key Stage 1, the pupils' attainment is above expectations for their age in ball skills and creative dance. In dance, they imagine they are small creatures and produce a range of movements that reflect the qualities of the mini-beasts they have chosen. The pupils co-operate very effectively and produce thoughtful expressive movements. Their ball and team-game skills are also above expectations. They have good hand-eye co-ordination for their age and a good awareness of the skills needed to play team games.
110. The pupils' responses are very good. They thoroughly enjoy the activities, give of their best and co-operate well with each other. In reception and Key Stage 1, the pupils are very enthusiastic about dance. They focus all their energies on the ideas they are working on, sometimes becoming totally engrossed, for example in the poise of a cat about to pounce on its prey. They show concern and consideration for others. For example, when one pupil was without a partner after the class had been asked to work in pairs, two pupils immediately rushed up and made a three. Their work rate is very good, and they work well unsupervised. Their behaviour is very good, and this enables lessons to proceed smoothly.
111. The standard of teaching is consistently good overall and is very good in Key Stage 1. It was good or better in every lesson seen during the inspection, and very good in two out of five lessons. This is a good improvement on the satisfactory teaching reported by the last inspection. The very good teaching is characterised by a very well organised but relaxed style of delivery that engages the pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Very resourceful and creative methods enable the pupils to take plenty of responsibility for organising themselves within a clear framework. Planning is good, reflecting the teachers' good subject knowledge. Lessons clearly build on existing skills. Teachers change for lessons and take the pupils through appropriate warm up and cool-down routines. Their enthusiasm contributes very positively to the pupils' good responses and progress. Day-to-day informal assessment of the pupils' attainment and progress is good, and in very good lessons, the pupils evaluate and appreciate each other's efforts.
112. The curriculum is organised effectively to deliver the full National Curriculum, including swimming. However, because the playing field is some distance from the school, it is not used consistently to provide all the pupils with optimum opportunities to develop games

skills and fitness. The school recognises the impact this is having and has recently purchased adjoining land to provide extra soft play and games space. Assessment is used effectively to inform planning. Teachers assess the pupils' skills on a day to day basis and use a commercial scheme to assess and record achievement and progress over the longer term.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

113. Pupils make good progress and reach standards in line with the locally agreed syllabus at Key Stage 2. They have a good knowledge of the key figures, events and ideas in the main religions. They understand how religions try to explain important human feelings and experiences such as jealousy, hate, anger and greed. They demonstrate an excellent disposition to meditating, appreciating that this Buddhist technique can have relevance to their own lives. They compare the different religious perspectives that they encounter to the basic tenets of Christianity. At Key Stage 1, the pupils' attainment exceeds the expectations of the syllabus. They use words like 'noble' and 'generous' to describe aspects of the human spirit, have a good understanding of the importance of symbols in religions, and talk about how meditation makes them feel.
114. Pupils respond very positively to lessons. They show interest in discussing ideas and feelings, and are very confident in expressing themselves. Pupils in Key Stage 2 show maturity in their approach to meditation, and all the pupils have a positive approach to daily prayers. Behaviour is very good and the pupils enjoy excellent relationships with each other and the teachers.
115. The standard of teaching is good overall. It was very good in two out of the three lessons seen and never less than good. The teachers are genuine in their commitment to teaching the subject and this is reflected in the pupils' responses and learning. Lessons plans identify clear learning objectives that the teachers communicate very effectively to the pupils. They deliver the lessons very effectively using varied methods and strategies to keep the pupils interested and actively involved. They know the pupils well so that they can plan the lessons on the basis of the pupils' existing knowledge and understanding. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities and given appropriate support to make good progress.
116. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' personal development. Spiritually it helps them to reflect and to appreciate that people live by a variety of different ideals. Socially it helps them to discuss ideas and appreciate other points of view. Morally it helps them to understand how people decide between right and wrong, and culturally it gives them an insight into the religious beliefs associated with different cultures. The level of provision and the standards achieved are better than was reported by the last inspection.