

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Shakespeare Primary School**  
Fleetwood

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique Reference Number: 119342

Inspection Number: 187326

Headteacher: Mrs Margaret Lund

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Reporting inspector: Ms Margot D'Arcy  
23158

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707522

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Manor Road Fleetwood Lancashire FY7 7LL
Telephone number:	(01253) 872887
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Kevin Pennington
Date of previous inspection:	March 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Margot D'Arcy, RgI	Information technology Under fives	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management
Alan Dobson, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnerships with parents and the community Accommodation Efficiency of the school Staffing and learning resources
Martin James	Science History Geography Art Equal opportunities	
Jean-Pierre Kirkland	Mathematics Religious education Special educational needs	Curriculum and assessment Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Paul Stevens	English Design and technology Music Physical education	

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- The headteacher provides excellent leadership. This underpins all of the school's many strengths and steers it resolutely on its course of continual improvement.
- Pupils make very good progress, so that, by the age of 11, they achieve above average results in English, mathematics and science. They also achieve highly and make good progress in most other subjects.
- High quality teaching exists throughout the school and within many subjects. This has a positive impact on raising pupils' standards and promoting their very good progress.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and work and their standards of behaviour are very good. They get on well with their teachers and each other.
- Pupils' personal development is excellent. They willingly take on responsibility and show initiative. Pupils gain confidence and self-esteem and learn much about being a good citizen. They take pride in their work and present it neatly.
- There is a rich and stimulating curriculum for all pupils, which places good emphasis on developing the basics of literacy and numeracy, without restricting pupils' learning in creative and practical subjects.
- There is very effective implementation of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies, both of which are having an extremely positive impact on raising standards.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of a well-planned curriculum, high quality teaching and very good management by the co-ordinator.
- Teachers make excellent use of the assessments they make of pupils, to plan work for them and set them individual targets for improvement.
- The way that teachers mark pupils' work is very effective in celebrating what the pupils do well and in giving them advice about how to improve.
- An extensive range of after-school activities is on offer to the pupils; all teachers are involved in running these and attendance by the pupils is high.
- The school makes very good provision to develop pupils spiritually, morally, socially and culturally.
- The school takes very good care of its pupils. In particular, it has excellent procedures to monitor their progress and personal development.
- Very good links have been established with parents and the community. The school works hard to ensure that parents are involved in their children's education. Visitors and visits to places of interest enrich pupils' learning and have a very good impact on their personal development.
- The school is a highly efficient organisation, where financial planning, deployment of staff and school administration is very effective.

**Shakespeare is an outstandingly successful school that has many strengths and no significant weaknesses. In the context of its many strengths, some minor points for improvement have been suggested and these should be considered by the governors as the basis for an action plan. The plan will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.**

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

The last inspection, in March 1996, found Shakespeare to be a good school. Since then the school has responded very well to the key issues for improvement that were raised and has also improved in many other areas. Of particular note is the school's excellent implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, which has raised standards significantly in both the infants and the juniors. Teachers who co-

ordinate subjects, now have a much greater management role and have helped to raise standards and teaching quality in their subjects. There are now comprehensive work programmes for all subjects, so that pupils' progress is carefully planned for. Assessment has improved tremendously and the school now makes excellent use of the information they gain from assessing pupils to ensure that work is closely matched to the specific needs of all pupils; this is having a very good impact on raising standards and promoting pupils' progress. Very good improvements have occurred in relation to raising pupils' standards and the quality of teaching in information technology. Teachers' confidence and competence to teach all aspects of this subject have improved significantly and resources have also been increased and updated. Excellent leadership from the co-ordinator and headteacher has underpinned the very good improvements made to information technology. The school has very clear insights into its strengths and weaknesses and strong determination to improve even further. There are effective strategies and systems to ensure that this happens. As a result, the school has very good capacity to improve.

### **Standards in subjects**

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

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

These are a pleasing set of results. Evidence from the inspection confirms these high standards of 11 year-olds and finds that their standards in mathematics are better than those depicted by the test scores above. This is due to the continuing positive impact of the National Numeracy Strategy, which is raising achievement in all classes. In addition, although it is not entirely apparent in the table above, the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standards in English is well above average. Inspection evidence and the results of national tests, show similarly high achievement for seven year-olds, particularly in reading and mathematics where a very large proportion are working at levels above those expected for their age. Most seven and 11 year-olds' standards in information technology and religious education are also above those expected for their ages All pupils make satisfactory progress in geography and good progress in all other subjects. Children under five make good progress in all their work and achieve the standards expected for beginning the National Curriculum. By the time they leave school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have achieved as well as they can.

### **Quality of teaching**



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

Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. In three-quarters of lessons teaching is good or better and in a third it is very good or excellent; only a very small amount of teaching is unsatisfactory. Good and very good teaching is seen in all parts of the school and by all teachers. There are particular strengths in Year 6 where no teaching is less than good and 73 per cent is very good.

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

### Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good. Pupils are well mannered and respectful to adults and each other. They apply themselves well to work, move around the school sensibly and play amicably.
Attendance	Better than the national average, but too many parents take their children on holiday in school time. Punctuality is much improved since the last inspection.
Ethos*	Excellent. Pupils are valued, respected and cared for. The commitment to high standards is evident in everything the school does.
Leadership and management	Excellent. The headteacher provides exceptional leadership and directs the school very well on its course of continual improvement. The deputy provides very good support for the head and carries out her duties effectively. Co-ordinators manage their subjects and responsibilities well and make a good contribution to how the school is led and managed. Governors are a strong team and are appropriately involved in monitoring the school's work.
Curriculum	Very good. All subjects are given due emphasis and there is effective provision for teaching pupils about health and sex education and the dangers of drug misuse. Extra-curricular provision is excellent; it is varied and there is good attendance by pupils.
Pupils with special educational needs	The needs of these pupils are very effectively met both in the classroom and when they are withdrawn to be taught individually or in small groups.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good. Effective contributions are made in assemblies and in many subjects, but particularly in religious education, science, art and music. Visits to places of interest and visitors to the school help children to appreciate and understand their own and other cultures, including the multicultural nature of society.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good range of experience among teaching staff and a good number of support staff. There are very good arrangements for all staff to receive additional training and this improves their teaching. Support staff make good and occasionally very good, contributions to teaching. All subjects are well resourced and there are very good

resources for information technology, physical education and children under five. The accommodation is clean and well maintained. It is greatly enhanced by tasteful decoration and stimulating displays of pupils' work.

Value for money

Very good. Costs of running the school are average. Most pupils come into the school with average levels of attainment and they are provided with a high quality curriculum and teaching which leads to high academic results by the time they are 11 years old.

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

## **The parents' views of the school**

There was an overwhelming response to the questionnaire that was sent out prior to the inspection, with over 90 per cent of parents returning these. The responses to the questionnaire were also overwhelmingly positive, showing very high support for the school.

### **What most parents like about the school**

- I. The high standards and good progress their children make in all subjects. Parents are particularly pleased with standards and progress in mathematics and information technology.
- II. Pleased that subjects such as art and music are given a high priority in the curriculum.
- III. That the more able pupils and those with special needs are appropriately challenged and make good progress.
- IV. Particularly pleased with the individual targets that are set for their children; feel that these show teachers know their children very well.
- V. That their children enjoy going to school.
- VI. The way the school promotes very good standards of behaviour.
- VII. The way homework is organised. Pleased that they have prior knowledge about what will be covered and feel it is broad and supports their children's progress.
- VIII. Praised the quality of reports and particularly like the individual letters that are sent to each child from their teacher.
- IX. That teachers and the headteacher are dedicated and always available to speak to them if they have a concern.

### **What some parents are not happy about**

that the

Inspectors endorse parents' positive views. Discussions with pupils show that many enjoy the reading scheme referred to and the associated work that accompanies it. Moreover, there is good evidence to show that the scheme is not used in isolation for any pupil, but is supplemented by a wide range of other stimulating reading material.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

There are no key issues for the school to address, but, in the context of its many strengths, the following minor points for improvement should be considered by the governors and headteacher as the basis for an action plan.

XI. Provide detailed guidance to support teaching by classroom assistants in the reception classes.

*(Paragraphs 32, 97, 100, 103)*

XII. Comply with the legal requirement to supply parents with information about the school and national results of 11 year-olds in the end of Key Stage 2 tests and assessments.

*(Paragraphs 63, 71)*

## INTRODUCTION

### Characteristics of the school

1. Shakespeare is a mixed county primary school situated in Fleetwood in Lancashire. The area suffers from high unemployment. The number of pupils attending the school has increased significantly in recent years and the school is now much larger than other schools of the same type nationally, catering for 410 full-time pupils between the ages of four and eleven. Many pupils live in local authority housing and others live in privately owned homes.
2. Twenty-three per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average; seven pupils have statements of special need. The school has identified 25 per cent of pupils as having special educational needs, which is above the national average. No pupils speak English as an additional language.
3. All pupils are taught in single age group classes and throughout the school there are fairly equal numbers of boys and girls, although in some year groups there are significant gender imbalances. The average class size is 29.3.
4. Children enter the reception classes in the September of the academic year in which they turn five. The school does not have a nursery or attached playgroup and it is only in the last two to three years that the majority of children entering the school have had some form of pre-school education. When children enter the school, most demonstrate the standards expected of children this age, but a significant minority have poor standards in language, literacy and mathematics; a few children have above average skills in all areas of learning. At the time of the inspection there were 42 children who were under the age of five in the school's two reception classes.
5. Statutory target setting for literacy and numeracy standards of 11 year-olds up to the year 2002 has been completed by the governors and headteacher, in consultation with the local education authority. The school's current educational priorities are to:
  - continue to raise standards in literacy and numeracy;
  - continue developments in information technology through a bid for the National Grid for Learning; and
  - continue to monitor standards and quality in all areas of school life.

There are 12 separately stated school aims. Many of these focus on developing pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in all subjects of the curriculum, within a caring environment that promotes their happiness and enjoyment of learning. Other aims focus on developing pupils personally, socially and culturally and encouraging a partnership between home, school and the community.

## 6. Key indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	33	22	55

6. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	26	26	30
	Girls	21	20	21
	Total	47	46	51
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	84 (70)	82 (68)	93 (82)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

6. Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	27	32	31
	Girls	22	22	22
	Total	49	54	53
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	89 (70)	98 (85)	97 (83)
	National	82 (80)	86 (85)	87 (86)

### Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>2</sup>

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	26	32	58

6. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	21	22	22
	Girls	28	27	29
	Total	49	49	51
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	85 (67)	87 (67)	90 (84)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

6. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	18	22	22
	Girls	26	27	29
	Total	44	49	51
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	76 (➤)	85 (➤)	88 (➤)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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<sup>1</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

<sup>2</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

6. **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed			%
through absence for the latest complete	Authorised	School	4.3
reporting year:	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.4
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

6.

6. **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	3
	Permanent	0

6. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	33
	Satisfactory or better	97
	Less than satisfactory	3



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

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

#### **Attainment and progress**

1. The results of National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds in 1999 were well above the national average in English, mathematics at the expected level and above at the higher level. In science, the results were above the national average at both the expected and the higher level. Compared to pupils in similar schools, pupils achieved results that were well above average in all three subjects. Over the last four years, pupils have maintained above average results in science, whilst their performance in English has risen steadily with a significant rise between 1998 and 1999. Pupils' results in mathematics have shown a continuous upward trend due to the school's very successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, for which they were a pilot school. There are no significant differences between the standards achieved by boys and girls.
2. The results of National Curriculum tests and assessments for seven year-olds in 1999 were above the national average in reading and science, close to the national average in writing and well above in mathematics. A very high proportion of pupils achieved the higher levels in reading and mathematics. Compared to pupils in similar schools, the pupils achieved results that were well above average in reading, writing and science and were very high in mathematics. Teachers' assessments of pupils' speaking and listening skills judged them to be above average. Over the last four years, pupils' results have improved steadily in English and more rapidly in mathematics and science. Although this year's English tests show girls achieving higher than boys, this generally matches the national picture and boys do not under-achieve in either reading or writing. In mathematics and science, there are no significant differences between boys' and girls' standards.
3. Inspection evidence supports the results of the national tests and assessments, except in mathematics at Key Stage 2, where the current groups of Year 6 pupils are working at a higher level than the 1999 test results show. The difference is due to the continuous positive impact of the school's implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, which is raising standards in all classes. At the end of both key stages, most pupils' standards in all aspects of English and in mathematics and science are above those expected for their ages. By the end of both key stages, pupils also achieve above average standards in information technology and religious education. Seven and 11 year-olds also produce work that is mostly above the levels expected for their ages in art, design and technology, history, music and physical education; they produce work in geography that is in line with the expectations for their ages. Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' standards in literacy and numeracy are above average. Since the last inspection, satisfactory standards have been maintained in geography and have risen in all other subjects.
4. When children enter the school, most demonstrate the skills and knowledge expected for their ages. A significant minority has low standards in language, literacy and mathematics and a few children demonstrate above average standards in these aspects and in other areas. During their time in the reception classes, the children make good progress in all areas of learning and achieve the standards expected for beginning the National Curriculum. Some children achieve beyond this level in all areas of learning, particularly in some aspects of music and physical development. The children develop skills in early reading, writing and mathematics and they make good progress in learning about the world in which they live and how to express themselves creatively through art, music and movement. They learn the routines and rules of school life and how to work and behave as part of a large group.

5. At both key stages, pupils make very good progress in literacy and numeracy. They make satisfactory progress in geography and good progress in all other subjects; Year 3 pupils make very good progress in swimming. At both key stages, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. In situations where they are withdrawn from their classrooms for additional help, or where they receive additional support in class lessons, their progress is often very good, especially in English and mathematics. The highly detailed individual education plans produced for these pupils are used very well by teachers when planning their work and this makes a very positive impact on the good progress they make.
6. Pupils make very good progress in English. By the time they leave the school at age 11, they are thoughtful listeners who are confident to answer and ask questions and express opinions on a range of topics. They have gained an extensive vocabulary with which to express themselves and eagerly participate in discussions and debates. By age 11, pupils read accurately, fluently and with very good expression and understanding. They have a good knowledge of different authors and their styles and can explain their reading preferences, giving examples of why they like or dislike texts. By this age many higher attaining pupils have developed more advanced reading skills such as scanning long reference texts, in books or on CD-ROM, to find specific information and by inferring meaning that shows their understanding of texts goes beyond the literal. By age 11, pupils' writing skills are well developed. They produce interesting writing, including imaginative stories, accounts, letters, poems and newspaper articles. Their work shows a clear understanding of different styles of writing and they make very good use of vocabulary and grammar to enhance the meaning and interest level for the reader. They have learned to plan their writing and amend it after an initial draft. Pupils' writing shows a very good degree of correct use of punctuation, grammatical structure and spelling. Work that is hand-written shows a neat, legible and joined style. Pupils also make good use of computer programs to compose, amend and present their writing.
7. Throughout the school, pupils' progress in literacy is continuously developed in other subjects. Teachers miss no opportunity to promote pupils' literacy skills. They often remind pupils to write logical sequenced accounts and, for example, to use lists, notes and labelled diagrams. They are taught how to spell subject-specific vocabulary and encouraged to use dictionaries, thesauruses and reference material to support their work across the curriculum.
8. Pupils make very good progress in mathematics. By the age of 11, they have very good knowledge of number facts and operations and have acquired a wide range of strategies to manipulate large numbers mentally. They add and subtract fractions, decimals and whole numbers with very good accuracy and speed and they have learned to convert fractions to decimals mentally and successfully do this to two decimal places. Skills in handling data are also well developed and pupils construct and read graphs and charts accurately to draw conclusions from the data they have collected and represented, often making use of information technology in this work.
9. Teachers never fail to make use of opportunities to develop pupils' numeracy skills in subjects and contexts other than mathematics lessons. In an assembly, for example, the teacher asked very young pupils to count the 10 silver coins, which were the focus of a Bible story. Registration periods are also used imaginatively to extend pupils' mental agility and understanding of number. Data handling skills are enhanced in science, geography and information technology, whilst work on co-ordinates in geography also supports pupils' number skills. Weighing and measuring are key components of design and technology and estimating distances are features of some physical education lessons.
10. Progress in science is good. By the age of 11, pupils have good knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, materials and physical phenomena. Their knowledge and skills in

experimental and investigative science are well developed. They make predictions and hypotheses, which they then test fairly, altering or maintaining one or more conditions to find answers to scientific questions. They record their findings in different ways, often making very good use of information technology.

11. Pupils' progress in information technology is good and often very good. By the time pupils leave the school they have a clear understanding of the various uses of information technology in the everyday world. They also make good use of a variety of programs and equipment to communicate meaning, research information, control objects and events, measure external phenomena and engage in computer simulations, such as adventure programs, which develop pupils' logical thinking skills. Good progress occurs in religious education. By the age of 11, pupils have gained a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity. They also know about a good number of other major world religions and the customs and festivals associated with them. Their skills in reflection are very well developed.
12. Across the curriculum, there are examples of pupils making good and very good progress. For example, pupils use sketchbooks to improve their techniques and practise skills in art. They learn how to produce detailed designs to help them make different products in design and technology, where they also learn how to use a variety of equipment safely and with increasing skill. In history, the pupils develop good skills of enquiry as well as learning about significant people and events, whilst in music, they develop good singing skills and learn how to play a variety of instruments and appreciate the work of different composers and styles of music.
13. The good and very good progress that pupils make is a direct result of the high quality teaching they receive across a range of subjects and in all areas of the school. Teachers' high expectations are a particularly significant factor as is the very good quality curriculum and excellent use of assessment. Underpinning all of this is the excellent leadership from the headteacher and the clear educational direction she provides. These factors have ensured that standards have risen and are continuing to rise, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics, information technology and religious education.
14. Statutory target setting has been completed up to 2002. These targets are based upon reliable evidence of the pupils' current standards, as assessed by teachers. The pupils' results in non-statutory tests, incorporate a degree of challenge and take account of the numbers of pupils with special educational needs in the different year groups.

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

15. Pupils' attitudes to school life are very positive. They like going to school and it shows. They settle down very quickly and are extremely keen to learn - many lessons have a real buzz to them. Pupils are mentally alert, listen very attentively and obey instructions first time. Most are very highly motivated and show a real excitement about learning new facts and techniques across a wide range of subjects, although mathematics is particularly popular. Throughout the school, there is a very clear enthusiasm for participating in lessons - when questions are asked, hands shoot up. The vast majority of pupils work very hard at school. When given a task, they stick at it for the total allocated time. Most pupils take considerable pride in their work and are keen to show it off. Pupils with special educational needs also take a full and active part in lessons. Whether answering questions, undertaking written or practical work or participating in assemblies, these pupils are keen to improve.
16. Behaviour in the school is very good. Pupils live up to the very high standards expected of them. They know the rules well and think they are fair. The behaviour of pupils with special educational needs is also generally very good. All pupils take the gaining of awards extremely seriously; the

“Student of the Week” medals awarded to each class are worn with particular pride. Pupils move around their classrooms and the school in an orderly way and this provides an environment that is conducive to learning. In assembly, pupils are very quiet and show a correct respect during prayers and periods of reflection. Dining is a civilised social occasion; noise levels are reasonable and good table manners are much in evidence. Breaks are fun and friendly periods. Neither the pupils nor their parents consider that bullying is a problem, but if an incident does occur both have confidence in the headteacher and staff to sort things out. Parents also said that when they come into school to help out or when they accompany pupils on school visits they are always very impressed by pupils’ high standards of behaviour. In the last year there have been three temporary exclusions.

17. Relationships are very good. The school is a very friendly place where pupils and staff all get on well with each other. The pupils are extremely courteous and polite and make visitors very welcome. In lessons, when working in pairs or larger groups, pupils collaborate very well, treating each other’s views with respect and showing a keenness to share ideas and help each other. Boys and girls mix well together in the classroom and the playground.
18. Pupils make excellent use of the opportunities for personal development. Pupils clearly feel a sense of ownership of the school and know that the staff and governors take their views and opinions about school life seriously. These views range from offering suggestions for hymns in the “Request a Favourite Hymn Box”, to electing class representatives to feed ideas to the school management for consideration in the school’s development plan. Pupils respond extremely well to the school’s emphasis on developing skills for independent learning. In many lessons, they instinctively turn to reference materials, including CD-ROM and make good use of the school’s library. Pupils take homework very seriously and most complete it conscientiously. Throughout the school, pupils accept extra responsibilities enthusiastically, ranging from collecting milk in reception classes to office duties in Year 6. Very high levels of initiative were observed, for example pupils moving on to more challenging work without waiting to be told. Pupils’ awareness of wider social issues was apparent when Year 6 pupils questioned their local Member of Parliament firmly, but politely, on the government’s policy on fox hunting and genetically modified foods. Pupils take a real pride in giving public performances, particularly the choir, which regularly performs at both regional and national level. School clubs are very well attended. Pupils show respect to property and their environment. Books and equipment are handled with great care, classrooms are kept tidy and there is no litter around the school.
19. Children under the age of five have very good attitudes to school and they behave very well. They are adapting to the rules and routines of school life and learning to take on simple responsibilities such as giving out milk, returning the class register and feeding the fish.
20. The high standards of behaviour noted during the last inspection have been successfully maintained. The current pupils’ confidence, maturity and sense of responsibility are very apparent. Their real enthusiasm for school life, combined with their very good behaviour is making a major contribution to their successful learning. They are a credit to the school and their parents.
26. **Attendance**
21. Attendance at the school is good. The rate (95.2%) is better than the national average for similar schools. Unauthorised absences are below the national average.
22. A significant proportion of absences in the autumn and summer terms is due to parents taking their children on holiday. Around a quarter of the pupils miss at least one week’s lessons each year due to holidays in school time. This inevitably interrupts these pupils’ learning and has an adverse effect on their progress. The majority of pupils attend regularly, however, and this is having a positive effect on their attainment and progress.

23. Since the last inspection, there has been very good improvement in pupils' punctuality, which is now very good. On average, just one per cent of pupils arrives a few minutes late. Registration takes place promptly and efficiently. The registration period is used very productively and gives a positive start to the day. Lessons start on time.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

### Teaching

24. The quality of teaching has improved since the school was last inspected and is one of the school's strengths, with very good teaching in all year groups. In three-quarters of lessons, teaching is better than satisfactory and a third is very good or excellent; only three per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory. There is very good teaching of English, mathematics and religious education at both key stages and there is some excellent teaching of music at Key Stage 1 and religious education at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 2, there is also very good teaching in science, information technology, art, design and technology and physical education, including swimming. There is some very good teaching of English and mathematics to pupils with special educational needs and the contributions made by classroom assistants are often good and sometimes very good.
25. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is particularly strong because teachers have good knowledge of these subjects and have gained skills in teaching them effectively and in accordance with the recommendations of the National Literacy and Numeracy Frameworks, which the school has adopted. Teachers also pay good attention to ensuring that pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are promoted and extended in other subjects. Both of these factors are having a positive impact on raising pupils' standards in literacy and numeracy and in promoting their very good progress. Since the school was last inspected there have been significant improvements in the teaching of information technology. Throughout the school, teachers' knowledge of this subject has been extended considerably and they are much more confident to explain and demonstrate skills and plan for the use computers in many subjects.
26. The quality of teaching for children under five in the two reception classes is good, overall, with almost one lesson in three being very good. Teachers' thorough understanding of the distinctive learning needs of very young children is clearly reflected in their detailed planning and the methods and organisational strategies they use. Play is used well as a vehicle for learning. Lessons and activities are well prepared, with significant thought given to providing tasks that are stimulating, have a real purpose and require the children to be actively involved in their learning. For example, thoughtfully resourced role play areas such as the class fish and chip shop, encourage the children to write and read menus, write down orders and telephone messages, including numbers and begin to learn the value of different coins. Specific activities in the fish shop promoted the children's understanding of the language of position. All these activities promote children's learning in meaningful and enjoyable contexts. Teachers have high expectations of what they want the children to learn. The very effective methods they use to explain, demonstrate and interact with the children result in good and often very good progress being made. Teachers make very good use of the time available and after whole class introductions to lessons they spend focused teaching time with small groups and maintain a good overview of other children's work, circulating and intervening well to promote the children's progress. Classroom support assistants are given appropriate teaching tasks to support lesson objectives. However, although their input is not unsatisfactory, it is often much less effective than that of the teachers because they are not given enough guidance or direction about how to exploit the learning potential of the activities they lead. Teachers have ensured that the classrooms are well organised so that the children can access and put away resources, but, although there are some opportunities for children to initiate aspects of their own learning, these are limited and most work is teacher directed, which restricts, somewhat, children's independent learning skills. Teachers continually assess what the children know and can do so that they can adapt teaching programmes to the children's specific needs. They do this extremely well and it has a significant impact on promoting the children's progress.

27. At Key Stage 1, most of the teaching is good and there is a high proportion of very good teaching in Year 2. Teaching is very strong at Key Stage 2, with very good teaching by all teachers and particular strengths in Year 6 where no teaching is less than good and 73 per cent is very good. Most teachers have high expectations of pupils and there are many examples of teachers planning and teaching work that is pitched at a level above that which is generally expected for pupils' ages. Teachers' own knowledge and understanding of the different subjects of the National Curriculum is very good. This is a reflection of teachers' hard work, dedication and commitment to improving their own standards, including acting upon advice from the monitoring of their teaching and the school's very good arrangements for the professional development of its staff. In many subjects, teachers' very good subject knowledge is evident in the clear and detailed explanations, demonstrations and instructions they provide for pupils, the penetrating questions they ask them and the technical vocabulary they use and promote.
28. Teachers make very effective use of a wide range of methods and forms of organisation to get the best from their pupils. They are very successful at combining creative and imaginative teaching methods with what is accepted as the best of traditional teaching. For example, there is often very good direct teaching to the whole class at the beginning of lessons, including the sharing of lesson objectives with the pupils and, at the end of lessons, to reiterate key learning points and assess what the pupils have learned. In between, teachers make good provision for pupils to work collaboratively in pairs and small groups, or individually, so that they can practise skills or extend their learning in various ways, including independent research tasks. During these periods, teachers visit the different groups and spend productive time questioning pupils and encouraging them to talk about their work. This enables teachers to assess how well the pupils are learning and set more challenging work for those who pick things up quickly and provide further support for those who are experiencing difficulties.
29. At both key stages, a particularly effective aspect of the teaching is the very efficient way that teachers use time. In literacy and numeracy lessons teachers manage the various elements extremely well, with maximum impact on pupils' progress. Other lessons also proceed at a brisk pace and teachers create a sense of urgency for the completion of work without allowing pupils to lose sight of their high expectations for the quality of its content or presentation. This ensures that pupils sustain attention and work tenaciously and this also has a positive impact on their progress. A further strength is the very good use made of the thirty-minute sessions allocated to the teaching of information technology and the writers' workshops. In these short, but intense, periods teachers manage to cover a great deal and pupils benefit tremendously from sharply focused instruction, questioning and opportunities to practise skills.
30. Throughout the school there is very little unsatisfactory teaching and relatively few lessons that are only satisfactory. Unsatisfactory teaching resulted from insufficient time for pupil activity and involvement in a practical lesson in music and physical education. Occasionally, there is a lack of challenge in mathematics, although other evidence suggests that this is not the norm. In these instances, however, weaknesses in teaching restricted pupils' progress. During the period of the inspection, a significant proportion of teaching in two classes was being undertaken by student teachers. This occasionally resulted in good teaching but, overall, teaching from this source was mostly satisfactory.
31. At both key stages, teachers make good use of other adults; either the school's own staff or parent helpers. They ensure that these adults are well briefed about their roles and about how to help the pupils in the various activities to which they are assigned. An important aspect of the teaching and one that is particularly effective in promoting pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes to work, is the very good relationships between teachers and pupils. Teachers clearly like and respect their pupils and know them very well; a good rapport exists between the two.

32. Pupils with special educational needs receive good and, frequently, very good teaching as part of a small group withdrawn from their classrooms and within the larger class group. The special needs co-ordinator and class teachers make very effective use of these pupils' individual education plans when deciding what work these pupils will complete and how it will be approached. For example, class teachers often ensure that there is additional adult support for these pupils and design appropriate worksheets, both of which promote the pupils' good and very good progress. In addition, teachers always ensure that they involve pupils with special needs in discussions and in question and answer sessions, adapting their questions appropriately so that pupils feel that they make worthwhile contributions. This raises their self-esteem and has a very good impact on promoting their progress.
33. Teachers make very good use of day to day assessment. Well targeted questioning acts as a strong evaluative tool in most lessons and the comments made to pupils about their work, both verbally and through marking, strike the right balance between celebrating pupils' efforts and informing them about how they can improve. Indeed the quality of marking is exceptional and plays a highly significant part as an assessment tool and as a discussion focus for conferencing sessions with pupils to set targets for improvement. This aspect of teaching undoubtedly has a very significant impact on the very good progress that pupils make. The school makes very good use of homework to promote pupils' learning. The amount provided increases steadily as pupils get older and is effectively linked to the work done in class; it also makes a very effective contribution to extending pupils' independent learning skills. Homework provides a good emphasis on supporting essential literacy and numeracy skills, but also extends to many other subjects, including research work for practical subjects such as art and music. Parents expressed almost unanimous support for the school's homework provision.

39.

#### **The curriculum and assessment**

34. The school provides a very good curriculum for all its pupils and provision has improved since the last inspection. The curriculum is broad and very well balanced. Children under five follow a curriculum based upon the recommended six areas of learning and this prepares them very well for beginning the National Curriculum. At Key Stages 1 and 2, all subjects of the National Curriculum are taught, together with religious education. Appropriate time allowances are made for all subjects with additional time for personal and social development. Literacy and numeracy are given an appropriately high emphasis with provision in these areas occurring at various times during the day; for example, in the set literacy and numeracy lessons and in additional English and mathematics lessons such as the "Writers Workshops" for Key Stage 2 pupils. The school also makes very good provision for pupils to study a wide range of cross-curricular themes, such as citizenship, careers, economic awareness and European studies. These are effectively implemented and incorporated into many subjects, in addition to being taught specifically through personal and social education lessons. The latter also include the school's very good provision for health and sex education, including making pupils aware of the dangers of drug misuse. The curriculum is very appropriate and relevant to the pupils. Teachers ensure that what they teach is rooted in the pupils' interests. For example, in personal and social education lessons the pupils learn strategies for dealing with worries, whilst in mathematics lessons they consolidate multiples by working out timings for a microwave oven. In history lessons, the pupils are given the opportunity to question a visiting "Roman Soldier" and similarly, in religious education, they question a visitor acting the role of the 'Virgin Mary'. This well-thought out provision results in stimulating learning through a very varied curriculum and enhances pupils' rate of progress significantly. The school meets the statutory requirement to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education.
35. All pupils have very good access to the curriculum and very good opportunities to learn. Through



very careful planning and classroom organisation, including the good use of non-teaching assistants, the curriculum is made accessible to all pupils. Teachers are required to ensure that all the work provided for pupils is effectively matched to their particular needs and that additional adult support is provided where necessary to support the pupils' progress; they do this very successfully. All staff check that pupils understand the work required of them at each stage in the lessons. As a result, there is equality of access and opportunity, enhancing the quality of learning to a high level throughout the school.

36. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and this is another of the school's strengths. All areas of the curriculum have been appropriately modified, so that all pupils can work at levels that help them succeed and make progress. Clear, well-targeted, individual education plans provide teachers with a very good planning instrument for these pupils, whose progress is enhanced as a result. The special needs co-ordinator is careful to ensure that when pupils are withdrawn from classes for small group teaching, this is for short periods only. Class teachers ensure that any work missed by the pupils who are withdrawn is made up. Provision for pupils who are withdrawn from their classes, mainly for support in literacy and numeracy, is very good and this helps these pupils to access the whole curriculum more effectively. In-class support has a similar, very positive impact on learning by enabling greater overall access to the curriculum.
37. The quality of curriculum planning has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. There are very good quality schemes of work, which map out what pupils will learn as they move through the school. These provide a clear and effective structure for teaching, so that pupils are able to build upon what they have already learned. As a result, pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding across the whole curriculum are assured. In some subjects, commercial schemes have been adopted with appropriate modifications made to suit the needs of the pupils and their life experiences. In this way the curriculum becomes very relevant to the pupils; in mathematics and religious education for example, there are numerous examples of practical everyday issues being raised within the planning. The school's implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is very good and its implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is excellent, the latter having been in place for some time now as the school was part of the national pilot project. Both of these initiatives are having a very positive impact on raising pupils' standards and promoting rapid progress in these subjects.
38. The curriculum is greatly enhanced by the school's excellent provision of extra-curricular activities for pupils at both key stages. A very wide and varied range of activities is provided at the end of the school day and during lunchtimes. These are very well attended by pupils, with classrooms almost full of pupils engaged in further learning such as French, drama, cooking, gardening or homework. An equally wide and varied range of sporting activities supplements these additional classes and supports pupils' participation in competitive events, in which they are very successful. The impact these activities have on pupils' standards and progress is outstanding. Parents express their appreciation of this aspect of provision, particularly the commitment shown by teachers, all of whom are involved in running at least one extra-curricular activity. A good range of visitors and visits to places of educational interest, including a residential visit for older pupils, are thoughtfully chosen to link with topics and themes being studied and these make a very good contribution to pupils' learning.
39. Assessment procedures throughout the school are excellent. This is also a significant improvement since the last inspection. From first entry to the school, what children know, understand and can do is assessed, carefully recorded and constantly reviewed. Work in this area is guided by the school's very clear policy that is followed by all staff. Throughout the reception and infant years, the school's procedures ensure that the appropriate level of work is planned and taught and that

teachers can identify those pupils who demonstrate problems with learning or those who learn more quickly and so tailor the work to suit their specific needs. Regular and thorough checks are made of pupils' reading and spelling skills using a range of test and assessment tools and methods. The results of the statutory and optional standard assessment tests are carefully scrutinised and the latter are now an integral part of curriculum planning for pupils at Key Stage 2. In other subjects, at both key stages, there are excellent procedures for assessing pupils' attainment following the end of each unit or module of work. All the information gathered is very well documented and recorded for further use, especially for writing reports to parents.

40. The school's use of assessment as an instrument for improvement is outstanding. This is now a major strength of the school in raising standards and progress, as well as raising the overall quality of educational provision, including teaching. All teachers make effective use of their records of pupils' achievements to support them in planning lessons. Marking is used particularly well to focus teachers and pupils on aspects of individuals' strengths and weaknesses and helps to set the agenda for the conferencing sessions, where pupils and teachers agree targets for improvement; these targets are recorded and evaluated regularly. Statutory and other assessments of pupils with special educational needs occur at the appropriate intervals and excellent use is made of the information to produce clear, specific and measurable targets in pupils' individual education plans that guide teachers' planning and teaching.

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

41. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Provision in this aspect has improved since the last inspection and is now a major strength of the school. Assemblies make a significant contribution to all aspects of the provision. All contain acts of corporate worship that are well thought through and, in most cases, are of a very high standard. Pupils participate fully in assemblies and are given frequent opportunities to read poetry, texts, sing individually or in groups, play musical instruments or take the lead in prayers. As a result, the school provides very good opportunities for raising pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem, whilst meeting fully the legal requirements and providing a relevant and good quality start or end to each day. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully involved and integrated into assemblies and worship times, which helps to raise their confidence and self esteem. Moreover, the school's policy of including everyone in presentations or questioning in classes has a significantly positive impact on pupils with special educational needs, helping them to develop a strong sense of belonging and a realisation of how highly they are regarded by the school. When acts of worship are held in smaller class groups, teachers provide very good quality sessions that dwell upon and extend pupils' understanding of the theme for the week, for example, "Precious Things".
42. Provision for spiritual development is very good, partly as a result of the high quality acts of worship and partly through implementation of the very good policy for this aspect of pupils' development. The work in many subjects contributes greatly to pupils' spiritual enhancement and development. It is not uncommon to hear gasps of wonder as pupils are taught or explore the potential of information technology equipment or engage in scientific experiments. In a reception class, the children watched spellbound as the teacher showed them how to use the shadow puppets to tell the story of the Nativity. Year 1 and Year 3 pupils respectively were in awe, but delighted, when adults dressed and acting in role as a Roman Soldier and the Virgin Mary visited them. There was amazement and wonder when a Year 2 teacher was demonstrating number patterns on the overhead projector and, by turning the paper around, made the columns into rows with different combinations. A true spiritual atmosphere is created when candles are lit in a religious education lesson at Key Stage 2 and pupils are given time to reflect upon what they have discussed. Pupils are provided with many other opportunities to develop their awareness of

complex social and moral issues, which also has a positive impact on promoting their spiritual development, for example, when they think about the value of things in terms of the “story” behind what makes them precious, rather than their monetary worth. They are also moved and inspired when listening to a blind visitor talk about how his guide dog helps him in his everyday life.

43. The provision for moral development is very good. A simple yet effective code of conduct sets the tone for a high moral code in the school. Teachers are very good role models, as are all visitors and other staff. Through the code and by example, all pupils are provided with the opportunity to distinguish between right and wrong, which they do effectively. There is an expectation of very good behaviour in and out of lessons and this is achieved. The school’s pastoral aims are fully realised. In many lessons and assemblies moral themes, environmental issues, the Ten Commandments and the nature of family and love are explored. As a result, pupils have a secure, calm and strong sense of belonging that enables them to make very good progress in many of their lessons and in their personal lives.
44. The school makes very good provision for pupils’ social development. In all classrooms, there is a very high level of emphasis on group work and pupils develop very good social and co-operative skills as a result. The school has effectively developed a culture of celebrating achievement so that pupils take great care and pride in their own work and genuinely recognise and applaud the efforts and achievement of others. The school makes equally good provision by the careful, detailed and sensitive manner in which books are corrected and feedback is given. This helps to establish and maintain excellent relationships, which further the process of social development. Pupils are asked to consider people less fortunate than themselves, which they do through assemblies and in lessons in subjects such as geography, religious education and personal and social education. A regular annual opportunity for older pupils to question a local Member of Parliament provides them with an exceptionally good and early experience of a more formal structure and forum for the discussion of a variety of issues. Pupils are regularly involved in raising money for charities and are supported in their understanding of these through a very good policy on citizenship, which encourages participation in the community. Significant numbers of pupils perform in the school choir, play instruments and give concerts and performances locally, regionally and nationally.
45. Provision for cultural development is very good. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to explore a wide range of cultural issues through the curriculum. Strong contributions are made in literacy, art, history, geography, music and religious education. In art, for example, pupils are given opportunities to study non-western artwork; they learn about the meanings in the patterns of Aboriginal and African art and learn of the legends associated with American Indian Dream Catchers. English work includes the celebration of National Poetry Day and participation in drama workshops. In religious education, the establishment of the Christian faith and its impact on the community are very well developed and pupils learn to compare this with other major world religions and their associated beliefs and customs. For example, the pupils have learned about the festivals of Diwali, Eid, Rosh Hashanah and Hannukah. African and Indian visitors also help the pupils to understand and appreciate the multicultural nature of society, as do the wide range of multicultural books in the school’s library and the multi-ethnic dolls used by younger pupils in play contexts. The art, music, geography and physical education curriculum also encompasses a wide range of work associated with different cultures, such as the study of an Indian village in geography and learning traditional dances from other cultures in physical education. Pupils participate in a wide range of visits, including residential visits, associated with their work in history, geography, art, music and religious education. These make a valuable contribution to their understanding of past and present cultural traditions.

51. **Support, guidance and pupils’ welfare**

46. The provision for pupils’ support, welfare and guidance is very good. The school is an extremely

friendly community where relationships are very good and all pupils are valued as individuals. The headteacher has a high profile within the school and knows the pupils very well, as do all the teachers, who, together with all the other adults at the school, provide very good role models. The staff are extremely good listeners and treat the pupils' views with obvious consideration and respect. The induction of very young children into full-time schooling is handled sensitively and with a good understanding of their needs. At the meeting with inspectors, parents expressed their appreciation of this. The school promotes healthy eating habits by selling fruit at morning break; a policy that is very popular with the pupils. Good table manners and the correct use of cutlery are effectively encouraged in the dining room. Pupils are well supervised at all times and during the lunchtime break. Welfare assistants are actively involved in playing a range of games with the pupils. The school's personal and social education programme ensures that pupils are aware of ways to keep safe, including learning about the dangers of drug misuse. All of these factors produce a very supportive ethos that is highly conducive to the pupils' wellbeing and consequently has a positive effect on their learning.

47. The school's provision for monitoring pupils' progress and personal development is excellent. All pupils have regular, individual conferencing sessions with their class teachers, during which their progress over a range of subjects is discussed in detail; these sessions are friendly but purposeful. Pupil's results in recent class tests are considered, areas of concern are effectively highlighted and strengths are celebrated. In these sessions, teachers and pupils discuss the progress made towards the previously set targets and new ones are agreed. The pupil is totally involved in the setting of these targets, which are specific, realistic and individual to the child; involvement in school clubs and outside activities is also discussed. This regular in-depth monitoring of each pupil's progress is having a major impact on raising standards and is a significant strength of the school.
48. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in lessons and this helps them achieve the targets in their individual education plans. There is very good liaison with various support agencies and the school ensures that the impact of this support is maximised for the pupils' benefit. The special needs co-ordinator and support assistants play a vital role in ensuring that all needs are met and that good and often very good progress is made. Records are very well ordered and kept up-to-date.
49. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are highly effective and evident in the very good behaviour seen by pupils throughout the school. High standards are expected and achieved without the need for a strict regime. Discipline has a low profile. School rules are simple, well publicised and clearly understood by the pupils. Procedures are applied consistently throughout the school. Good behaviour is positively recognised with a series of rewards, particularly the class-based 'student of the week' award. Any incidents of inappropriate behaviour are noted and follow-up action is planned if necessary. The school does not tolerate bullying or racist behaviour; neither of these is a problem, but there are procedures to deal with any incidents, should they occur.
50. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. Registers are well kept and meet statutory regulations. The school rigorously follows up all absences where a reason has not been provided and makes effective use of the Educational Welfare Service when necessary. The attendance policy omits any reference to holidays in term time, but parents are regularly reminded of the importance of not taking their children away from school for holidays. Unfortunately, these reminders are not always effective, as holidays represent a significant proportion of the school's total absences. Good punctuality is encouraged and this is very effective, with a significant improvement in this aspect since the school's last inspection.
51. Health and safety issues are taken seriously and the responsible person has received adequate training. The school premises and equipment are regularly inspected and safety is stressed in lessons. A very high number of adults are trained in first aid and all accidents are correctly

recorded.

52. The school has good procedures covering child protection. The designated person has been correctly trained and all the various staff handbooks have clear guidance on how teachers and other adults should deal with incidents or concerns.
53. The school has successfully addressed the weakness identified in relation to the completion of registers and has improved security measures considerably.
- 59.

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

54. The school's highly successful partnership with parents has a very positive impact on the pupils' learning. The positive features identified during the school's last inspection have all been maintained and improvements have been made to pupils' reports, homework and in the provision of courses for parents.
55. Parents are very supportive of the school, which has an extremely good reputation in the local community. In an exceptionally high response to the OFSTED questionnaire and at a well attended pre-inspection meeting, parents reported almost unanimously that they are encouraged to be involved in the life of the school. Parents say that they find the school approachable, are kept well informed about what is taught and approve of the school's standards and values. The inspection evidence completely endorses these positive views.
56. The quality of information that parents receive is very good. The "Meet the Teacher" evenings give parents a clear insight into what is going to be taught. This is very effectively backed-up with a termly document for each year group, detailing work that will be covered in English, mathematics and science, together with clear guidance on future homework tasks. Pupils' reports are well written and meet statutory regulations. Progress is always clearly stated together with a note of the child's current reading age. There are consistently perceptive comments by class teachers on each pupil's general performance. The quality and usefulness of these reports has to be judged in conjunction with the individual letter written every July to each child by their class teacher. These letters are very personal and supportive. They give the child a clear indication of what they do well and where they can improve. Moreover, they are specific enough for the child to be able to make a written response about how they will try to maintain their strengths and improve on the aspects identified. The very personal nature of these letters goes a long way to ensuring that the advice will be effective. This excellent procedure is a strength of the school and is making a real contribution to raising standards as well as recognising the importance of involving the pupils in evaluating their own performance.
57. Although parents are given the individual results of their child, as achieved in the National Curriculum tests and assessments, for some years they have not been informed of the school's end of Key Stage 2 results in the statutory national tests and assessments, nor have they been provided with comparative information to allow them to compare the results of the school's 11 year-olds with the results of 11 year-olds nationally. This is because the school's governors refuse to publish these results in their annual report to parents or in the school's prospectus. Although this decision is made on a matter of principle, it is against the law and is denying parents access to information they are legally entitled to have. The present situation is unsatisfactory and governors must provide this information to parents.
58. The school maintains very good links with parents of pupils with special educational needs. They are kept fully informed of their child's problems and the action being taken to secure improvement. Parents of these pupils are always included in invitations to statutory reviews and kept informed of outcomes if they do not attend. All parents receive copies of individual education

plans so that they may support their children at home if they wish. Many choose to do this, thereby helping to improve their children's progress. Links with other helping agencies are very good, ensuring a swift response when problems are identified.

59. The school is very good at involving parents in their child's education and in the life of the school. The school is genuinely interested in parents' views. For instance, all parents are asked to complete an annual questionnaire and the responses are taken into consideration in preparing the next school development plan. Parents are encouraged to help in the classroom. This help is well organised and is making a good contribution to the pupils' learning. The school arranges courses for parents to support their understanding of how their children are taught and to help them be more directly involved in their child's education. Parents are very well informed on homework and approve of the school's structured homework policy. The home/school association is very active and successfully raises considerable additional funds for the school.
60. Links with the community are broad and enrich the pupils' learning in a very positive way. There is a very good programme of visits, all with a strong educational purpose, ranging from the factory of a local throat sweet manufacturer to an outdoor field centre. Visitors give the pupils a wide breadth of experience, from question time with the local Member of Parliament to understanding the problems of a local resident who is blind and has a guide dog. Pupils' self esteem is very effectively boosted by competing in local sporting leagues, library quizzes, singing in the choir at regional and national festivals and by taking part in public performances of school productions. The pupils are actively involved in collecting for a variety of charities, which helps to extend their understanding of the needs of people who are less fortunate than they are.

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

### **Leadership and management**

61. The quality of leadership and management is a strength of the school. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and clear educational direction for the school's continuing improvement. She is dedicated, knowledgeable about educational issues and has very good interpersonal skills, all of which ensure that the quality of provision and relationships are maintained to a very high standard. The headteacher is central to the school's ethos of high expectations of both pupils and staff and she works continuously and tenaciously towards this end. She is liked and respected by staff, pupils, governors and parents.
62. The headteacher is ably supported by a hardworking deputy and senior management team. The deputy carries out the tasks that are delegated to her efficiently and has received a good grounding in the full range of managerial tasks required of a headteacher and is able to manage the school in the headteacher's absence.
63. The support and monitoring of teaching and curriculum development are excellent. This is an area that has improved significantly since the last inspection, particularly in relation to the role of subject co-ordinators and the improvements have had a very positive impact on raising standards of achievement and the quality of provision. The headteacher regularly monitors the quality of teaching and the evidence from her observations demonstrates her sharp and perceptive insight of the most crucial aspects of effective teaching. She knows what works well and what does not and is, therefore, able to offer individual teachers very good advice about how to improve their performance. She has a clear view of individuals' strengths and weaknesses. The former are celebrated and shared so that all staff benefit and the latter are discussed privately, with appropriate support and training provided to ensure that improvements are made. All subject co-ordinators are involved in monitoring how their subjects are taught throughout the school and many have provided demonstration lessons and in-service training for staff, which has raised the quality of teaching and improved pupils' standards. There is thorough monitoring of teachers'

planning. Co-ordinators monitor teachers' medium-term planning and the headteacher monitors this and teachers' weekly plans. She makes rigorous checks in relation to curriculum coverage, that work is suitably adapted for pupils' differing needs and that teachers are evaluating lessons appropriately and acting upon these evaluations in planning future lessons. Occasionally, individual teachers' planning is tracked, in depth over an extended period. Pupils' work is monitored regularly by the headteacher and co-ordinators to ensure, for example, that pupils in different classes in the same year group are covering the same work, being challenged similarly and receiving the same quality of marking. All of this ensures that the headteacher and governors are fully aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and provides a clear focus for improvement.

64. The school plans very well for its future development, rigorously monitoring its progress and critically evaluating the effectiveness of the action it takes to secure improvement. The school's development plan is a very useful working document to secure school improvement and the management of change in an effective and efficient way. The plan is formulated through an effective process of consultation with all interested parties, including pupils and parents. Its priorities for improvement are the right ones for the school at this time. All priorities are rightly linked to raising pupils' standards and the quality of provision. The plan contains comprehensive detail for the current year and the outline planning for the next four years shows that the school is aware of the need to be proactive and plan carefully for the future.
65. The governing body is a committed and effective team that provides considerable support for the school. Governors have a clear view of their roles and responsibilities and have attended training to support them in their work. Many governors, including the Chair, are regular visitors and there is good involvement in the work of the school and in monitoring its effectiveness and improvement. For example, both the literacy and numeracy governors have monitored lessons in these subjects and reported back to the full governing body. Governors receive good quality information from the headteacher and co-ordinators, which helps them to evaluate the effectiveness of the progress made towards priorities in the school's development plan. The governors ensure that the requirements of the government's Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are met. The co-ordinator's management of this aspect of provision is also a strength and includes good links with the special needs governor. Governors are aware of all of their legal obligations, but they do not fulfil the statutory requirement to provide parents with information, to which they are entitled by law, about how well the school's 11 year olds are performing in relation to other 11 year-olds in the country. Although the governors' continued decision not to provide this information to parents does not negatively affect pupils' standards, it is nevertheless unacceptable, in that it is breaking the law and is restricting parents' access to crucial information about the standards the school achieves.
72. The implementation of the school's aims, values and policies and its ethos for learning, are excellent. The headteacher, governors and staff have high expectations of all pupils and ensure that there is equality of opportunity to succeed and make progress. The school successfully achieves its aim of developing pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding across the whole curriculum within a caring, happy environment that promotes pupils' enjoyment of learning. It also realises its aim of extending pupils' personal and social development and promoting and maintaining a very good partnership with pupils' parents and with the community. Although these aims are accomplished in many ways, the aspects that are related to pupils' standards and progress, both academic and personal, are very effectively supported by the school's excellent procedures for, and use of, assessment information. This allows teachers and pupils to set targets for raising standards and helps the school's management to focus on specific aspects of provision that need to be improved. This highly effective aspect of management is one that has played a significant part in raising standards since the school's last inspection.
66. The school has responded very well to the key issues for improvement that were raised during its

last inspection and has also improved in many other areas at the same time. Co-ordinators now have a much greater management role and there are now comprehensive schemes of work for all subjects. Excellent use is now made of assessment information to match work closely to the specific needs of all pupils and this is having a very good impact on their standards and progress. Very good improvements have occurred in relation to raising pupils' standards and the quality of teaching in information technology. Registration procedures now meet statutory requirements. Teachers' confidence and competence to teach all aspects of this subject have improved significantly and resources have also been increased and updated. Excellent leadership by the co-ordinator and the headteacher has underpinned the very good improvements that have occurred in this subject.

67. The school has very clear insights into its strengths and weaknesses and strong determination to improve even further. There are effective strategies and systems to ensure that this happens. As such, the school's capacity to improve is very good.

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

68. Staffing levels, the quality and size of the accommodation and the range of resources available for teaching and learning are good, overall.
69. The school has a good number of teachers suitably qualified to teach the National Curriculum, religious education and the areas of learning for children under five. The balance between those teachers with considerable experience and those who have recently joined the profession is good and there is a good range of subject and phase expertise amongst teaching staff, which is taken into consideration in allocating responsibilities and deploying teachers to specific year groups. Teachers have detailed job descriptions that include specific targets for each year. All teachers, except the newly qualified teacher, have responsibilities for subjects, aspects of provision and/or phases of the school, depending upon their experience and expertise in these areas. All co-ordinators have adequate expertise in their particular subject. The good range of teaching expertise is having a positive impact on raising pupils' standards and promoting their progress.
70. There is a good level of support staff at the school and these adults are effectively deployed so that pupils in all year groups benefit from their input. All the support staff either have appropriate qualifications or a considerable number of years experience, ensuring that they make a positive impact on pupils' learning. There is a very good level of staff and support assistants for pupils with special educational needs. They are fully trained and know their pupils very well. Team spirit amongst all the staff, including voluntary helpers, is strong.
71. The arrangements made for the professional development of staff are very good and these are also effectively linked to the school development plan and individual teachers' needs, as assessed at an annual meeting with the headteacher and through the regular monitoring of their teaching skills. All teachers and support staff have satisfactorily completed the training for the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and there has been extensive training in information technology, which has made a very positive impact on raising the quality of teaching in this subject and in raising pupils' standards. Induction procedures for the newly qualified teacher are good. She has a mentor, her lessons are regularly monitored and formal assessment meetings are arranged to discuss her progress. The school has produced three different staff handbooks to address the needs of all staff; these provide very good information to assist them in carrying out their roles effectively. To date, the school has complied with the requirements to take part in the statutory appraisal of teachers.
72. The school participates in the training of new teachers. During the inspection week three students were teaching at the school, two of whom had considerable teaching responsibilities. The school ensures that the work of students is closely monitored, so that pupils' education is not adversely affected by students' lack of teaching experience.



73. Accommodation is good. Classrooms are generally of a good size, the furniture is always satisfactory and in some classrooms it is good. The very good quality of decoration and maintenance, both inside and out, is an exceptional feature that belies the age of parts of the school and its traditional exterior. The inside is bright and stimulating with a strong emphasis on primary colours. Displays throughout the school are of a very high quality. These displays are always interesting and colourful and cover the whole range of the curriculum. They enrich the learning environment in a very positive way and celebrate pupils' work
74. There is an adequate sized library and two small rooms used for teaching small groups of pupils with special educational needs; these too are attractive and stimulating. The hall is adequate in size for key stage assemblies and for physical education lessons; it is rather cramped when all pupils assemble together. The school has detailed plans to build a new hall, which will ease this situation and the constraints experienced at lunchtime, when many pupils have to eat in their classrooms; there are also plans for the building of additional toilets. The sound insulation in the floors of the classrooms on the first floor is poor and this results in considerable noise disturbance in the classrooms below, although the pupils and teachers seem not to notice this and it does not have a negative impact on learning. The school is very clean and has a well cared for appearance, which is enhanced by the efforts of the site supervisor. Externally, there is a courtyard containing a pond that provides a useful learning resource and there is a secure play area for the under fives. The playground has been made considerably more interesting by the addition of curved benches and large wooden structures of people in the courtyard, which are a stimulating talking point. A small courtyard houses a "Den" for Year 6 pupils, which is very popular. The school has recently acquired a field to the rear of the building, which is presently too uneven for the satisfactory teaching of physical education. However, there are firm plans to develop this area and add to the present good quality of accommodation.
75. The overall supply of learning resources, including books, is good and this provision makes a significant impact on the learning opportunities provided for pupils. Resources are of good quality, appropriate to the needs and ages of the pupils and readily accessible to the staff. The school has a very good range of high quality resources for information technology, physical education and for children under the age of five. The provision of resources for information technology has been substantially improved since the time of the last inspection. The rooms used for pupils with special educational needs are well resourced, including information technology and appropriate programs, mainly to support pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy.
82. **The efficiency of the school**
76. The quality of financial planning is very good. The school manages and monitors its budget very efficiently and makes effective use of the services purchased from the local education authority's finance department to support budget planning. Planned expenditure takes good account of the school's previous spending patterns and an audit of current requirements. Spending is also effectively linked to the priorities in the school's development plan and, as such, has a very positive impact on pupils' standards and progress. Once the various budget figures are agreed, they are examined and confirmed by the full governing body. The finance officer provides very extensive and detailed records of all expenditure and these allow the governors to monitor the school's financial position very closely. The most recent audit was in 1995; this found that the majority of the school's financial procedures were operating to a high standard; the minor deficiencies that were identified have all been remedied and a new audit is to be conducted in the near future.
77. The school is successful in spending most of its annual income to address the needs of pupils currently in the school, usually with a small contingency each year. However, the school has been

able to amass considerable additional funds, amounting to a forecasted 20 percent of its proposed budget for next year, through the generosity of the headteacher in completing some trade union duties in her own time rather than in school time and for which significant funding is allocated. In addition, significant additional funding was accrued during the headteacher's secondment to the advisory service when an additional teacher at the school replaced her only 50 per cent of her time. All of these additional funds have been diverted into the school's budget with the sole purpose of funding an extension to the school hall. The surplus that has been accrued has not diverted funds away from essential resources. Indeed, resources in most areas and for most subjects are at least good. The school is aware that they must use the significant budget surplus quickly and the indications are that the planned extension will occur within the year.

78. All of the specific grants awarded to the school are used for the purpose intended and are having a very positive impact on raising standards and improving the quality of provision. For example, money for staff training and development is used well to improve the quality of teaching and the money for pupils with special educational is effectively spent and targeted to raise their standards and promote their good progress. The school also benefits from the considerable amounts of money raised and donated by the home-school association. The school fund and the fund maintained by the home-school association are audited independently each year.
79. The school development plan is well detailed in terms of the financial implications of initiatives and it also outlines expenditure over a four-year period. This is supported in turn, by an extremely detailed annual plan. All spending is clearly related to the raising of educational standards. The finance committee of the governing body is involved in the formulation of the plan and is also closely involved in monitoring and evaluating the cost effectiveness of all spending decisions.
80. Good use is made of staffing expertise in the school and management decisions about how best to deploy teaching and non-teaching staff are very effective in promoting pupils' progress. Overall, good use is also made of classroom assistants, particularly where they assist in supporting pupils with special educational needs, where a good balance is achieved between in-class teaching support and small-group teaching away from pupils' classrooms. Support staff liaise closely with teachers, are well prepared and their work has a good impact on pupils' standards and progress. The use of support staff in the reception classes would be enhanced if teachers provided more detailed guidance for these adults in relation to how to exploit the learning potential of the many teaching activities they undertake. Throughout the school, good use is also made of parental help.
81. Very good use is made of the accommodation, both during normal lessons and at other times when a very extensive range of extra-curricular activities is being provided. The school organises lessons so that maximum use is made of the school hall and the library is constantly in use, the latter making an excellent contribution to promoting pupils' independent learning and research skills. The additional rooms that are used to teach pupils with special educational needs are very effectively used. The accommodation for children under five is carefully organised into different areas that stimulate the children's interest, encourage exploration and effectively separate quiet and potentially noisy areas. The outdoor play area for these children is almost always in use and this helps to promote the children's physical development and social skills. The space between the two Year 1 classes is used very well for a range of practical and other activities to support the work pupils do in class. Very good use is made of learning resources; of particular note is the almost constant use of classroom and other computers, which promotes pupils' standards and progress in information technology and also supports the work they do in other subjects.
82. There are efficient and very effective procedures to support day to day financial control and administration. The school's administration team works very efficiently and does much to support the smooth running of the school.

83. When the school's income is balanced against the standards pupils achieve, their very good progress, behaviour, attitudes to work and the high quality of education provided, the school gives very good value for money.

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

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

91. The school admits children to its reception classes in the September of the academic year in which they turn five. Although most children have experienced some form of pre-school education, a significant proportion have not. On entry to the reception classes, most children demonstrate average skills in all areas of learning, but a significant minority have poor skills in language, literacy and mathematical development; a few children have above average skills in all areas. At the time of the inspection, 42 of the 60 reception children were under the age of five.

#### **Personal and social development**

92. Children make good progress in this area of learning and all achieve the levels expected by the time they are five. Children come happily to school and have settled quickly into the routines of school life. They have learned the rules for working happily with others and there is minimal evidence of conflicts or unwillingness to share. Their behaviour is very good and they are developing a clear understanding of right and wrong. The children are learning to sustain attention for increasingly longer periods and many are able to concentrate for considerable time in a range of activities, showing good interest in and taking care over their work. They gain social skills of co-operation, for example, in working in pairs on computers or in groups of six using the listening centres. Children tidy away resources at the end of lessons and are developing good skills in dressing and undressing for physical education, making a clear effort at folding and organising their clothes neatly on chairs. The children enjoy being part of key stage and whole school assemblies and have adapted very well to routines such as playtimes and eating their lunch in the hall. The children have formed trusting relationships with the adults who teach and look after them and are willing to express their thoughts and feelings to them. They are beginning to understand and consider the needs of others and show kindness to and concern about each other and living things such as plants and their pet gerbil. Through carrying out simple tasks, such as returning the register to the school office and feeding the class fish, they are gaining appropriate experiences in being responsible members of a community.
93. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers provide a secure environment and foster very good relationships with the children, ensuring that they are happy and willing to learn. They are very good role models for the children and use praise effectively to promote very good behaviour, relationships and attitudes to work. Teachers provide a wide range of activities that encourage the children to co-operate with each other and they ensure that all children have the opportunity to take on appropriate responsibilities such as distributing milk, watering plants and looking after the pet gerbil. There are some opportunities provided for children to show independence in making decisions about their work, but these are fairly limited.

## **Language and literacy**

94. Children make good progress in this area and most achieve the expected standards by the time they are five. Children listen intently to stories and poems, showing keen interest and enjoyment. Many comment on the pictures and are confident to answer questions and offer their views or news. In role-play situations they devise various scenarios and hold conversations with each other showing a growing awareness of the ways in which various characters may speak. All children have good attitudes to books and reading. They are developing the ability to recognise a wide range of common words and words associated with their reading scheme by sight and they understand that text carries meaning and that it is read from left to right. They carefully point to individual words as they read them and make good use of pictures and the clues in repetitive and patterned texts to help them with their reading. They choose favourite stories from the book corner and use the pictures on the front cover to make feasible predictions about their content. They show their understanding of stories when they suggest probable words to fit into gaps left in sentences by their teachers. The children are beginning to recognise rhyming words and associate these with letter sounds; indeed their knowledge of letter sounds is particularly good; for example, most know the sound of each letter of the alphabet and are learning the sounds made by the letters sh, ch and th. They are learning that books are written by people and are developing a specific vocabulary to talk about books, for example, author, illustrator and title page. Children's writing is developing well in play contexts and in more formal activities. They write over or under teachers' writing and experiment with writing their own letters and words in specifically designed activities or in the writing or role-play areas. Many children write their names correctly and they form their letters well, showing developing control and co-ordination.

94.

95. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers provide a wealth of opportunities for children to use and explore spoken and written language in meaningful and enjoyable activities. They use their voices effectively to arouse children's interest and maintain their attention, modelling reading skills particularly well and they use questioning skilfully to extend children's speaking skills. In class and group reading sessions, the teachers demonstrate the direction of print, the shape and sound of letters, help children identify rhyming words and encourage them to make predictions based upon the pictures and their understanding of what is being read. They teach children the technical vocabulary needed to discuss books and draw their attention to many features of print such as punctuation, the differences between capital and lower-case letters and explain why some print is written in bold type and how this should be responded to when reading aloud. Teachers value children's early attempts at writing and ensure that this is displayed on walls and becomes part of the written text of large class books so that the children see themselves as writers. Labels and captions around the classroom promote children's literacy development, as do the thoughtfully resourced role-play areas that encourage children to read and write in meaningful contexts.

95. **Mathematical development**

96. Children make good progress and achieve the levels expected by the age of five. Their mathematical development occurs within a wide range of specifically planned and incidental contexts. Many count past 20 and have a good understanding of number to 10. Understanding of addition and subtraction occurs in practical contexts where children sort, match and count objects and realise what happens when some are added or taken away; many correctly answer questions about “one more than” a given number up to ten. Children’s knowledge of number also develops through reciting and taking part in counting rhymes and songs, in role-play activities such as the fish and chip shop and telephone booth and whilst working on number programs on the computer. The children are developing a very good knowledge of mathematical shape, size and position. During the inspection week, they made very good progress in learning the names of three-dimensional shapes such as cone, cube and sphere and were becoming familiar with the properties of these shapes. Their recognition of the two-dimensional shapes, triangle, square and oblong is good and a few can explain the differences between an oblong and a square. Many children use the language of size correctly when describing objects that are small or big and they are developing the idea of relative size when they compare and order different sized objects and describe them as smaller or bigger than others.

96.

97. Teaching is good and sometimes very good. The teachers have high expectations and provide challenging ideas in relevant and meaningful contexts so that the children are receptive and keen to learn. In the lessons on shape, for example, the wide range of activities provided good support for teachers’ initial input with the class and promoted children’s understanding of mathematics whilst also developing skills in other areas. For example, one group were required to print shape pictures in shades of blue whilst another cut pictures from greetings cards into six pieces and then fitted them together as a simple jigsaw. A further group identified three-dimensional shapes inside a “feely bag” which supported their understanding of the shapes’ properties and names. Teaching assistants make a satisfactory contribution, but too often they miss opportunities to promote children’s learning as effectively as they might, because they are not given enough guidance about how to do this.

97. **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

98. By the time children are five, they have made good progress in this area of learning, which includes scientific, technological, geographical and historical learning and they achieve the levels expected. Early scientific skills are developed as children examine and describe a range of different materials such as sponge, plastic, paper and foil. They feel and compare clay in its malleable and dried form and learn that rolling, stretching and pulling it alters its shape. They use hand lenses to look closely at objects and living things such as plants and some are fascinated by the behaviour of their pet gerbil as it feeds and plays. As children work in sand and water they develop early scientific skills such as careful pouring and measuring.
- 98.
99. The variety of role-play activities, which change continually throughout the year, often includes a range of shops and services which supports children's early geographical understanding. In conversations they show good awareness of important features of their locality, such as churches and hotels and they are aware of a variety of different forms of transport, including trams and boats; they give simple explanations about the differences between fields and the beach. Children's historical understanding occurs through discussions about recent and more distant memories in their own and their parents' past. In relation to these memories they handle artefacts such as photographs, old toys and baby clothing, which belonged to themselves and their parents. Children develop good skills in design and technology. They make recognisable models using a variety of construction equipment and reclaimed materials and learn skills of cutting and joining materials with glue and sticky-tape. A group of children worked very well together to build a bridge with large foam blocks, which also supported their mathematical development as they learned which shapes fitted well together. Their skills in information technology are developing very well. They are gaining good control of the mouse and arrow keys to work on a variety of programs which also support their development in many other areas of learning. For example, they use a music program to compose simple tunes, a literacy program that supports their understanding of word meanings and letter sounds and a mathematics program that supports numeracy development. They also learn to control simple toys, work audio centres and explore appropriate adventure simulation programs.
- 99.
100. There is good quality teaching of this area of learning. Activities and experiences are thoughtfully planned to provide the range of knowledge and understanding required and this occurs in interesting and relevant activities that the children enjoy. In a science lesson, the teacher continually promoted children's observational and descriptive skills by drawing their attention to the different properties of the clay they were working with and how it was changing, providing an extensive range of useful words to help describe its properties. In an information technology lesson, the teacher demonstrated essential skills for extending the children's knowledge of a program's capabilities and modelled appropriate technical vocabulary to describe the various parts of the hardware and the actions required to work with the program. Whilst classroom assistants contributed satisfactorily to the teaching, insufficient guidance for their input resulted in their missing opportunities to develop children's skills and understanding in activities that had excellent potential to do so.

## **Creative development**

100.

101. Within a range of art, music and play activities the children make good progress and achieve the levels expected by the age of five. A thoughtfully organised and resourced music area encourages the children to explore instruments and the sounds they make. During the inspection week, the children took great delight in using the beaters to create different sounds on the xylophone and metallophone. They explore the different sounds made by tapping, rubbing and scratching the class “sound dragon” that is made from a range of materials and which also supports children’s knowledge and understanding of materials in science. The children have developed good singing skills, having learned the words, tunes and actions to many songs. They sing these enthusiastically and with good enjoyment, showing a developing ability to sing in unison. Some children show above average skills in clapping a steady beat and transfer this skill when playing different instruments; others understandably find this difficult at such a young age.

101.

102. In art, the children learn a range of techniques and skills. They learn that mixing colours produces other colours and attempt colour mixing for themselves. Afterwards, they use different sized brushes to paint pictures of flowers, remembering to include detail such as leaves and petals. The children have also used fabric dyes to mix colours and noted the effect of these when dripped onto cloth. Children’s free painting and drawing show their developing awareness of shape and form. They use a range of found objects to make prints and have experienced weaving. Using cold clay and plasticine, the children learn how to mould and form it into small thumb pots or manipulate rolled pieces into coil pots. They use a range of tools to make imprints in the clay, some producing a recognisable pattern.

103. The quality of teaching by teachers is good and sometimes very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations, which they use very well to plan activities that develop children’s creativity and related skills. In a music lesson, the teacher provided clear instructions and demonstrations of singing and maintaining a steady beat. She included many children in playing the instruments and used praise very well to encourage the children’s efforts. In a lesson on making pots, the teacher worked alongside the children, using language and demonstration very well to extend their understanding and experience of how best to work with the clay, its potential and limitations. Although classroom assistants work satisfactorily with groups on practical art work, they sometimes direct and control the outcome of activities too closely and do not make the best use of the activities’ potential to develop children’s skills in other areas such as science and mathematics. This is because they are not given enough guidance on how to do this. Effective use is made of information technology to support children’s creative development.

103.

## **Physical development**

84. Children make good progress in this area of learning and, by the time they are five, they achieve the standards expected, with a significant proportion achieving beyond this. The children have gained good awareness of space and others around them. They travel in different ways and a good number are able to hold a balance in a chosen shape when stopping at a signal from the teacher. Children are gaining good co-ordination and control over their bodies. For example, they follow closely the pathway formed by a rope, either by walking or moving on hands and feet. They pay very good attention to instructions and try hard to accomplish the tasks. They are aware of simple safety rules and why these are necessary. In outdoor play, the children show good co-ordination in using the wheeled toys and negotiating simple climbing apparatus. They play happily together during these times. Children’s small movements are developing very well and they gain greater dexterity in managing and manipulating small equipment. This occurs within a range of activities such as threading beads, completing puzzles, cutting-out, glueing, painting and making models.



105. Teaching is always good and sometimes very good. Teachers change for physical education lessons and give good demonstrations that help the children understand what they are required to do. Teachers use praise very effectively and give the children appropriate time to practise new skills and demonstrate these to their classmates. Good warm-up and cool-down activities are provided and teachers remind the children about the need to work safely. Teachers use their voices well to capture and maintain the children's interest. Within the whole range of classroom activities, teachers provide very good opportunities for the children to develop their small manipulative skills.

## **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **English**

85. The results of National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds in 1999 were well above the national average at the expected level and above at the higher level. Compared to similar schools, the pupils achieved results that were well above average. Over the last four years, pupils' results have risen steadily with a significant rise between 1998 and 1999. There are no significant differences between boys' and girls' attainment.
86. The results of National Curriculum reading tests for seven year-olds in 1999 were in line with the national average at the expected level and well above at the higher level. In the writing tests, pupils' results were in line with the national average at both the expected and the higher levels. Compared to similar schools, the pupils achieved results that were well above average in reading and average in writing. Teachers' assessments of pupils' speaking and listening skills were above the national average at the expected level and close to the national average at the higher level. Over the last four years, pupils' results have been close to the national average with a generally upward trend except in 1998 where there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. The most recent tests show girls achieving higher than the boys in both reading and writing, although boys' achievement is at least in line with the results achieved by boys nationally in both of these aspects of English.
87. Inspection evidence generally supports the results of the National Curriculum tests and assessments. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' standards in reading are above average and many have above average standards in writing; pupils' standards in speaking and listening are also above average. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils are achieving above average standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening; this level of attainment is very good.
88. Good improvements have occurred since the school was last inspected and standards at both key stages have risen. This has come about as a result of the school's concerted effort to improve the quality of provision, particularly for writing; for example, through providing writers' workshops at both key stages and through the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. The school has also been successful in significantly narrowing the gap between the standards achieved by boys and girls, for example, by segregating boys and girls in writing workshops and by extending the book provision in relation to purchasing books that are generally more attractive or interesting to boys. The inspection found no evidence to suggest that boys achieve differently from girls.
89. By the end of both key stages, pupils' standards of speaking and listening are above average. They concentrate well and listen carefully to instructions and explanations. They participate well in discussions and answer questions readily. They give relevant detail when explaining their work, for example, when explaining how they work out mathematical problems or about the new skills

they have learned in information technology. There is much good discussion between pupils at both key stages during various group work activities. For example, pupils at Key Stage 1 discuss how to provide sufficient detail for step by step instructions about routes to take to the zoo and in a science lesson and Year 6 pupils discuss how they would construct different types of circuits to make various models work. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils showed highly developed speaking and listening skills when asking questions of their local Member of Parliament. Initial questions showed thoughtful preparation and their subsequent “off the cuff” inquiries were very perceptive and probing.

90. By the end of both key stages, most pupils’ standards in literacy are above average. Most seven year-olds read accurately and with developing fluency and expression. Lower attaining pupils have good attitudes to books and are confident to tackle unfamiliar words with a variety of appropriate strategies, including sounding words out. These young pupils can say something about their story’s content and characters, showing that they are reading for meaning. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to discuss their preferences in books. Seven year-olds’ knowledge and skills in using non-fiction texts are particularly good for their ages; most of them know how to use contents and index pages to locate information and do this instinctively, for example, to find out information about characters from the past in a history lesson. By the time pupils are 11 years old, most are fluent and expressive readers, who demonstrate very good understanding of what they read. Most know that there are different types of texts and readily express preferences, often referring to specific authors. Some pupils discuss how authors use similes, metaphors and other means to achieve specific effects and make their writing more interesting. A few higher attaining pupils show good awareness of the idea of bias and persuasiveness in newspaper articles. Pupils have advanced skills in using the library and accessing information from non-fiction texts. They talk knowledgeably about the Dewey decimal system of organising information books and they know the purpose of diagrams, glossaries and keys. Advanced reading skills, such as skimming and scanning information texts are developing well. Pupils also make good use of CD-ROM encyclopaedias to access information.
91. By the end of both key stages, most pupils’ standards in writing are above average. Many seven year-olds write well-organised short stories that show logical development of ideas and characters. They write in a range of different forms, including poetry, sequenced instructions, prayers, invitations, captions and labelled diagrams. For example, some produce imaginative poems about the wind and make good use of their developing knowledge of adjectives to make their stories about “Winnie the Pooh” more interesting. Many pupils use full stops correctly to demarcate sentences. Pupils have good spelling skills; they know the correct spellings of many common words and apply their growing knowledge of spelling rules to more complex words with good success. Pupils’ handwriting is neat and joined.
92. By age 11, average and high attaining pupils have developed a good overview of how to structure stories and factual accounts. Their work shows maturity, good imagination and a keen sense of humour, for example, when they write predictions about the future or poems about “When I am Old”. Pupils’ understanding of the need to develop a setting and characters is well developed. For example, they write good, true-life character studies of Henry VIII’s wives and of fictional characters such as “Stig of the Dump”. Pupils’ writing shows their understanding and application of different styles. For example, after reading part of Shakespeare’s play Macbeth, they re-write parts of the play in modern-day language and, in the role of one of the characters from the play, they write letters to other characters about the situation. Poetry that focuses on the things pupils would put into a “Magic Box”, shows a good appreciation of style and creative use of vocabulary. Inspection evidence shows that boys write equally as well as girls. Pupils’ writing shows good knowledge and application of grammar and higher attaining pupils make very good use of descriptive vocabulary within quite complex sentence structures. Most pupils’ spelling shows a high degree of accuracy and standards of handwriting are very good, with a mature style

developing well.

93. All pupils make good progress in speaking and listening. As they move through the school, pupils develop skill in explaining themselves in greater detail and with more clarity. During Years 1 and 2, pupils learn to listen for increasingly longer periods and gain confidence in speaking aloud. They develop a more precise vocabulary and use this effectively to express their thoughts and feelings clearly, describe events and retell stories. During Key Stage 2, pupils become more adept at presenting a reasoned argument and in considering and responding to others' points of view. In drama lessons, pupils learn to express ideas about friendship and loneliness and, in another lesson, pupils discuss worries and the effect these have on peoples' behaviour. Confidence in speaking aloud continues to develop well; for example, many Year 5 pupils spoke clearly and with very good expression in an assembly for the whole school and parents. At each key stage, pupils' standards and progress are enhanced by the many opportunities they have to take part in performances, including choral speaking.
94. Throughout the school, all pupils make very good progress in reading. During Key Stage 1, pupils develop a wide range of useful strategies to help them read and accuracy and expression improve as does pupils' understanding. They learn to distinguish fiction from non-fiction and routinely use words like "author" and "illustrator" when discussing books. During Key Stage 2, pupils successfully tackle texts that are much more complex and older pupils begin to develop advanced reading skills such as inferring meaning beyond the literal, for example, in discussing the meaning of metaphor. The pupils are acquiring very good research skills, which are exploited in a range of subjects and effectively promoted by additional, specific teaching from the school librarian.
95. At both key stages, pupils make very good progress in writing. During Key Stage 1, pupils learn to write in different forms. Initial words and short phrases develop into sentences and short stories and accounts; the length and complexity of pupils' writing increases. There is very good progression in pupils' skills of spelling, grammar and handwriting. During Key Stage 2, pupils develop skill in structuring their writing and developing the characters, setting and plot. They are more adventurous in their use of vocabulary and they extend their understanding and skills by writing in a wide range of different forms and styles. For example, younger pupils write letters from the viewpoint of a Roman Soldier, whilst older pupils write vivid newspaper reports about sightings of the "Iron Man".
96. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in all aspects of English and sometimes their progress is very good. Their speaking and listening skills develop well in many lessons where they are encouraged to answer questions and offer opinions. Pupils' responses are always valued by teachers and support staff, which increases the pupils' confidence in participating verbally in lessons. These pupils' literacy skills are effectively developed through increased attention and support from teachers and other adults during the Literacy Hour and other English lessons and when they are taught in small groups withdrawn from the classroom.
97. Pupils' attitudes to English are very good. At Key Stage 1, pupils are very attentive during the shared reading session. They are keen to be involved and eagerly anticipate the next picture or page of text. Pupils move quickly to the activities that they are to complete independently and work well on collaborative tasks. At Key Stage 2, pupils are equally attentive and become increasingly confident and adept at working under their own initiative. Pupils settle quickly to work and they maintain very good concentration throughout, being keen to complete the tasks set. All pupils are well behaved and courteous to adults and each other. Pupils take great pride in their work, are conscientious about ensuring that their spellings and grammar are correct and that it is presented well.

98. The quality of teaching is very good, overall. Almost 40 percent of teaching is very good and over 80 percent is better than satisfactory; there is no unsatisfactory teaching. This high quality teaching reflects teachers' very good subject knowledge and their high expectations of the pupils. At both key stages, teachers plan interesting lessons that take good account of the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy and make excellent use of assessment information to ensure that the work they give to pupils builds effectively upon what they already know and can do.
99. Teachers' own enjoyment of the subject is evident in their lively presentations and in the imaginative activities they plan for pupils to complete independently. Teachers are skilled in planning for and teaching the Literacy Hour and use the various aspects of this hour very well to develop pupils understanding and skills in reading, spelling, grammar and writings. There is a good balance of different methods and forms of organisation in lessons and teachers ensure that they spend all the available time teaching. The school's successful implementation of the Literacy Hour is having a very positive impact on raising pupils' standards and promoting their progress. These lessons are supplemented by additional English lessons that extend various aspects. Of particular note is the introduction of writers' workshops for all pupils at Key Stage 2. These half-hour sessions are taught very well. They have a clear focus, for example, the development of story setting using descriptive vocabulary and exceptionally good use is made of the time, which results in a brisk pace and the creation of a sense of urgency that motivates pupils and keeps them on task. For these workshops, boys and girls in Years 5 and 6 are taught separately; the school has noticed a considerable improvement in the standards and progress of boys' verbal input and the quality of their writing as a result of this initiative.
100. In many lessons in different subjects, teachers continue to develop pupils' literacy skills, reminding pupils to spell words correctly, research information and write coherently and in different forms as required by the context. Teachers also ensure that information technology is used to support work in English. Word processing programs are often in use as pupils write stories, accounts, lists or instructions and pupils' understanding of grammar and punctuation is enhanced when they are asked to correct texts with errors of this nature.
101. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and this helps to support their progress. The quality of marking is consistently very good and this effectively guides the pupils towards improvement. It also provides an excellent framework for the conferencing sessions where teachers and individual pupils set specific targets for improvement.
102. The subject is very well managed and the policy and scheme of work are excellent. Extremely good work has been done in relation to monitoring the quality of teaching and the curriculum and this has helped to improve standards of teaching and learning. The curriculum is enhanced by the very good opportunities for pupils to engage in drama, choral speaking and other performances. Very good use is also made of visitors, including authors.

123.

### **Mathematics**

103. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are well above national averages. These high levels are a substantial improvement on the last inspection. At Key Stage 1, in the recent national tests, 93 per cent of pupils achieved the expected level or above and a very high proportion, 62 per cent, achieved the higher level. These results place the school above the national average and very high in comparison to the averages achieved by similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2, the 1999 national tests show pupils achieving above the national average with 85 percent reaching the expected level for 11 year-olds and 28 percent achieving the higher level. These results are well above average when compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Achievement in mathematics at both key stages is a significant strength of the school. Results have been showing a steady upward trend since the school became a pilot school for the National

104. Inspection evidence supports the results of the national tests at Key Stage 1 and places achievement better than the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 results show. The difference is due to the continuing positive impact of the National Numeracy Strategy, which is raising achievement in all classes throughout the school. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a very high level of understanding of number. They mentally add and subtract up to 20 and most are able to add and subtract up to 100. Pupils use more than one strategy when solving problems, especially the average and higher attaining pupils. Pupils measure accurately, using a ruler, and they describe shapes well, including three-dimensional ones such as cube or cone. By the end of Key Stage 2, mental agility with numbers is highly developed for the majority of pupils. When solving problems mentally, they add and subtract fractions, decimals and whole numbers with very good accuracy and speed; they mentally convert fractions to two decimal places. Pupils have good knowledge of multiplication tables and have good understanding of this operation and that it is the inverse of division. Pupils are competent in multiplying and dividing by 100 and 1000. Data handling is of a very good standard and well above average. Pupils are competent in converting statistics into bar charts and pie-graphs, which they present in various ways, making very good use of information technology. Most pupils interpret and read graphs well, drawing appropriate conclusions from the evidence.
105. Progress, overall, is very good throughout the school. Approximately a third of pupils enter the school with below average standards of numeracy and only a small proportion have above average skills when they begin school. By the end of the Key Stage 1, however, over 60 per cent have achieved the higher levels in numeracy, problem solving and in shape, space and measure. Progress in the development of mathematical vocabulary is very good. Pupils begin to acquire a wide range of technical language and use this very well when explaining how they solve problems. By the time they are five, very young pupils use the language of shape effectively to provide clear explanations about the differences between a cube and a square. Most pupils make considerable gains in speed and accuracy in mental arithmetic, especially higher and average attaining pupils. Lower attaining pupils and those with numeracy as a target on their individual education plans also make very good progress. When given specialist help in small groups in lessons, or individually, they consolidate their understanding of number patterns well, using either quality worksheets or appropriate information technology programs. Most pupils have learnt to count and sort early on in Year 1 and they make very good progress in recognising patterns of numbers, especially in Year 2.
106. Pupils are making very good progress during their time in Key Stage 2. Progress is very good in most lessons and standards are continuing to rise, especially in Years 5 and 6 where the full impact of the National Numeracy Strategy has yet to be realised. Pupils consolidate and build well on their number skills, with increasing accuracy and speed in mental arithmetic. By Year 5 and Year 6, mental agility is very high. For example, one pupil in Year 5 was quickly able to mentally calculate 88 over 264 as a substitute multiple of 8 over 24. Pupils in Year 3 count on and back in multiples of 2, 5 and 10. By the end of the key stage, pupils can work competently with minus numbers in mental work. Over the key stage, they gain a very good understanding of decimals and fractions and apply these skills to a variety of real life problems. Data handling skills develop well and most pupils are successful in extrapolating a range of information from graphs and charts. Pupils develop a good understanding of symmetry and angles.
107. Higher attaining pupils make very good progress over time, especially on multiplication tables and mental problem solving activities and especially at Key Stage 1, where, to date, the National Numeracy Strategy has had a more concentrated impact. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs also make very good progress, overall. In all lessons, work is

appropriately matched to need so that these pupils are given clear progressive steps which they achieve stage by stage. Progress in number patterns and mental skills is especially good and some make good progress in problem solving, even though this proves the hardest challenge for them.

108. Pupils' response to mathematics is excellent, overall. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy the challenges of mathematics and have very good attitudes to their work. They settle down quickly after the mental sessions and are very eager to solve problems and work out answers. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils listen very well, are attentive and very eager to please. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are outstandingly good. Pupils show very high levels of co-operation and collaboration when working in groups to solve problems, or when sharing equipment. They pay very good attention to their teachers and concentrate well on what they are being taught. The very good relationships and rapport give rise to very high levels of personal development, where for example, in one class, a group of pupils decided that the challenges were not high enough for them, so they invented even higher ones which promoted very good progress.
109. Teaching is very good, overall. Almost forty per cent of teaching is very good and it is consistently very good in Years 2 and 6. During the inspection, trainee teachers taught some lessons; these were satisfactory, overall, but lessons that were taught by class teachers were of a much higher standard. What works especially well in the very good lessons is the high degree of challenge and expectation provided by teachers, backed up by very good quality explanations and worksheets which extend pupils' knowledge and test their understanding. These factors enable pupils to make very good progress. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and, with few exceptions, they use this effectively to ask challenging questions in the mental sessions and when preparing work for groups of pupils of different attainment.
110. Teachers skilfully adhere to the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy. They plan in detail the work they will teach and provide pupils with time at the beginning and end of lessons to explore and discuss new ideas and skills. Appropriate time is also allowed for pupils to practise new skills during independent work. Teachers make very good use of questioning and ensure that they involve many pupils in the whole class sessions, so that all feel involved and teachers learn which pupils need further challenges or help. Teachers use a wide range of mathematical language throughout lessons, share the learning objectives with the pupils and review progress towards these before the end. During the inspection, there was a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching, which resulted from the teacher deviating from the proposed plan and setting of work that was too easy for the pupils. However, the scrutiny of work for these pupils indicates that this was a rare occurrence and does not detract from the overall high quality of teaching.
111. Teachers are conscientious in developing pupils' numeracy skills in a range of subjects and they make very good use of information technology to promote pupils' progress in numeracy. The way in which teachers mark pupils' work is excellent; throughout the school there are consistently clear messages to pupils about how they can improve and genuine celebration of their efforts.
112. Leadership in the subject is excellent. The current co-ordinator has a very clear overview of standards of achievement and provision and regularly undertakes monitoring of teaching and of the work produced by pupils; this has led to the setting of clear targets for improvement. The scheme of work is built around the National Numeracy Strategy and is very effective in providing a structure for the development of stepped skills over time, which promotes very good progress.
133. **Science**
113. The results of the National Curriculum tests for 11 year-olds in 1999 were above the national

average at both the expected and the higher level. Compared to similar schools the pupils achieved results that were well above average. Over the past four years, the school has maintained results that are largely above or well above the national average.

114. Statutory teacher assessments of seven year-olds in 1999 were above the national average at both the expected and the higher level. Compared to similar schools, the pupils achieved results that were well above average. The most recent results show significant improvement over the previous years. Between 1996 and 1998, the attainment of girls was generally higher than that of the boys, but the 1999 figures show no significant difference.
115. Inspection evidence supports the results of the 1999 tests and assessments. By the end of both key stages, most pupils' standards are above average.
116. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know many details about living things. For example, they know that humans and animals need food for energy and they have a good understanding of the kind of food that constitutes a healthy diet. They know that plants need water and light to grow and they can explain that both animals and plants need to grow and reproduce in order to survive. The pupils have a good knowledge of materials and their properties. They name common materials such as metal, plastic and wood and they know that some are made whilst others are found naturally. The pupils have learned to group materials according to their properties, for example, those that are magnetic or waterproof. Pupils understand that some materials change when they are heated or cooled and they know that forces, such as pulling or twisting, can change the shape of objects, depending upon the materials they are made from. Pupils are confident in explaining that light comes from the sun and that sound can be heard when it enters the ear; they know the function of batteries, wires and bulbs in a simple electrical circuit. Scientific investigation and experimentation is central to all the work that pupils complete. As a result, they have a good knowledge of early scientific skills such as observation, description, predication and recording the results of their work in different ways, for example, labelled diagrams and simple written accounts.
117. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are confident in explaining many of the life processes of humans, including the functions of the heart and the circulation of the blood. Pupils have a good knowledge of the bones and muscles in the human body and clearly explain the different functions of each. Pupils study plant reproduction and know the functions of different parts of a flowering plant in this process. In their study of materials, they have learned about the difference between solids, liquids and gases. They know that substances can be combined into mixtures and they explain how some of these can be separated through processes such as evaporation and filtration. They know that there is a limit to the amount of solid that will dissolve in a given amount of water. Pupils are particularly competent in their knowledge of electrical circuits. They competently set up parallel and series circuits and some know how to represent these in diagrams. Pupils successfully carry out a wide range of experiments throughout the key stage and have made good progress in learning the formal processes of scientific investigation and experimentation. In this work, they make reasoned predictions and test hypotheses in a fair way with a growing understanding of the importance of altering and maintaining certain variables. They record their findings in a variety of ways, including graphs and diagrams, making good use of information technology to support them in this work.
118. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they move through the school. They show a clear increase in their scientific skills, knowledge and understanding. In their work on the human body, for instance, pupils in Year 1 recognise the main external features, whilst pupils in Year 6 name the main internal organs and their functions. When learning about electricity, Year 2 pupils know how to construct a simple circuit whilst Year 4

pupils know the functions of switches in these. In work on materials, Year 1 pupils progress from describing and grouping them whilst pupils in Years 5 and 6 understand how they can be mixed and changed. As they move through the school, pupils' skills in scientific experimentation become more complex, with pupils taking more responsibility for choosing their own equipment and raising their own questions for investigation. Pupils' use of scientific vocabulary increases as does the range of methods they use to communicate what they have discovered.

119. Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. They listen carefully to their teachers and undertake all aspects of their work with concentration, interest and enthusiasm. They show confidence in offering opinions and engaging in practical work. Pupils work well with each other, are supportive and readily share resources and ideas, particularly when they are carrying out experiments. They are usually very well behaved. Pupils take care with written work and present this very well. They are keen to discuss the outcomes of their work and identify whether their results match their initial predictions.
120. The quality of the teaching is good, overall, and it is very good at Key Stage 2, with half the lessons being of very good quality. In the best lessons, the planning has clear and precise learning objectives that show teachers' high expectations of the pupils. In these lessons, the objectives are shared with the pupils and progress towards them is effectively reviewed at the end of lessons. The best teaching also incorporates very good opportunities for practical investigative work and the promotion of scientific skills. Teachers' secure subject knowledge comes through in their planning and in the way that they challenge pupils through probing questions. During practical work, they visit the different groups of pupils and assess their understanding and skills, adjusting work to provide opportunities for further consolidation or greater challenge. Teachers provide a good balance between instruction, practical work and discussion. All of these factors have a very positive impact on raising pupils' standards and promoting their good progress. Lessons are well organised with a good range of resources. Where experiments are being tackled, teachers provide clear demonstrations of the work to be undertaken. Pupils' work is regularly marked, with an extensive range of comments, praise and advice being provided to celebrate pupils' achievements and tell them how to improve.
121. Teachers use science work well to promote pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and information technology. They expect pupils to learn to spell new words correctly and write clear logical accounts of their investigations. Measurement and the collection and recording of data support numeracy skills and these are often linked to the development of information technology skills, when using specific data handling programs or, for example, when using the monitoring equipment to measure external events such as temperature or noise.
122. The good quality scheme of work is effectively linked to the requirements of the National Curriculum and is having a positive impact on raising pupils' standards. There is effective management by the co-ordinator, who has monitored teaching and pupils' work. Assessment of pupils is excellent and the information from assessments is used constructively to plan work tailored to pupils' needs and to set targets for improvement. The very good opportunities provided for practical investigation promote a very real sense of wonder in pupils, at the beauty of the natural world and the magnificence of scientific phenomena, which support pupils' spiritual development.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **Art**



123. By ages seven and 11, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have made good progress in art and produce work that is mostly above the standard expected for their ages. Good improvement has occurred since the last inspection and standards have risen.
124. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use pencils, pastels and paint effectively. They are learning how to achieve different colours and shades by mixing paint and they experiment with this to good effect. They are learning different techniques such as smudging chalk, charcoal and oil pastels and they apply these well in their work, for example, when producing pictures of the sky. Pupils are developing skill in using different types of pencils and sizes of brushes to develop the artistic elements of line and tone in their drawings and paintings. Their still-life drawings of fruit and flowers demonstrate good progress in observational skills. Pupils successfully undertake work in three dimensions and have, for example, produced impressive models of various items of food, using such things as salt-dough and cotton wool mixed with glue. Pupils have examined examples of Aboriginal art and used them as a stimulus for their own work in this style. Similarly, their study of works of well-known artists such as Rousseau and Miro has resulted in their producing their own work in the same style.
125. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are skilful in mixing colours and have produced their own water colour paintings of buildings and various scenes in Fleetwood. The way they use pencils to add fine detail to drawings of things such as door hinges, gloves and footwear is particularly effective. Pupils use their imaginations well to stimulate artwork. For example, they paint pictures of a world drained of colour or draw their vision of heaven. Work in three dimensions has resulted in the production of Indian Dream Catchers, using wire, feathers and beads and the production of a variety of items connected with their work on the Tudors. In their study of African art, the pupils have produced very impressive papier-mâché masks. Pupils successfully use both paint and pencils to produce pictures in the style of many famous artists, including Monet and Van Gogh. The work undertaken in the style of Paul Klee on "Taking a Pencil for a Walk in an Obstacle Race", is particularly well done. Throughout the school, pupils develop skill in evaluating their work and commenting upon how it might be improved. The use of sketchbooks is particularly effective in allowing pupils opportunities to experiment and explore different techniques and has a positive impact on their progress.
126. Pupils' attitudes to art are usually very good. They take their work very seriously and they are keen to master all the techniques and skills presented to them. They listen very carefully to their teachers and set about their tasks enthusiastically, showing very good concentration and perseverance. Pupils take pride in their work and are keen to perfect it. They behave very well in lessons and collaborate well with each other in group tasks. Pupils show sensitivity when appraising the work of others.
127. The quality of teaching is mostly good and one lesson in five is very good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, which results in well-planned lessons, clear explanations and demonstrations of techniques. They expect a lot of their pupils and this has a positive impact on the high quality of work they produce. Lessons show a good balance between informing pupils about different types of art and artists and opportunities for pupils to practice and develop skills. Lessons are well organised with a good range of resources available. During practical work, teachers circulate well, offering praise, support and advice; good use is also made of classroom support assistants during practical work. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to appraise their own work and that of others. Teachers celebrate pupils' work in stimulating displays that enhance the learning environment and they also make good use of information technology to support pupils' learning.
128. There is very good management of the subject. A good scheme of work ensures that pupils make gains in knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the school. Opportunities for

assessment are identified in teachers' planning and a good range of assessment information is recorded, which is used effectively to plan future lessons. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans, pupils' work and the quality of teaching. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and high quality displays of pupils' work enhance the learning environment.

#### 149. **Design and technology**

129. Only four lessons were observed during the inspection. Nevertheless, these, together with pupil interviews and photographic evidence, make it possible to give a clear judgement that progress by the end of Key Stage 2 is good. This includes those pupils with special educational needs. By the ages of seven and 11, most pupils are producing work that is generally above that expected for their ages. This shows good improvement since the previous inspection.
130. During Key Stage 1, pupils design and make a wide variety of constructions using commercial kits and a variety of reclaimed materials. For example, pupils work with paper, cardboard, cloth and cotton wool to make their own hats, first generating a design idea and later discussing and evaluating the finished product to determine if it could be improved. They learn a variety of skills such as measuring, scoring, cutting, folding and joining. A good example was the work undertaken by Year 2 pupils in making flaps; this gave the pupils opportunities to design hinges and learn that flaps are joined only on one side. Pupils' progress is well promoted by various disassembling tasks where, for example, they take boxes apart and learn how these look in net form and where the folds and joins are made. This type of work also makes a good contribution to pupils' progress in numeracy.
131. During Key Stage 2, pupils progress to making high quality woven designs. They learn to work with a wider range of materials and incorporate scientific knowledge into their work; for example, they use circuitry to make model lighthouses. Towards the end of the key stage, a range of design and make processes are used to stimulate the production of pupils' own torches. For example, pupils initially disassemble commercially made torches and then generate their own ideas as a result of what they have learned. Next they produce detailed, step by step plans, with diagrams, about how the product will be made and what materials and processes will be used. Having made their product, they evaluate them in detail before making improvements. The same process is applied to the production of other products, such as slippers, which also involves careful measuring and the application of creative designs, making a very good contribution to pupils' progress in numeracy and art.
132. Pupils' attitudes to design and technology are very good. In both key stages, they show their interest when discussing their work and older pupils are able to explain that they particularly enjoy the challenges presented by the subject. Pupils listen carefully to instructions and are keen to continue with the work, even when the lesson has ended. After clear demonstrations and explanations from teachers, pupils are enthusiastic to begin work and make little fuss as they begin to work independently. They learn from their mistakes, for example, when trying to make a special kind of fold for a pop-up picture. Pupils persevere very well for long periods, they behave well and are happy to help each other.
133. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is never less than satisfactory and occasionally it is very good. As only one lesson was seen at Key Stage 1, it is not possible to make a secure judgement about the specific quality of teaching at this key stage. The best teaching is characterised by expert demonstration and advice on skills, which emanates from teachers' secure subject knowledge. These lessons also stand out because teachers ensure that there is an

appropriate balance between direct teacher input and time for pupils to practise and explore skills and techniques. During the latter, teachers move continuously between groups, questioning and setting further challenges for pupils who are making quicker progress. The excellent rapport between teachers and pupils supports the pupils' good progress; for example, teachers provide pupils with opportunities to ask questions and relationships are such that pupils are confident to do this. All teachers ensure that pupils are aware of necessary safety considerations in the work that they do. In all lessons, teachers manage pupils well and have high expectations of their thinking, use of skills and final presentation. Occasionally, some of the resources for disassembling are unsuitable for the purpose and demonstrations are insufficiently detailed, both leading to pupils becoming confused. Teachers make good use of classroom assistants to provide support for pupils during practical work and, from the beginning of Key Stage 1, they effectively incorporate information technology into lessons and activities, for example, when pupils make moving models using motorised parts or when they use CD-ROM to conduct research for designs. When asking pupils to write reports or label diagrams, teachers remind pupils about their spellings and grammar; independent research work also supports the pupils' literacy development.

134. Design and technology is well managed. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans and the quality of teaching. A good scheme of work ensures that pupils are given appropriate opportunities to develop essential knowledge, skills and understanding. Good links are also made with other subjects, such as literacy, mathematics, art and information technology. There are very good systems for assessment and pupils' achievements are recorded against skills' lists which teachers use to ensure that all make progress. The curriculum is enriched by visits to places like power stations, water-works and a castle and the provision of an after-school sewing club also supports pupils' progress.

155. **Geography**

135. By ages seven and 11, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have made satisfactory progress and produce work that is in line with what is expected for their ages. The school has maintained these standards since its last inspection.

136. During Key Stage 1, pupils learn about their locality and the youngest pupils successfully identify physical features such as houses, roads, shops and bridges. They undertake fieldwork in the local area and have successfully drawn simple maps of the school grounds and their route to school. Their studies of the weather have increased their knowledge and understanding of seasonal weather patterns. Pupils' understanding of places increases as they compare contrasting localities in this country and in other parts of the world. These have included Rivington Pike, Fleetwood, Hong Kong and areas of Australia. In this work the pupils learn to identify and compare differences, such as in housing and landscape. In studying their own locality, pupils confidently discuss the attractive and unattractive features in Fleetwood and they show a particular concern for the problems caused by litter.

137. During Key Stage 2, pupils correctly identify many towns and countries on an appropriate range of maps; they use grid references and co-ordinates successfully to locate particular features. Pupils have studied a number of contrasting locations, including Chembakolli, in India and they are confident in comparing features, such as diet, clothing, houses, school life and climate, with those found in Fleetwood. They extend their studies of climate to identify the kinds of weather found in different parts of the world. Pupils know that towns vary in size and that they are developed for different purposes, with, for example, some being ports and others being market towns. Pupils accurately identify parts of a river system, such as the source and the mouth and they confidently explain how rivers erode the banks. Pupils show a concern for the environment, expressing particular concern for the problems caused by pollution. They suggest ways in which

improvements might be made.

138. Pupils' attitudes to their work are good and often very good. They listen to their teachers with interest and provide a range of appropriate and thoughtful answers to questions and points for discussion. Pupils set about their tasks with great enthusiasm and show a particular interest in comparing different localities, especially those located in Australia and India. They watch videotaped programmes about different parts of the world with interest, study maps, globes and postcards and handle artefacts carefully. They show initiative in finding relevant information from books and CD-ROM encyclopaedia. Pupils are very concerned for the environment, not only identifying problems that are being caused, but in enthusiastically supporting ways that would improve it. Pupils are very well behaved in lessons and work well together. They take considerable care with their work, producing neat and well-presented writing, drawings and maps.
139. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and in a third of lessons it is good. Work is well planned and teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject. Most provide clear explanations, especially when discussing aspects of life in different places and pupils are generally kept busy throughout the lessons. Very occasionally, instructions are not entirely clear and, as a result, a small number of pupils are not sure how to proceed. Good relationships are developed and teachers and classroom assistants help pupils with well-focused support and advice. They provide a good range of resources, especially atlases and maps and an appropriate variety of videos and artefacts to help pupils with their work. Teachers make good provision for pupils to use information technology for research purposes; work on replicating the design of the classroom enhanced Year 5 pupils' knowledge of scale and plan-view. Teachers mark work thoughtfully and very helpfully so that the pupils know how they can improve.
140. A good scheme of work ensures that pupils receive appropriate experiences to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. Opportunities for assessing what the pupils know and can do are identified in teachers' planning and the information is used effectively to plan future work. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans and has also monitored teaching and pupils' work; all of this ensures that pupils' steady progress is maintained. The subject makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills. For example, when writing accounts, they learn to spell subject-specific vocabulary and research information. Numeracy skills are also effectively developed, particularly in relation to map work on co-ordinates. Pupils' cultural development is successfully extended through the study of life in other countries.

161. **History**

141. By ages seven and 11, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have made good progress and produce work that is mostly above the standard expected for their ages. Good improvement has occurred since the last inspection and standards have risen.
142. During Key Stage 1, pupils learn many details about the past. By looking at pictures, videos, photographs, newspaper articles and books they learn that they can find out information about the past from different sources. They begin to identify some of the changes that have taken place in things such as toys, clothing, houses and hospitals. Pupils study household artefacts such as radios, irons and cameras and develop the historical skill of chronology through successfully sequencing these from the oldest to the newest. Pupils have a good knowledge of a number of famous historical figures, for example, Captain Cook, Mother Teresa and Florence Nightingale, as well as important past events, such as the Crimean War. In the course of their work they gain a good vocabulary to describe the past.
143. This good progress continues through Key Stage 2, where pupils extend their knowledge and

understanding of various periods in history. Through their study of the Aztecs, Ancient Greeks and Romans, the pupils have increased their knowledge of ancient civilisations and the effects these had on our lives today. Pupils are also able to discuss many aspects of life in Tudor and Victorian times such as living conditions, recreational pastimes and religious beliefs. For example, Year 6 pupils have extensive knowledge of Henry VIII and his wives, the Spanish Armada and the events leading up to the break with Rome. Throughout the key stage, pupils gain significant knowledge about people and events. For example, pupils have good knowledge of the Roman invasion of Britain, the sinking of the Mary Rose and of Queens Victoria and Boudicca. Pupils learn that historical events can be interpreted in different ways depending upon the perspective of the historian.

144. Pupils' attitudes to history are consistently very good, typified by enjoyment and curiosity. They show great interest in the topics being studied and they are keen to be involved with all aspects of the work. They listen carefully, answer thoughtfully and generally set about their tasks with zeal. They study books, videos, photographs and historical artefacts with concentration and genuine interest and this greatly enhances the progress they make. They readily work with each other, sharing information and discussing ideas. When Year 6 pupils take part in simple dramatic recreations of past events, such as expressing the views of different people about the Spanish Armada, they do so confidently and with an acute sense of humour. Pupils present their work neatly and show good pride in it. They behave very well in lessons.
  
145. The quality of teaching is good and in a quarter of lessons it is very good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, which comes through in their planning, explanations and questioning. In the best lessons they raise thought-provoking questions that challenge the pupils to express their own views and opinions and to undertake research to find things out. Teachers provide a good range of quality resources and artefacts for pupils to explore. These are used well in lessons and promote pupils' good progress. Good use is also made of time-lines in all classes, which helps pupils to place different historical events and periods in a correct chronological framework. Teachers use a range of methods to motivate pupils. For example, Year 6 pupils engaged in role-play whilst Year 4 pupils asked questions and examined the clothing and weapons of an actor posing as a Roman Soldier; these activities stimulate pupils' interest and have a very good impact on their progress. Throughout the school, teachers mark pupils' work thoughtfully and include many useful comments of encouragement and advice. Good use is made of classroom assistants to support the pupils in their work and skills in literacy, numeracy and information technology are all effectively developed within the subject, for example, when pupils write accounts from the perspective of different people and show empathy in their writing; when they calculate dates and periods of time on time-lines; and when they use information books and CD-ROM encyclopaedia for research purposes.
  
146. A good scheme of work ensures that pupils learn progressively more about different periods and people in history as they move through the school and that they develop essential historical skills. The co-ordinator manages the subject very well, monitoring teachers' planning and teaching and pupils' work. Pupils are regularly assessed and lessons are evaluated to inform future planning. Work in history makes a significant contribution to pupils' cultural development and colourful and stimulating displays of artefacts and pupils' work do much to enhance the quality of the learning environment.

## **Information technology**

168. By the end of both key stages, all pupils' have made at least good and often very good, progress to achieve standards that are above those expected nationally for pupils of these ages. The school's provision for this subject has improved significantly since the last inspection and pupils' standards have risen as a result.

168.

169. Year 2 pupils competently use a wide range of computer programs to communicate information. For example, they use word processing programs to compose text and have the necessary skills for rectifying mistakes, using the arrow keys or mouse to place the cursor at the appropriate place and then using the delete or backspace keys. They know how to use the *Shift Lock* key to produce capital letters and can save, retrieve and print out their work by themselves. They have good skills in controlling the mouse; for example, to choose colours, shapes and brushes to create pictures on paint programs or to "drag" pictures or objects and position them creatively to produce different scenes on various backgrounds. When using these programs the pupils are able to incorporate writing into their pictures and move easily between the different functions in this task. Some pupils are aware of how to use the mouse to highlight words or sections of text to delete them.

169.

170. Year 6 pupils have gained good skills in word processing and use these within a desktop publishing program to produce newsletters and storyboards for younger children. They competently use a data-handling program to store information about birth weight and have the skills to check the accuracy of the information thinking about its plausibility. In completing this work, their understanding and skills in mathematics are well supported as they convert pounds and ounces to kilograms and grams. These pupils also devise and test a sequence of commands, using a control console to control the sequence of lighting in a model of a set of traffic lights. This work also provides very good support for their study of electricity in science. In a range of contexts and for various subjects, pupils make very good use of information technology to find out information, which promotes their literacy development as well as the development of their independent research skills.

170.

171. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and a significant proportion at both key stages make very good progress. Year 1 pupils learn to use the standard keyboard to write messages and they learn how to move around the screen and perform simple editing tasks. They gain early skill in using information technology to store, sort and present meaningful data and they learn how to give simple commands to make a floor turtle move. During Key Stage 2, pupils become familiar with a range of programs such as Power Point and use these creatively to communicate meaning in different ways. For example, Year 3 pupils create greetings' cards and Year 5 pupils produce plans of their classroom. The pupils gain comprehensive knowledge about the capabilities of these programs and become very skilled in using the different functions and incorporating text, pictures and sounds. Skills in handling data, controlling, monitoring and modelling are progressively developed in interesting activities that link very well with work being covered in other subjects. For example, throughout Key Stage 2, pupils use equipment to monitor external events such as sunlight, movement, noise and temperature, which also provide very good support for their work in science and geography.

171.

172. The good and very good progress made by pupils is a direct result of the steps the school has taken to improve the quality of provision, particularly teaching. Excellent leadership from the co-ordinator has resulted in a detailed scheme of work that clearly identifies the different knowledge and skills that pupils will learn, in each element of the subject, in every term of each year as they move through the school. This very good framework has been thoughtfully supported by extensive staff training, including demonstration lessons by the co-ordinator and rigorous monitoring of all aspects of teaching. In addition the co-ordinator has provided excellent guidance to support teaching and devised a very good system for assessing and recording pupils' achievements, including providing all pupils from Year 1 upwards with their own disks to save their work. As a result, the co-ordinator is able to monitor pupils' work and use what they have saved onto disk as a discussion point with them.

172.

173. Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject. They are interested, keen to learn and enjoy the range of work set. They show perseverance and they collaborate well when working as a pair or small group. Pupils' behaviour is of a high standard. They show respect for the equipment, help each other, listen attentively and speak respectfully to their teachers and other adults who help them. Higher attaining pupils willingly help less confident friends and show good levels of maturity and sensitivity in this. The pupils take a pride in their work and do their best to present it well.

173.

174. The quality of teaching is good and frequently very good. Teachers' subject knowledge has improved considerably since the last inspection and they are now confident and competent to explain and demonstrate different skills. Particularly effective use is made of time, with teachers packing lots of information and demonstrations into the weekly 30-minute sessions that introduce the programs and skills to be used and practised throughout the week. In these sessions, teachers' own subject knowledge and clear preparation are evident as they use accurate technical vocabulary to describe actions and functions and involve many pupils in demonstrating and answering questions, including pupils with special educational needs. Teachers make sure that all pupils understand the objectives for the week and ensure that, where appropriate, computers are used throughout lessons. They make effective links between information technology and other subjects, particularly literacy and numeracy, so that skills are being developed in relevant contexts.

175. Since the last inspection, the school has increased its resources considerably and is well prepared for the new developments that will occur as a result of its National Grid for Learning bid. The school has responded extremely well to the key issue raised by the last inspection and they are well placed to improve even further.

#### 175. **Music**

147. By ages seven and 11, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have made good progress and produce work that is mostly above the standard expected for their ages. The high standards and provision noted during the previous inspection have been maintained.

148. During Key Stage 1, pupils learn to sing with accurate intonation, rhythmic precision and good volume. In lessons, most develop a good knowledge of musical instruments, play accompanying percussion with a steady beat and synchronise different rhythms successfully. They soon learn to discriminate between high and low pitched sounds and to identify individual instruments such as a violin accompanying a song about the wind.

149. During Key Stage 2, pupils' progress in singing continues to be good because of the good quality

of teaching for this aspect. They learn to vary their volume and develop skills in singing against one another in songs with more than one part. They sing with gusto and enjoyment, showing a good awareness of the audience, for example, in assemblies. Pupils' progress is also very effectively enhanced through their participation in the school choir. Their skill in playing instruments continues to improve at this key stage and is also well supported by participation in instrumental classes and the school orchestra. Pupils have good opportunities to play a variety of instruments and they learn to do this well; for example, a group of pupils played the violin very well during a whole school assembly. At both key stages, pupils learn about different composers and different styles and traditions of music.

150. Pupils have a very good attitude to music and enjoy taking part in singing and playing; this enthusiasm shines through in their performances. Their behaviour is very good. They are keen to learn new songs and skills and try hard to perfect these quickly. Pupils treat instruments carefully and have good confidence in performing in front of others. They always listen appreciatively to each other and to recorded music.

151. At both key stages, the quality of teaching is good, overall. Occasionally, teaching is excellent, but there is a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching, which is characterised by too little opportunity for pupils to be actively involved in the lesson. The best teaching is characterised by the incorporation of a good balance of teacher exposition and demonstration and sufficient time for pupils to practise skills and explore sounds and instruments. The most successful lessons are based upon detailed planning that depicts teachers' high expectations of the pupils and thorough and precise tuition of singing and playing techniques. At both key stages, teachers are confident in helping pupils progress both in their knowledge and skills, for example, when they sing new songs and accompany them by playing percussion instruments. They give clear demonstrations and insist on no talking during a performance. The pace of most lessons is good, but sometimes not enough time is provided to refine singing skills in hymn practices. Very good assessment is conducted mainly on a daily basis, which is useful in meeting individual pupils' needs and helping teachers to adapt lessons to pupils' needs.

152. The co-ordinator provides very good guidance to enable teachers to help pupils make progress, including in-class support. A good range of high quality instruments is available and this effectively supports pupils' progress in playing and composing. Several members of teaching and non-teaching staff are thoroughly involved in the school orchestra. The choir has performed in many prestigious venues including the Royal Festival Hall, The Bridgwater Hall and Lytham Music Festival. Their high standards are reflected in very good placements in local and national competitions. In addition, they also perform at local services, festivals and receptions and have exhibited their qualities on television. In sum, the high standard of musical provision has been maintained since the previous inspection.

#### 181. **Physical education**

182. During the inspection it was possible to observe only one lesson at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, three lessons were observed that were based upon the development of ball skills, one lesson on dance and two on swimming. In over three-fifths of all lessons, pupils' progress was good or better; this included pupils with special educational needs; overall progress is good.

153. Pupils develop ball skills from an early age in Key Stage 1 and progress to use these in games such as rugby in Key Stage 2. They improve their ability to run with the ball near to their body and with their heads looking up for a space to pass the ball to a partner. Pupils learn attack and defence tactics in games and talk about ways to retain and gain possession of a ball in a



competitive game. They show good co-ordination in learning to control their body and the ball simultaneously; most pass accurately while dodging. In dance lessons, Year 6 pupils make very good progress in interpreting music through movement. For example, they develop characterisation when moving elegantly and with poise to depict Victorian ladies and gentlemen. They then produce contrasting movements that are jerky and bent to depict an old man. In all of this, the pupils show good awareness of space, level, direction, tension, speed and stillness as they put together their dance montage. They practise and refine their movements to improve the finished piece.

154. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. They change quickly and settle down in their place with minimum fuss, ready to start the lesson. Pupils follow instructions carefully and put a great deal of effort into their work. Where it is necessary to collaborate with others they do this well and sensibly. Pupils respond very well to the teaching of skills, watching demonstrations with interest and showing keenness to improve their own performance. They develop confidence in their own ability and the high numbers that attend after-school sporting clubs and activities reflect pupils' enthusiasm for the subject.

155. The quality of teaching is good, overall. In half the lessons it is very good. There was only a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching, which resulted from pupils spending too much time listening to the teacher or watching demonstrations rather than being active. Where teaching is at its best, the teachers' secure subject knowledge and enthusiasm are clearly evident. This results in lessons that teach essential skills at a brisk pace, make provision for much pupil activity and also incorporate imaginative activities that motivate the pupils. In these lessons, the teachers demonstrate skills and movements and provide very good models for the pupils' work, which has a positive impact on their good progress. Assessment procedures are very good, with teachers maintaining a running record of individual pupils' skills development, which informs their future planning. Year 2 teachers have used a digital camera to record and assess pupils' skills and there are plans to extend this practice to other year groups.

156. The school provides a very good physical education curriculum that addresses all the different elements of the subject. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership, which has included the monitoring of teaching. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to take part in after-school sporting activities, including competitive games with other schools. The range of extra-curricular activities provided includes football, netball, swimming and cricket and both boys and girls participate fully in these.

186. *Swimming*

157. The inspection of this school included a focused view of swimming, which is reported below.

158. The school complies with the statutory requirement to teach swimming. It is not possible to make a secure judgement on pupils' standards in swimming by the end of Key Stage 2 since only pupils in Year 3 receive swimming instruction. Prior to this year, pupils in Years 3 and 4 received instruction in swimming and the school's records show that all had learned to swim by the end of this two-year programme, with most being able to swim 25 metres unaided. The reduction in provision has come about from reduced funding from the local education authority, which pays for all aspects of swimming provision at the school. Given this situation, the school has made the decision to target the youngest pupils at Key Stage 2 and to concentrate on aspects of the programmes of study for swimming that ensure pupils develop confidence in water from an early age. This is done very effectively.

159. At this early point in the school year half the pupils in Year 3 are able to swim unaided, a quarter managing to sustain this for about ten metres. Approximately a sixth of these pupils have developed a satisfactory or good style of breaststroke and are able to synchronise their arms and legs well and use vigorous movement to propel themselves. At this stage, about half the pupils are not yet able to swim without some form of buoyancy support. All pupils have a sound knowledge of the principles of water safety.
160. Year 3 pupils make very good progress. By the end of the year a high proportion are able to swim short distances unaided. Non-swimmers have gained increased confidence in the water and are beginning to develop effective swimming strokes to propel themselves. There are no significant gender differences in standards or progress. Within lessons, pupils make very good progress because of the high quality of instruction they receive.
161. Most pupils enjoy learning to swim. They respond confidently to the initial challenge of taking their feet off the bottom of the pool and are then very keen to develop the quality of their strokes and to swim longer distances. Pupils pay good attention to what they are told and co-operate very well with both the instructor and teacher. They behave very sensibly both in and around the pool and they understand and adhere to safety rules.
162. The quality of swimming instruction is very good. Long and short-term planning is very good, with a staged approach to the development of skills. Classes are split into swimmers and non-swimmers so that instruction can be tailored to the pupils' needs. Both the instructor and teacher have a secure knowledge of the skills that must be taught and have high expectations of the amount of participation, effort and concentration required from pupils. The level of skills demanded is appropriate and buoyancy aids are provided for individual pupils as required. The needs and concerns of non-swimmers are fully appreciated and these pupils are thoroughly challenged, but with sensitivity shown to their developing confidence. Swimmers are challenged to develop the quality of their strokes and encouraged to swim longer distances. Very good use is made of the time available and assessment and recording of pupils' skills is very good with this information being effectively used to support the teaching of subsequent lessons.
163. The adopted policy and scheme of work are very good. Pool staff and teachers liaise very well and opportunities are made to celebrate pupils' achievements with certificates. The swimming facilities used by the school are very good with a pool specifically for learners that provides a safe environment for pupils who still need to gain confidence. The larger pool enables swimmers to develop the quality of their strokes and to swim longer distances. Trained lifeguards supervise both pools very closely. The ratio of adults to pupils is very good and the arrangements for emergencies are satisfactory. Appropriate communication is made to parents whose children do not regularly attend swimming lessons and pupils who demonstrate advanced skills are encouraged to participate in a local swimming gala.

193.

### **Religious education**

164. Standards in religious education exceed the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound understanding of the Christian faith and can explain the major events in the calendar. They are very aware of the importance of major festivals, such as Christmas and Easter and are able to describe and explain the events leading up to Christmas with good detail. Pupils are also very proficient at explaining their own thoughts and feelings. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve above the expected levels. They have good knowledge of several world faiths, including Islam and Sikhism. They are able to explain in detail the origins and nature of

Diwali, for instance and they understand the significance of the “Five Ks” in Sikhism. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment have good understanding of the Christmas story and they know the reasons for the Advent wreath and the significance of the four candles lit on successive Sundays leading up to Christmas.

165. Progress is good at both key stages. Through careful planning and exploration of feelings, pupils at Key Stage 1 begin to develop an awareness of the concept of a higher power and how God sent his Son, preceded by the angel’s good news, to Mary. Pupils are learning to relate well to the symbolism of Bible stories and think about the messages in relation to their own life experiences. Pupils learn the skill of reflection, for example, when they think about precious things. They think about the good news brought to Mary and her cousin Elizabeth by the angel and write their own tidings of good news, which show a good appreciation of Christian love, tolerance and forgiveness. Throughout their study of different religions the pupils develop a good technical language and learn new words such as prophet, Qur’an, messenger and baptism.
166. Throughout Key Stage 2, the good standards achieved earlier are progressively built upon. The time given to thought and reflection increases and artefacts are used well to enhance progress; for example, lighting candles in lessons, or demonstrating the use of the Christingle. In one excellent lesson at Key Stage 2, pupils were given frequent opportunities to explore their own personal thoughts and feelings as a candle was lit. This resulted in pupils developing a strong sense of calm, peace and hope, which was then related to the Christian message, depicted through the appearance of the angel in the Annunciation.
167. Pupils with special educational needs take a full and active part in all class or group discussions at both key stages. They make good progress in developing their own thoughts and feelings and they gain in self-confidence when debating or discussing these. They also acquire a good level of technical language, although this is better in oral than written form. Pupils with higher levels of prior attainment develop their personal thoughts well and to a good level so that other pupils are stimulated by their ideas. They make good progress across both key stages.
168. Pupils’ attitudes are very good overall. They enjoy the discussions that take place, especially at Key Stage 2. Pupils are very willing to talk in depth about their own personal feelings and, as a result, progress in personal development is also very effectively enhanced. Behaviour is very good, overall, but on occasions towards the end of the day, younger Key Stage 1 pupils lose concentration and become restless when activities are not sufficiently interesting for them. Overall, pupils show respect for the ideas and opinions of others and they listen well to teachers. Relationships are excellent. Pupils and teachers work extremely well in all classes, with pupils eager to please and keen to offer explanations to questions at every opportunity. The very good attitudes and outstanding relationships establish a very positive ethos for learning which enables good progress to take place throughout the school.
169. Teaching is good, overall. Teachers have very good levels of knowledge, which they use well when asking penetrating questions to provoke thought and creativity. Challenges are good, both in terms of written work, especially at Key Stage 2 and in oral work. There are many instances of good debate and discussions in lessons, on issues such as the meaning of some Bible stories, or how different faiths celebrate their festivals. Planning is good with clear learning objectives reviewed at the end of each lesson. In planning, different work is identified for pupils of different attainment and this enables all to make good progress. Teachers manage pupils very well and the thoughtful provision of resources has a very favourable impact on learning; for example, the shadow theatre in reception classes; the candles lit in Year 4 and the Advent wreath in Year 6. Most teachers use a good balance of explanation and group work, supported by written tasks. Teachers plan to use visitors very well in lessons, with regular visits from local church groups. Especially successful

was a visit made to classes by the 'Virgin Mary', a guest in role, who encouraged pupils to ask prepared questions focusing on her feelings at being the mother of Jesus.

170. The management of the subject is very good. There is appropriate emphasis at Key Stage 2 on written work, with frequent examples of extended and creative writing in the upper juniors, thereby enhancing literacy skills appropriately. Where artefacts and visual aids are used, they have a very positive impact on learning and in creating a positive ethos in lessons. There are clear targets for future improvement with a complete overhaul of the scheme of work planned by the end of the spring term. Assessment procedures at the end of sections of work and especially self-assessment techniques and the use of assessment in planning are outstanding and of a very high quality, helping significantly in the raising of standards.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

171. The inspection of Shakespeare Primary School was undertaken by a team of five inspectors, including a lay inspector, who, over a five-day period, completed a total of 25 inspector days at the school

#### **Prior to the inspection:**

- meetings were held with the headteacher, the Chair of governors and the teaching staff;
- the Registered Inspector held a meeting with 58 parents;
- documents provided by the school were analysed.

#### **During the inspection**

- One hundred and five lessons or parts of lessons were seen, representing almost 63 hours of classroom observation.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the Chair of Governors and governors with specific responsibilities.
- Planned discussions were held with the teaching staff; these focused on subjects and whole school issues.
- There were daily meetings between the Registered Inspector and the headteacher.
- Inspectors examined the written work of many pupils. All the available written work of a representative sample of pupils from each class was scrutinised.
- A representative sample of pupils from each year group was heard reading and these pupils were also questioned on their knowledge and understanding of books.
- Time was spent talking with pupils about their knowledge and understanding in different subjects.
- Observations were made of pupils arriving and leaving school and during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Attendance registers were inspected.
- Teachers' planning documents were inspected.
- Inspectors attended assemblies, acts of collective worship and extra-curricular activities.

- Informal discussions were held with parents throughout the inspection week.

## 202. DATA AND INDICATORS

### 202. Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	410	7	100	95

### 202. Teachers and classes

#### 202. Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	15.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	25.8

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

Total number of education support staff:	13
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	203.5
Average class size:	29.3

### 202. Financial data

Financial year:	1999
	£
Total Income	591,104.00
Total Expenditure	559,365.00
Expenditure per pupil	1,354.39
Balance brought forward from previous year	86,011.00
Balance carried forward to next year	117,750.00

202. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out: 410

Number of questionnaires returned: 369

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	61	38	1	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	60	38	1	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	37	49	9	2	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	51	47	1	1	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	54	41	3	1	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	59	39	1	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	62	34	4	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	55	41	3	1	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	53	44	2	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	53	38	6	1	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	67	29	2	1	1