

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Birk Hill Infant School**

Eckington

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique Reference Number: 112543

School Inspection Number: 187509

Headteacher: Mrs L McGregor

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Reporting inspector: Mr G T Storer RgI  
19830

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707160

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery and Infant
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chestnut Avenue Eckington Sheffield S21 4BE
Telephone number:	01246 433205
Fax number:	n/a
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr I Ringstead
Date of previous inspection:	25 <sup>th</sup> – 29 <sup>th</sup> March 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
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Mr E Marshall, Lay Inspector		Attendance Support, Guidance and Welfare Partnership with Parents and the Community
Mrs M Palmer	English Religious Education Art Music Special Educational Needs	Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources
Mrs B Rimmer	Mathematics Geography History Children Under Five Equal Opportunities	Attitudes, Behaviour and Personal Development Curriculum and Assessment

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- Many pupils make good progress and are achieving standards that are higher than would normally be expected for their age in English, science, religious education and history. Pupils' writing in all areas of the curriculum is particularly impressive.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide good leadership. This results in a strong team spirit and a shared sense of purpose on the part of governors, staff and the school's community.
- Members of the governing body are very involved. They give good support to management and all other aspects of the school's work.
- Pupils gain a very good understanding of their cultural heritage and of the richness and diversity of other cultures represented in society.
- The school is a safe and orderly community, where pupils are very well cared for.
- The school is very successful in involving parents in their children's learning and this contributes to the progress that they make.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Teachers tend to over-direct their pupils who, consequently, have insufficient opportunity to develop independence and personal responsibility in their response to work and other aspects of school life.
- II. Schemes of work for science, information technology, art, design and technology, history, geography and physical education are incomplete or in need of updating. They do not reflect current practice or adequately support teachers' planning.
- III. The monitoring of subjects, other than English, mathematics and science, is insufficient to provide the school with a

clear view of strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum as a whole.

IV. In a small number of lessons in Key Stage 1, short-term planning fails to identify appropriate targets for pupils' learning or teaching methods. This results in a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching.

**The weaknesses identified in this report are far outweighed by what the school does well.** They will, however, form the basis of the governors' action plan. A copy of this plan will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

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

Standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science have risen. A greater proportion of pupils achieves nationally expected standards and an increasing number now achieves above average levels. The overall quality of teaching has improved. Weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics and in design and technology have been redressed and teaching in these areas is now satisfactory. Teachers more regularly give work that matches pupils' learning needs and this allows them to make progress. The cultural dimension of pupils' learning has improved. Pupils are very aware of the cultural traditions of different groups in society and have positive attitudes towards them. The school has introduced a good range of assessment procedures and uses these effectively to track pupils' progress. The headteacher and senior staff monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the core subjects and are more aware of strengths and weaknesses, particularly in relation to English, mathematics and science. The school will need to extend this good practice to other areas of the curriculum. The school's curriculum co-ordinators have begun to up-date schemes of work. Where this has been done in English, mathematics, religious education and music, they provide improved guidance for teachers' planning. However, this work will need to be completed for other subjects in order to achieve further improvements. The time allocation for each subject is appropriate and now provides a better balance in the curriculum as a whole. Financial planning is better than it was. The governing body's Finance Committee is very involved in setting and monitoring the school's budget. This enables the governing body to make decisions in the light of more precise budgetary information. Procedures for ensuring that pupils are safe and well cared for have been improved. This includes the appropriate upgrading of the security of the school premises. The school has responded positively to the findings of the previous inspection and is well placed to continue the process of school improvement.

**Standards in subjects**

This table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests and Teacher Assessments:

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



In most years, children's attainments on entry to the school are broadly average, with many showing above average skills in language and literacy. This was not the case for pupils who reached the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999. In this year group, almost one third of pupils had identified special educational needs. Most of these pupils made satisfactory progress. However, many were unable to attain nationally expected standards in National Curriculum tests. As a result, the percentage of pupils that attained or exceeded nationally expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average and well below that found in similar schools. Teachers' assessments indicate that almost all of these pupils achieved the nationally expected standard in science.

This picture of low attainment is not typical of previous years, nor of the current Year 2. The levels at which pupils are currently working indicate that the vast majority are on course to attain or exceed nationally expected standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The overall picture of attainment is more consistent with the school's 1998 results. When compared to schools nationally, 1998 results were above average in reading, writing and science and were average in mathematics. They were in line with standards found in similar schools, other than in writing where they were above. Most pupils are also on course to attain nationally expected standards in information technology and standards in religious education are above those set out in the locally agreed syllabus.

• **Quality of teaching**

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

• The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 92 per cent of lessons inspected. In almost half of the lessons, both in Under-Fives and in Key Stage 1, teaching was good and in six per cent of lessons in lower Key Stage 1, teaching was very good or excellent.

*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**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Behaviour	Most pupils behave well and apply themselves conscientiously to their work, though a small minority sometimes behaves inappropriately.
Attendance	Satisfactory: most pupils attend school regularly and punctually. Absence is close to the national average.
Ethos*	The school has a positive ethos. There is a commitment to raising standards and to promoting pupils' self-esteem within a caring community.
Leadership and management	Good: the headteacher has a clear view of the way ahead and works hard to raise standards.
Curriculum	Sound: the curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced. A range of educational visits and extra-curricular activities enhances its relevance to the pupils.
Pupils with special educational needs	The school makes sound provision for these pupils. They make satisfactory progress towards their educational targets.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good overall: the school promotes pupils' cultural development particularly well.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory overall, although some curriculum areas, such as gymnastics and design and technology, are restricted by a shortage of resources.
Value for money	Satisfactory.

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

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

**What most parents like about the school**

- V. The school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school.
- VI. Parents find it easy to approach teachers with questions or problems to do with their children.
- VII. The school enables their children to achieve a good standard of work.
- VIII. The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children.
- IX. Their children like school.

**What some parents are not happy about**

- X. The way in which teachers use homework.
- XI. The lack of after school activities.
- XII. The way the school handles complaints.
- XIII. The information that parents receive about

Parents' responses to the questionnaire, at the parents' meeting and during the inspection were overwhelmingly supportive of the school and of the quality of education provided for their children. A very small number of parents expressed concern over some aspects of the school's work. The inspection supports the positive views of parents. Evidence gained from a wider sample of parents and during the inspection suggests that the headteacher and governors take complaints seriously and deal with them appropriately. However, a very small number of parents remain dissatisfied with aspects of this process. Inspectors find no cause for concern over the quality of information about pupils' progress. School reports contain appropriate information about what pupils know, understand and can do. They also contain targets to help pupils to improve aspects of their work or behaviour. Teachers welcome additional contacts with parents who require additional information and this further strengthens the process. The range of after-school activities is quite small, but typical of provision for pupils of this age. Where these involve larger numbers of pupils, as with concert rehearsals, they are undertaken with the full support of most parents. There are some inconsistencies in the use of homework, but overall, teachers' use of homework is constructive and contributes to pupils' attainments.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to raise standards of attainment and improve the quality of education provided, the governors, headteacher, and staff should:

a) Further improve teaching by:

- ) ensuring that pupils are given more opportunities to show initiative in planning and carrying out their work and to take responsibility by regulating their own behaviour;
- ) ensuring that all short-term planning identifies appropriate learning targets and teaching methods that actively involve pupils in their learning . (para 25, 30, 33, 64, 98, 102, 104, 106, 111 141. )

b) Improve curriculum planning by:

- ) up-dating or completing schemes of work for science, information technology, art, design and technology, history, geography and physical education ;\*
- ) ensuring that all schemes of work accurately reflect current practice and identify appropriate learning objectives to challenge pupils of different level attainment against which their progress can be assessed. (para 33, 39, 64, 116, 126, 128, 139, 141. )

c) Improve the management and development of the curriculum by:

- ) making provision for all curriculum co-ordinators to observe teaching and thereby monitor and evaluate the quality of

- ) using monitoring information to help in identifying priorities for the school development plan. (para 58, 68. )

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

<b>Area for development</b>	<b>Paragraph/s</b>
Emphasis on investigative work in science.	111.
Use of information technology throughout the curriculum.*	15, 91,103, 116.
Composing and playing music.	139.
Resources for gymnastics and design and technology.	18, 66, 127, 143.

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\*These issues are already included in the School Development Plan.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the school**

1. Birk Hill Infant School is situated on the edge of an extensive local authority housing estate on the outskirts of Eckington and close to the boundary with the open countryside. The immediate surroundings are quite attractive, comprising of extensive, pleasantly landscaped school grounds and a mixture of local authority and owner-occupied houses.
2. There are currently 148 pupils attending the main school. There are seven full-time equivalent teachers, including the headteacher. This gives an average class size of 25. There are places for a further 26 children in the morning and afternoon nursery sessions. These children are taught by a teacher and a qualified nursery nurse. Most of the pupils live in the area surrounding the school. They mainly come from homes on the nearby local authority housing estate, though an increasing number of families live in owner-occupied houses and private rented accommodation both within and beyond the immediate catchment area.
3. There is some unemployment in the area and a number of families experience a degree of socio-economic stress. Almost 12 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals; this is below the national average. A minority of pupils experiences some degree of difficulty with their learning. There are currently ten pupils (seven per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs. This is well below the national average for a school of this size. However, this number fluctuates considerably from year to year, with some year groups recently having almost 30 per cent of pupils on the register of special educational needs. Two per cent pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need; this is also below average. There are no pupils currently in school who are from ethnic minority groups or who speak English as an additional language.
4. The school admits children to the nursery class when they are three or four years old. This depends on parents' wishes and on the availability of places. There is a staged transfer to the reception class during the autumn and spring terms of each school year. At the time of the inspection, all children in nursery and reception classes were below statutory school age. There are six classes in the main Infant department; one reception class, two Year 1 classes, a mixed Year 1/2 and two Year 2 classes.
5. Since the last inspection, there has been a relatively high turnover of staff and the governors have made temporary arrangements to cover maternity leave and fluctuating pupil numbers. This has led to the reallocation of many management and curriculum responsibilities.
6. The school has a comprehensive list of aims. These include:
  - the provision of an environment in which each individual can develop to their full potential;
  - ensuring that children develop a positive attitude to school;
  - maintaining and raising standards;
  - the provision of a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum;
  - the provision of a happy safe and stimulating school, in which both parents and children feel welcomed and valued.
1. Current priorities include:
  - implementing the National Numeracy Strategy;
  - developing teachers' knowledge, confidence and expertise in information technology;
  - revising provision for children under five in the light of the move to a two point entry.

## 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	36	28	64

National Curriculum Test/Task		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
<b>Results</b>				
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	23	25	26
	Girls	26	24	27
	Total	49	49	53
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	77(90)	77(90)	83(92)
	National	82(77)	83(81)	86(84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	20	21	35
	Girls	24	20	28
	Total	44	41	63
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	69(93)	64(97)	98(97)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

### Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	5.6
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.1
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

### Exclusions

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

### Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	6
	Satisfactory or better	92
	Less than satisfactory	8

## PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

<sup>1</sup> Figures in parentheses refer to previous years' results

## · EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

### · Attainment and progress

1. Since the previous inspection, standards of attainment have improved significantly. This reflects in the year-on-year improvement in the results of National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments for seven-year-olds in the core subjects of reading, writing, mathematics and science between 1996 and 1998. The number of pupils that attains or exceeds the nationally expected standard in these subjects has risen steadily. When compared to schools nationally, 1998 results were above average in reading, writing and science and were average in mathematics. They were in line with standards found in similar schools, other than in writing where they were higher than comparable schools. There was, however, a marked dip in the results for 1999.
2. In most years, children's attainments on entry to the school are broadly average, with many showing above average skills in language and literacy. This was not the case for pupils who reached the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999. In this year group, almost 30 per cent of pupils had identified special educational needs. The majority of these pupils made satisfactory progress, with some attaining standards normally expected by the age of 7. However, many were unable to achieve nationally expected standards in National Curriculum tests. As a

result, the percentage of pupils in that particular year group that attained or exceeded nationally expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics fell below the national average and was well below that found in similar schools. These results do not, therefore, indicate a drop in standards. There has been no reduction in the school's provision or quality of teaching. This picture of low attainment is not supported by wider inspection evidence. The levels at which pupils are currently working and levels evident in their completed work indicate that the vast majority are on course to attain or exceed nationally expected standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

3. The school now analyses these results carefully and so effectively identifies the relative strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum. This information, along with other assessment data, is used in the setting of targets for individual pupils and in making planned changes to the content and organisation of the curriculum. These realistic targets, along with improvements in the overall quality of teaching, brought about by more frequent and rigorous monitoring and the successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and the Numeracy Strategy, are having a positive impact on overall standards of attainment. They ensure



that pupils of all levels attain appropriately high standards in core areas of the curriculum.

4. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is broadly average, although some children in more recent intake groups show levels of language development and literacy that are above those normally found in children of this age. Children under five make sound progress in most of the areas of learning. The majority attains many of the Desirable Learning Outcomes<sup>2</sup> by the age of five years old, though for younger or lower attaining pupils, this process continues throughout their time in the reception class. Higher attaining children begin working towards National Curriculum targets, particularly in English and mathematics. The staff in the nursery and in the reception classes place a considerable emphasis on developing children's language and literacy skills. Most quickly learn to listen attentively to adults when they give instructions or tell stories. They speak increasingly clearly and distinctly. They enjoy listening to stories and handle books carefully. Most recognise a number of common words and letter sounds on sight and, by the time that they are five years old, many are beginning to read and write their own names. Most

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<sup>2</sup> Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning on Entering Compulsory Education – SCAA / DfEE. These are goals for learning of children by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five. They mainly refer to literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills.

children recognise numbers, count effectively and use mathematical language appropriately in their play. Their knowledge and understanding of the world develops appropriately and they make satisfactory progress in their physical and creative development. Children make particularly good progress in their personal and social development. They establish good relationships with each other and with the adults working with them. Consequently, the children enjoy coming to school and this makes a significant contribution to the progress that they make. They become absorbed in activities planned for them and concentrate well. Most play happily with their classmates, taking turns and sharing toys and equipment.

5. By the age of seven, pupils' attainments in English are above average. Inspection evidence indicates strongly that 1998 standards have been maintained in Key Stage 1. The overall picture, therefore, is one of improving standards, brought about largely by the successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. The majority of pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress. The development of the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing receives significant

attention. From the early stages, teachers encourage children to talk about their work and to listen carefully to adults and to each other. This develops very well so that, by the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils express their views and opinions confidently, using an increasing range of appropriate vocabulary. Pupils throughout the key stage make good gains in the skills of reading. By the end of their time in school, most pupils enjoy reading for pleasure and read simple texts fluently and accurately. There are many planned opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in writing, so that many in Year 2 produce written work of a good standard. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their skills through work in other areas of the curriculum. For example, from the very beginning of Key Stage 1, pupils independently record almost all of their work in science. They seldom copy or use worksheets. This consistent, whole-school approach to recording in science, and in other subjects such as history and religious education, adds significantly to pupils' development and use of the skills of literacy.

6. Pupils' attainments in mathematics are in line with the national average by the end of the key stage and pupils of all levels of attainment make satisfactory progress. There are appropriate

opportunities for pupils to use and apply their understanding in mathematical games and this reinforces their learning, although there is scope for this to be extended through the curriculum as a whole. Their skills of quick mental calculation increase and many attain a secure grasp of number bonds and simple tables, so that they solve simple problems effectively. By the end of the key stage, most are secure with basic addition, and subtraction and are beginning to cope with multiplication and division. Their understanding of two and three-dimensional shapes, tables and charts develops appropriately.

7. Pupils' attainments in science are above the national average by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils of all levels of attainment make good progress as they move through the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils gain the basic skills of scientific enquiry. They use a range of simple apparatus sensibly and safely to carry out tests and investigations. They are beginning to predict outcomes based on their prior understanding and to consider the reasons for what has taken place. They achieve particularly good levels of knowledge and understanding related to life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes.
8. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainments in information technology are in line with national expectations. Pupils benefit from timetabled sessions, during which teachers introduce new skills or demonstrate new programs. This enables pupils to work more independently when computers are in use during other lessons. However, their progress varies from satisfactory to good as they move through the school. This results from variations in teachers' knowledge and understanding and from consequent variations in the extent to which they integrate the application of information technology into the curriculum as a whole. The school is aware of this and is planning further staff training in this area to coincide with the arrival of new computer equipment in January 2000.
9. By the time that they leave the school, pupils' attainments in religious education are above the standards set out in the locally Agreed Syllabus. They gain a thorough understanding of aspects of Christianity. They know about events in the life of Jesus. They know stories from both the Old and New Testaments and understand that these teach Christians how to live their lives. This promotes pupils' moral development effectively by dealing with issues such as charity, friendship, right and wrong. Pupils know about Christian festivals and how and why they are celebrated. Teaching about major world religions also receives appropriate emphasis and makes a significant contribution to pupils'

cultural development.

10. Most pupils make good progress in history. The school makes good use of its links with the community to produce an impressive range of artefacts and other resources. Educational visits and special events in school further enhance pupils' experience. These bring history to life and so improve the overall quality of teaching and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
11. In art, design and technology, geography, music and physical education, pupils make satisfactory progress overall, although there are areas of relative strength and weakness. In design and technology, teachers are beginning to emphasise the importance of the design process. However, overall progress is restricted by the school's narrow range of resources. Pupils' good progress in singing is a strength of the music curriculum. There are good opportunities for pupils to extend this by taking part in concerts, productions and choir activities, and some attain high personal standards. In physical education, pupils benefit from generally good facilities, but their progress in gymnastics is restricted by the lack of mats for use during floor and apparatus work in the school hall.
12. There are no significant differences in the attainment and progress of pupils of different gender or background. There are currently no pupils from different ethnic groups. The arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are appropriate and ensure that these pupils make satisfactory progress towards meeting targets in their individual education plans.
13. The school carries out a detailed analysis and interpretation of the data and results of its monitoring and assessment procedures. The headteacher and senior staff use this analysis as the basis for individual and whole school target setting. Targets are realistic and the school is on course to meet them and so this process contributes to raising standards of attainment.
20. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**
14. Children under five are happy to come to school and confident to leave parents. There is a sense of security in the nursery, where relationships are of a high standard. Children relate well to adults and to one another. This helps them to learn to share and take turns to a good extent. They follow instructions and behave well. They co-operate with adults and show consideration for others. Children choose

activities, showing a good sense of independence for their age. By the time they are in reception, they show an increasing ability to concentrate and persevere with given tasks. They respond well to the teacher's high expectations and co-operate well in large and small groups.

15. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have positive attitudes towards school, one another and their lessons. They readily share their interest and enjoyment in lessons, talking about their favourite activities with enthusiasm. They respond well to challenging questioning and interesting lessons, showing the confidence to express ideas and opinions. They settle to work readily and apply themselves with concentration, particularly when tasks are well matched to their interests and abilities. Pupils become absorbed and involved in their learning to a good extent. For example, they readily suspend disbelief in order to travel on a 'time machine' in Year 1. However, pupils soon become inattentive and restless at times when teachers do not hold their attention or directly tell them what they are to do.
16. Standards of behaviour in the school are good. Pupils behave well in the majority of lessons, enabling teachers to concentrate their efforts on teaching. In a small minority of lessons, there are instances of unsatisfactory behaviour. This occurs where the teacher has not yet formed satisfactory

relationships with the new class based on high expectations of behaviour and response. In assemblies, pupils enter and leave in an orderly way and pay attention to the teacher. However, they can sometimes become distracted and lack concentration when there is nothing specific to do. The routine of waiting calmly and patiently, even for a very short time, has not been established and, at times, this detracts from the reflective atmosphere that teachers try hard to promote. Pupils play well together at lunchtimes and breaks. They happily make orderly lines, for example, to wait their turn during games of hopscotch. They respond immediately and willingly to established procedures, such as lining up for assemblies and the end of playtime. Pupils are sensible and orderly as they move around the school. There have been no exclusions during the year preceding the inspection.

17. One of the characteristics of the school is the caring, supportive relationships evident amongst adults and between adults and pupils. Most of the staff, including lunchtime helpers and the caretaker, show friendliness and warmth towards pupils. The quality of these relationships is good. As a result, pupils are friendly and sociable and show care and concern towards one another. In many different areas of the curriculum, they co-operate well in pairs and

in groups and are willing to share equipment and books.

18. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. Through religious education lessons, history and stories, pupils demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of beliefs, attitudes and traditions. They give considered reasons, for example, why Guy Fawkes wanted to destroy the Houses of Parliament. During an assembly about sharing, younger pupils express their feelings openly. Pupils accept and understand sanctions, and have a strong sense of fairness and justice. They have a growing understanding of the actions and behaviour of others. Pupils tidy away equipment and books when asked to do so and look after their own belongings. They take seriously the responsibilities given to them, such as taking the message book round to teachers. However, most pupils are over-dependent upon their teachers to solve problems when difficulties arise. This is because they are seldom given the opportunity to make choices or show initiative in their work. They are used to being directed and so rarely initiate ideas or find solutions for themselves. This also lies behind pupils' unsettled response, as in assemblies, when nobody tells them exactly what to do.



25. **Attendance**

19. Attendance at the school is satisfactory, being above the 90 per cent threshold figure. Authorised absence is marginally above the national average for similar schools and is largely due to medical reasons and family holidays being taken in term time. Unauthorised absence is in line with the national average. There is no persistent lateness amongst pupils and no truancy. The school day commences and finishes on time and registration conforms to statutory requirements.

26. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

26. **Teaching**

20. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. The school has successfully maintained its quality of teaching since the last inspection, despite difficulties brought about by absence and a relatively high turnover of staff. In some respects, teaching has improved. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 92 per cent of the lessons inspected. In almost half of the lessons, the quality of teaching was good. In six per cent, it was very good or excellent. There were examples of good teaching throughout the school, although the very good and excellent teaching was located in one class in lower Key Stage 1. This contributes to the quality of education provided and to pupils' satisfactory attainment and progress. Many key roles and responsibilities have been redefined and newly appointed co-ordinators are beginning to influence work in their curriculum subjects. On-going initiatives relating to the content and organisation of the curriculum and also to the ways in which teachers plan and assess pupils' work are beginning to improve the overall quality of

teaching, though much still remains to be done in these areas. Whole school developments in the teaching of literacy and numeracy have led to greater consistency and a general improvement in these subjects. There is evidence of collaboration and the sharing of expertise and, as a result, the teachers work effectively together as a mutually supportive team.

21. The teaching of children under five in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory overall. Almost half of the lessons inspected in the nursery and in reception were good. The nursery provides a secure and happy introduction to children's learning, where teachers develop children's personal and social skills well. Relationships with parents and the community are of a high standard and contribute significantly to this aspect. These are established effectively through home visits, which form a positive start to a child's experience of school. Staff develop children's vocabulary well and provide very good models for spoken language. The quality of teachers' planning and organisation shows appropriate knowledge and understanding of the needs of the age group. The staff in the nursery work very well as a team. Teaching is most effective during direct, focused activities. However, learning objectives for children's independent play activities are not always clear and they sometimes lack purpose. There is good support from voluntary helpers who are used to good effect. There is good liaison between nursery and reception. This ensures sound continuity in teaching methods and teachers' expectations. It also helps teachers meet the developmental needs of the children appropriately and track them towards readiness for the National Curriculum. All adults effectively promote high standards of behaviour by their good example and high expectations.
22. The overall quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is sound. However, in almost half of the lessons, teaching was good and about one in twelve lessons were very good or excellent. Very good and excellent teaching was particularly apparent in Year 1. The teachers have sufficient knowledge to teach most subjects of the National Curriculum well. This aspect has improved with the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and reflects in the improving standards of attainment in core subjects of the curriculum. Some teachers have good subject knowledge and high levels of technical expertise in particular curriculum areas. This adds to the overall quality of teaching and results in consistently good standards in religious education, history and singing.
23. Most teachers manage their pupils effectively. This is a consistent strength of teaching throughout the school and results in a great majority of lessons that are well organised. Teachers use appropriate methods and make good use of time and resources so that teaching and learning proceed at a brisk pace. This motivates pupils and sustains their interest and so has a positive impact on their attainment and progress. Teachers have appropriately high expectations related to pupils' behaviour and response. They treat all pupils equally and most apply the school's discipline policies consistently. As a result, most pupils behave well in class and apply themselves conscientiously to their

work. Pupils are given some opportunities to develop a sense of responsibility. These include, returning the register to the office and taking the "message book" around to all classes each day. However, this is not a well-developed area of provision and there is a tendency on the part of teachers to over-direct their pupils. Whilst most pupils respond well to the challenge of lessons in which every minute is fully occupied, this tendency detracts from pupils' developing initiative and taking responsibility for directing their own work.

24. Teachers set most tasks at an appropriate level. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and is a contributory factor in the raising of pupils' attainments by the end of the key stage. Teachers increasingly use the end of lesson plenary session effectively to reinforce pupils understanding of key elements of the lesson. Good practice is beginning to spread from English and mathematics and is having a positive impact on pupils' learning in other subjects. There is some inconsistency in the way in which teachers use homework. Frequency and amounts set vary somewhat; in some cases, too little, in others, too much. However, most teachers use homework constructively, so that it makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers form very constructive relationships with their pupils and this, along with the pupils' predominantly positive attitudes and response, helps to create a positive atmosphere in which effective learning takes place.
25. Teachers' planning is thorough. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. In most lessons, teachers know what they expect their pupils to learn and there is usually appropriate provision for pupils of different attainment within the group. There is planning of this quality throughout the school, most consistently in English and mathematics lessons, where the school's literacy and numeracy strategies are having a beneficial effect on teachers' planning. Teachers are carrying out more frequent, on-going assessments, particularly in English, mathematics and science. These assessments are usually recorded and used as the basis for matching work to the prior attainments of different pupils in the class, enabling pupils of differing attainment to make satisfactory progress. There are good examples of teachers evaluating their lessons and noting pupils' progress. This information is used effectively to plan the next stage of learning. For example, work appropriately matched to prior attainment levels enables lower attaining groups to experience success and learn effectively.
26. However, this practice is not consistent throughout the school. At times, in a small minority of mathematics and English lessons, the work set for pupils is not closely linked to what pupils already know and understand. As a result, it is insufficiently challenging and this reduces the progress that pupils make. In addition, some short-term planning for individual lessons is not precise enough. Objectives identified in medium-term planning are too broad. They are not always carried through to short term planning in sufficient detail to meet the needs of all pupils or to ensure that the teacher is properly prepared, for example for practical component of a science lesson. These lessons are unsatisfactory. They lack direction and a clear sense of purpose or the teacher uses inappropriate teaching methods and organisation. As a result, attainment is low and pupils make insufficient progress. There are also subjects for which teachers currently have insufficient guidance to support their planning. This is the case, for example, in science, art, design and technology, and geography, where the planning for many individual lessons is sound, but where a lack of detailed schemes of work means that the overall coherence of planning is reduced. This slows the rate at which pupils gain skills and build upon them in a systematic way.
27. The school makes satisfactory arrangements for the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. The support that they receive from class teachers, the special educational needs co-

ordinator and the support assistants ensures their sound progress in most aspects of their work. Teachers successfully create an atmosphere of trust and encouragement and pupils with special educational needs readily participate in all aspects of school life. Individual education plans are prepared carefully, after appropriate consultation between teachers, parents and local education authority support staff. Teachers collaborate well with the special educational needs co-ordinator to match targets in individual education plans to the needs of each pupil. They usually reflect these targets in planning for lessons, especially in literacy and numeracy, and this promotes satisfactory improvement. The co-ordinator monitors the progress of pupils with special educational needs effectively. This information is used well to inform future planning and as a basis for the review meetings that are held in accordance with the special educational needs Code of Practice.<sup>3</sup>

34. **The curriculum and assessment**

28. The quality of the school's curriculum is satisfactory overall. It promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development appropriately and prepares them suitably for the next stage of their education.
29. In relation to the areas of learning for children under five, the Early Years curriculum is sound. There is an appropriate balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities in the nursery. The reception class is admitting much younger children than in the past and the teacher is learning to implement a less formal curriculum incorporating the recommended Desirable Outcomes for children's learning. This change in emphasis in the school's practice is appropriate, as it matches teaching more closely with the developmental needs of the children. It contributes well to their overall development and prepares them effectively for the subjects of the National Curriculum.
30. In Key Stage 1, the curriculum is sufficiently broad and incorporates all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious

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<sup>3</sup> Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

education. Following recommendations in the last inspection report, the school has made sure that an appropriate time is allowed to each curriculum subject. This has provided a better balance to the curriculum as a whole, with appropriate priority given to the core subjects of English and mathematics. Good cross-curricular links are made between subjects and there is a good range of visits to places of interest and visitors to the school. These increase pupils' interest and add to the quality of their learning. There is a suitable range of extra-curricular activities, including a school choir that sings regularly at local events and festivals of music to enrich pupils' experiences. The quality of the provision for the arts is satisfactory. Some teachers, who use mime and speech to good effect, successfully incorporate drama into the curriculum. Displays of work are of a good quality and celebrate the work of artists such as Van Gogh and O'Keefe. The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development effectively and provides pupils with appropriate insights into issues of health, safety and personal development.

31. The substantial majority of pupils have equal access to the full range of learning experiences available. Where pupils with statements of special educational needs are

regularly withdrawn from classes, their entitlement is sometimes compromised. However, the school is aware of this and tries to ensure that work undertaken complements that which is going on in the classroom. This usually, though not always, enables pupils from withdrawal groups to join in fully with subsequent activities.

32. The quality of curriculum planning has improved since the last inspection, with the introduction and successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. These initiatives are having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. There are appropriate policies in place for all subjects. Schemes of work have been produced for English, mathematics, religious education, and music and work is under way in science, history, geography and information technology. These revised and extended schemes are appropriately based on county and national formats and provide clear learning objectives based on the National Curriculum programmes of study. They provide effectively for pupils' learning to be continuous and allow teachers to build pupils' skills progressively in these subjects. However, there are still no detailed schemes of work for the foundation subjects of art, design and

technology and physical education. This leads to rather isolated units of work that do not build sufficiently on previous skills or knowledge to allow pupils to make good progress.

33. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory in the Early Years, with examples of good practice in Key Stage 1. There is a thorough and detailed policy, giving good guidance to staff. The school meets statutory requirements. It assesses children on entry to the nursery, again shortly after they move to the reception class. Teachers carry out standardised national tests and make careful ongoing assessments based on observations, discussion and looking at pupils' work. This wide and comprehensive range of records is kept in pupils' individual files. These provide a clear picture of pupils' personal development, attainment and progress across the curriculum. The headteacher and senior staff produce comparative data to recognise trends and charts pupils' progress from year to year.
34. Overall, the school has made good progress in addressing the key issue from the last inspection of developing systems for assessing pupils' achievements in order to identify their learning needs. The policy effectively establishes a planning cycle, informed by regular assessments. The use of assessment to inform planning is now satisfactory overall.

Assessment opportunities are identified in teachers' planning. These enable teachers to determine the extent to which individuals and groups of pupils have succeeded in relation to the key objectives for the lesson. In the core subjects of English and mathematics there is a thorough and comprehensive range of procedures and they are being developed effectively in the foundation subjects. The school uses assessment data to set realistic targets for all pupils in English, mathematics and science. These are reviewed each term on the basis of formal and on-going assessments. Teachers use the full range of information gained from the schools assessment procedures in all subjects to prepare detailed and informative reports to parents.

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

35. The school successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, through a range of activities, that reflect the values expressed in the school's aims and statements in the prospectus. These findings broadly reflect those of the last inspection.
36. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Through thoughtfully planned assemblies and acts of collective worship, pupils have regular opportunities to join in prayer and to sing hymns joyfully. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect, respond thoughtfully and develop self-knowledge. However, moments of quiet stillness are often too fleeting. Through religious education, pupils have well-planned opportunities to reflect on the beliefs and practices of Christianity and other major world faiths. Pupils' awareness of beauty and their sense of wonder are successfully promoted in subjects across the curriculum. Throughout the school, pupils' work in art and science frequently involves outdoor walks and close observation of plants and animals. These activities heighten pupils' appreciation of the natural world and so contribute effectively to the spiritual dimension of their learning.
37. Pupils' moral development is well promoted. School rules, based on common sense and safety, are kept to a minimum and members of staff are consistent in their approach. Pupils are also involved in drawing up their own classroom codes. From their earliest days in school, children are successfully made aware of what is expected of them and the difference



between right and wrong. Individual and class achievements and good behaviour are recognised and regularly celebrated at Friday's assembly. Worthwhile consideration is given to such moral issues as, 'helping' and 'being a neighbour', in assemblies, sometimes led by the local vicar. Much of the school's provision is embedded in the everyday life and teaching of the school. The headteacher and staff provide good role models and consistently treat pupils, other members of the school community, and each other, with respect.

38. Arrangements for promoting pupils' social development are good. Supportive and constructive relationships between pupils and teachers successfully promote pupils' self-esteem and a good quality of social interaction. Teachers successfully encourage their pupils to help each other and to work co-operatively in lessons; for example, Year 2 pupils collaborated effectively when working on paintings with a partner. Assemblies and class topics regularly focus on such themes as, 'fairness and sharing'. Pupils' social awareness and responsibility are promoted effectively through their activities in the local community. These include singing in the local residential homes, joining with the local secondary school at the annual carol services in the parish church and participating in the recently established Eckington Carnival. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the needs of others in the wider community and have supported a range of local, national and international causes, making donations to groups such as Sheffield Family Rescue, Help the Aged and a Romanian Orphanage.
39. Provision for the cultural dimension of pupils' learning is very good. Aspects of pupils' cultural development are promoted successfully across the curriculum, and particularly in religious education, history and art. Pupils learn about their cultural heritage through a range of activities, including visits to places of interest in the local town, participating in the county 'improving the arts' project and successfully competing in the annual music festival. Pupils also benefit from visits to school by drama groups and storytellers. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of other world cultures is very well promoted through assemblies, which recognise and celebrate significant events throughout the year, including Diwali and Chinese New Year. As part of their work in religious education, pupils participate in a wide range of carefully planned activities which successfully promote their learning about traditions associated with major world faiths, particularly Judaism and Islam.
40. Daily acts of collective worship are of a broadly Christian character and meet statutory requirements. They contribute effectively to the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils with special educational needs share the same provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as all pupils. They are enabled to participate fully in the spiritual and social life of the school.

47.

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

41. The school's provision for the support, guidance and welfare of its pupils is very good overall. The very good relationships between all members of the school community create an environment in which children feel happy and secure and which makes a positive contribution to learning. The overwhelming majority of parents agree that their children like coming to this school.
42. The procedures for monitoring pupils' academic and personal development are good. As a result, teachers know their pupils well and make appropriate arrangements for all aspects of their education and personal development. All children receive a valuable home visit by the Early Years staff prior to entering the nursery. Initial assessment of children's ability and personal characteristics is carried out both on entry to nursery and baseline assessment during the first term in the reception class. These, and on-going assessments, ensure that staff know when children are ready to begin the National

Curriculum. Word recognition and phonic skill tests are provided for all age groups. This enables teachers to track pupils' reading development carefully. Teachers maintain individual records of pupils' progress on a regular and systematic basis and use the outcomes to identify any personal difficulties and to establish the appropriate support needed as a result. Personal profiles are drawn up around targets, pupils' achievements and any concerns arising. Pupils with special educational needs are assessed regularly and the school prepares individual educational plans that promote satisfactory progress for these pupils. The school draws effectively upon the services of visiting specialists to supplement the work of its own staff and parents are consulted and involved at all stages.

43. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and behaviour are very good. The school's code of conduct is well known and pupils respond accordingly. Most classes discuss, agree and display their own list of supplementary class rules. This increases pupils' commitment to standards that they have agreed together. The rare instances of persistent inappropriate behaviour result in a discussion between the parents and the headteacher, who jointly agree the action to be taken. This procedure is usually successful in bringing about the desired improvements. Good behaviour is rewarded. This builds pupils' self-esteem and motivates them to behave well. The high standards of classroom behaviour eliminate the need for teachers to waste valuable time in establishing order and thus contribute positively to pupils' learning.
44. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting regular attendance are very good. Teachers enquire about any un-notified absence during registration periods and record any reasons given. The school secretary carries out a secondary check by inspecting registers and notifies the head teacher of any concern. The headteacher makes personal contact with parents when concerns arise. The school discourages holidays taken in term time and written application must be submitted to the headteacher before these are authorised. This successfully discourages parents' use of term time absences. Pupils with instances of unavoidable prolonged absence receive good support. They are given topic work to complete at home and parents are issued with relevant books additional sources of information. The negative impact of lost teaching time is reduced by this procedure.
45. Procedures for child protection and promoting children's wellbeing and health and safety are good. The school has clear policies and procedures for child protection. These conform to local authority recommendations and all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Fire drills are conducted regularly and fire protection equipment is tested annually. Large equipment for physical education is tested annually and brought up to standard, as required. The school has five qualified first aiders, who provide appropriate care for pupils when minor accidents occur. Sex, health and drugs awareness are introduced informally and through the content of the National Curriculum in science and the school uses sessions of personal and social education or circle time to develop pupils' learning further. Procedures for maintaining the security of the building have been improved since the previous inspection. The caring attitude shown by the school generates good pupil/teacher relationships and so effectively supports the teaching and learning process.
52. **Partnership with parents and the community**
46. The school's partnership with parents and the community is good. Parents receive regular, good quality information about their children's current work and about the life and activities of the school. This enables parents to contribute positively to their children's education, either by helping with school activities or by offering informed support in the home. Newsletters are informative and the prospectus is well documented. However, the

governing body's annual report requires review to ensure coverage of all information that is required. All parents have been issued with printed guidance on the literacy and numeracy initiatives, giving details of how they can help with their children's learning. New parents are invited to regular meetings to hear about the school and its work and the contribution they will be able to make. The response by parents, in providing a wealth of Victorian artefacts for this term's history topic, is an example of the very good support that they offer. Pupils' annual reports are detailed and parents feel that they show a true reflection of their children. All reports contain a section giving suggestions for extra parental support. The arrangement that offers parents admission into classes at the beginning and end of the school day to look at work and discuss any concerns with teachers is well appreciated, and is taken up by a significant number of parents. This adds considerably to parents on-going involvement

47. Parental involvement in children's learning, both in the home and in the school, is very good and enhances many aspects of their children's education. Parents feel welcome in school and are actively encouraged to participate in school life. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are consulted and are involved in the preparation of individual educational plans. Parent helpers are present in all age groups and give valuable and regular assistance to teachers. The parent/teacher association is a true partnership having representatives of parents, staff and the governing body within its membership. The group provides valuable assistance in the work of the school and in supplementing the school's budget by enthusiastic fund raising. The success of the group is witnessed by improvements to the library, information technology and nursery equipment and by environmental improvements to the school grounds. Parent governors play an active and effective role in overseeing and directing the work of the school. Parents run the school bank and generate additional income for the school.
  
48. The school has developed good links with the community to enrich pupils' learning. Links with public services, R.S.P.C.A., a local veterinary practice and the Post Office have resulted in valuable learning experiences and in financial support for the school. The school is also active in the life of the community. Pupils take part in the annual carnival and are contributing to the planning of a local regeneration initiative. The school choir performs ably in the church, in elderly persons' residential homes and in the market place, raising the school's profile in the community and creating a good reputation for its pupils and staff. A particularly productive link is formed by regular contact with the receiving secondary school. Pupils pay reciprocal visits and secondary pupils participate in joint activities, such as drama. The secondary school is a valuable source of learning resources, that help to make good shortages in the school's resources for subjects such as science. Pupils' participation in the activities of the school's community partners gives them an appreciation of the environment beyond the classroom and prepares them well for progress into adulthood.

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

55. **Leadership and management**

49. The leadership, management and administration of the school are good. There have been several improvements since the last inspection, notably in the areas of governor involvement, development planning and the monitoring of standards. The governing body and staff have responded positively to the last inspection. They are committed to the process of school development, so they are well placed to make further improvements. The school has clear educational aims, values and policies. These show a strong commitment to the provision of a high standard of education for all pupils, the raising of standards of attainment and the establishing good relationships and positive attitudes and values. These aims are widely shared by governors, staff and parents. As a result, the school has a strong and positive ethos, within which the caring for pupils and the raising of their self-esteem receives significant attention.
50. The headteacher has a positive view of the school within the context of the local community and is successful in developing a shared sense of purpose. The strong leadership provided by the headteacher gives clear direction to the work of the school. She works with energy and purpose and the standards which she sets are reflected in the quality of education provided. She is supported well by the deputy headteacher and staff, who work together as a cohesive team to fulfil the school's aims.
51. There are good arrangements for monitoring standards and quality in core areas of the school's work. The headteacher and deputy headteacher take leading roles in this by carrying out an analysis and interpretation of the data and results from the school's monitoring and assessment procedures. This analysis is systematically used as the basis for individual and whole-school target setting and has been successful in raising standards of attainment. Roles and responsibilities have been redefined in revised job descriptions and the headteacher ensures that these are properly fulfilled, by placing greater emphasis on monitoring standards and quality. She makes evaluative observations of teaching, visits all classrooms frequently and regularly teaches throughout the school. There are also appropriate arrangements, which allow the deputy headteacher and curriculum co-ordinator for English to be released from class to support this monitoring. Other curriculum co-ordinators are involved in the reviewing of planning. These arrangements work satisfactorily and, as a result, senior staff are well aware of the school's relative strengths and weaknesses in core areas of the curriculum. The headteacher uses the outcomes of the monitoring programme effectively to inform aspects of planning for school and staff development; for example, the school's response to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. However, there are weaknesses in the curriculum management process. These are caused because co-ordinators for subjects, other than English, mathematics and science, have insufficient opportunities to evaluate teaching and learning. This detracts from their ability to carry forward planned developments in the curriculum as a whole.
52. The management and organisation of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is sound. The special education needs co-ordinator, headteacher and special needs governor ensure that the school's policy and practice meet the requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice. The co-ordination and administration of procedures are appropriately thorough: pupils' assessments are recorded, individual education plans are kept up to date and pupils' progress is carefully monitored. The governing body successfully maintains an appropriate overview and active interest in this aspect of the school's work.
53. There have been recent improvements to the school development planning process. The Action Plan for

the school's response to the previous inspection addressed all areas of weakness highlighted in the inspection report. However, it was imprecise in identifying the steps that would result in successfully completed initiatives and was unrealistic in the timescales that it set. Consequently, as competing priorities have arisen, for example target setting and the implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Hours, the original Action Plan has been 'blown off course' leaving unfinished development tasks. The headteacher, senior management team and governors have already identified these weaknesses and now take a more rigorous and focused approach. The current school development plan is more detailed and thorough in setting out the school's agreed priorities and the headteacher ensures that the staff and governors are fully involved in the development process. Development initiatives are accurately costed and links are made to the school's delegated budget and additional grant funding through the development funding plan. This has the effect of turning good intentions into firm commitments. Governors and senior staff monitor all initiatives carefully against agreed success criteria and more realistic timescales. This is ensuring that most targets on the school's development agenda are now successfully met and that those responsible do not lose sight of the agreed priorities.

54. The governing body gives very good support to the management and all other aspects of the work of the school. The Chair of Governors and other members of the governing body visit regularly. There are frequently additional meetings of the full governing body and these ensure that all governors are fully involved in the decision making process. In addition, individual governors have responsibility for monitoring the school's introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and for overseeing other important aspects of the school's work, such as provision for pupils with special educational needs or issues relating to health and safety. They carry out these tasks conscientiously, in close collaboration with the school's nominated co-ordinators, and this serves to increase governors' awareness of and involvement in the on-going work of the school. Committees for Finance, Curriculum, Health and Safety/Buildings and Personnel have clear terms of reference and, as a result of their meetings, governors are fully involved in strategic planning and decision making in all major areas of the school's work. Statutory requirements are met fully.

61.

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

55. The adequacy of the school's staffing, accommodation and learning resources is satisfactory overall and effectively supports the education provided by the school. These findings reflect those of the last inspection.
56. There are sufficient teachers to match the numbers of pupils and they are suitably qualified to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. There are sufficient qualified staff to teach children under five in both the nursery and reception class. Throughout the school, there is a good balance of younger and more experienced staff. The range of expertise among the staff is effectively shared with colleagues both formally and informally and this strengthens aspects of planning. The support staff understand their roles clearly and this enables them to carry out their responsibilities satisfactorily. There are sufficient, appropriately experienced staff to assist in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. The good level of liaison between teaching and non-teaching staff successfully promotes the learning and progress of all pupils and effectively underpins the school's support for pupils with special educational needs. The school's clerical assistant is efficient and helpful. Her work in routine administration and in keeping open the channels of communication between teachers, parents and the local authority enables the teaching staff to concentrate on educational matters, though some aspects of the procedures for financial control are still undertaken by the headteacher. Other staff, including the caretaker and midday supervisors, are very

much part of the team and so add positively to the ethos of the school.

57. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are satisfactory. A successful induction and mentoring policy supports newly qualified teachers. Arrangements for the support and induction of supply staff are in place but are not yet fully implemented. As a result, teachers who are new to the school can face difficulties in meeting the school's normal expectations and practice, especially when guidance documentation in some areas is deficient. The school has a well-established appraisal scheme, which is well linked to staff development and the school development plan. This ensures that training initiatives meet the individual needs of staff and the corporate needs of the school.
58. The size of classrooms and hall allow for the effective delivery of the curriculum, but there is no spare space. In recent years, the roof and external cladding of the school have been replaced and an additional classroom has been added. The school is meticulously maintained and a programme of carpeting and other improvements to the fabric and décor is underway. These on-going improvements to the school buildings add to the quality of the school environment and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. In classrooms and corridors, stimulating displays of pupils' work celebrate achievements and positively promote pupils' self-esteem. The playground is adequate for the number of pupils. It is marked out for children's games and there is a well designed seating area. These facilities help to keep pupils happy and well occupied during break times and contribute to pupils' good behaviour. The nursery has an adjacent, secure outdoor play area and plans have been agreed for a similar area leading from the reception class. This is appropriate, as new transfer arrangements mean that there will be a greater number of children under five in the reception class and this level of provision will be required to meet their needs.
59. Resources are satisfactory overall. The nursery is sufficiently resourced with both indoor and outdoor equipment. English is appropriately resourced for the National Literacy Strategy. The current stock of books adequately supports work across the curriculum and presents appropriate images relating to gender, race and society. The National Numeracy Strategy is well supported by the good level of mathematics resources, which are well supplemented by equipment made by teachers. Science resources are satisfactory. The school makes effective use of the Library Loans Service and also borrows equipment from the local secondary school, with which it has good links. There are sufficient information technology

resources and pupils have good access to computers. Religious education resources have been built up and satisfactorily support the study of Christianity and other major world faiths. There are sufficient resources to support teaching and learning in art, history and music. Geography is adequately resourced overall, although the number of posters and maps is limited. There are sufficient resources to support physical education, with the exception of mats, which are inadequate. Design and technology resources are generally inadequate, and the school relies on parents to provide appropriate resources, as they are needed. However, there is a good level of construction equipment. A good range of visits and visitors successfully enrich the use of the resources within school, particularly in history, English, and a range of topic work. Also, in science, history and geography, the school makes appropriate use of the local environment to successfully support teaching and learning. The Library Loans Service is also well used for borrowing topic books and artefacts to support work.

**66. The efficiency of the school**

60. The school achieves a good level of efficiency in its financial procedures. This improves on the standards reported at the last inspection, as there have been improvements to the frequency and precision governors' monitoring of the school's budget. This means that

governors are able to make on-going decisions in the light of accurate and up-to-date financial information. Day-to-day administration and financial control are satisfactory. The school's clerical assistant carries out her role efficiently, though some aspects of budgetary control and monitoring are still carried out by the headteacher and this reduces her time for supporting teaching and learning.

61. Most aspects of the school's financial planning are detailed and thorough. The senior management team carries out the groundwork for each new budget. The Finance Committee examines each proposal in great detail, to ensure that initiatives are well conceived, are consistent with the school's priorities and are prudent, within the constraints of the budget as a whole. Final proposals go from the Finance Committee to the full governing body for further scrutiny and approval. This process successfully ensures governors' full participation in the school's financial planning. Governors receive detailed information about the budget at each governing body meeting. The Chair of Finance has analysed this and leads the discussion on any matters that arise, so that governors can monitor the progress of each budget effectively and make on-going decisions against a background of full information. Financial planning is forward looking and prudent. This benefits pupils by allowing the school to make plans beyond the current year and so provide funds for larger initiatives or meet rising costs. For example, in the current year, the school's expenditure is likely to exceed its income, but the budget will be balanced by funds carried forward from the preceding year. Governors are aware that this over-spend cannot continue and are already considering options that will reduce costs and ensure that the budget remains in balance in the year ahead. Money for subject areas is limited by overall budget constraints and, other than when English and mathematics have been high amongst the school's priorities, it is allocated on an 'ad hoc' basis. The lack of co-ordinator monitoring makes it difficult for governors to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of spending in these areas or to assign relative priorities. This is less efficient as it prevents co-ordinators and governors from planning for future expenditure and has contributed to shortfalls in resources; for example, in design and technology and in physical education.
62. The use of teaching and support staff is good. The headteacher regularly contributes to teaching and so effectively supports groups of pupils throughout the school. There is good use of staff expertise in music and this has a positive impact on standards of attainment, especially in singing. The funding for support staff is very high. This is an appropriate use of funds as their enthusiastic and committed work has a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning and their attitudes. Funding for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need is used well. They receive appropriate support, but because they are usually appropriately integrated into whole class activities, other pupils benefit from additional help and this improves their progress too.
63. Staff make good use of learning resources and accommodation. Displays are of high quality. Teachers ensure that classrooms, corridors and shared areas are bright and stimulating. Impressive displays of historical artefacts, multi-cultural artefacts and pupils' work add to the quality of the learning environment, stimulate pupils' interest and imagination and build pupils' self-esteem. Computers are in regular use by pupils. They are used appropriately to support pupils' learning across most subjects of the curriculum. Additional space in corridors is used to accommodate the school library and for the storage of books and other resources. These areas are also used for small group and individual teaching when this is appropriate. This flexible use of space allows teachers to organise teaching and learning so that it meets pupils' needs adding to the progress they make. The caretaker and cleaners carry out their responsibilities well. Classrooms, corridors and toilets are cleaned to a high standard. The grounds are almost completely litter free. This helps to reinforce the school's expectations and the standards that the school sets.



64. Taking into account the broadly average income that the school receives, the sound and sometimes good progress that most pupils make, their positive attitudes to learning and the quality of education that the school provides, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

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

65. Children enter the nursery from the age of three, attending either mornings or afternoon sessions of 26 children. A teacher and a nursery nurse care for children with the assistance of voluntary parent and student helpers. Children start full time school in the adjacent reception class in September or January of each school year, depending on when they will be five. They begin to follow an appropriate programme based on both the National Curriculum and the recommended Desirable Outcomes for Learning.
66. There is a wide range of attainment and experience when children start nursery at the age of three. Overall, attainment is in line with that expected of this age group. Most children's speaking and listening skills are well developed for their age and for some, personal and social skills are above average. This supports progress in other areas of learning. Provision and teaching for children under five is sound overall with good features in personal and social development and language and literacy. As a result, progress in these areas is good. It is satisfactory in all other areas of their learning. The majority of children are making sound progress towards the Desirable Learning Outcomes. By the time they are five years old, they reach the expected standards in all areas of learning and in personal

and social development and language and literacy many attain standards above those normally expected at this age.

### **Personal and social development**

67. Children make significant gains in their personal and social development in the nursery. Progress is good. They leave parents happily and soon become confident and secure in familiar routines, such as registration, drink time and outdoor play. Children relate well to teachers, adults and to one another and learn to share and take turns to a good extent. They follow instructions and behave well. Younger children are still learning to relate to others and, as is typical for the age group, usually choose to play alone. Most co-operate well when they say nursery rhymes together. They show good consideration of the feelings of others and make thoughtful remarks during well-chosen stories, such as the 'Rainbow Fish' told in assembly. With outdoor equipment, children learn to take turns and share wheeled toys. Children demonstrate their growing independence in dressing themselves and in personal hygiene when they prepare to go outside or in the hall.
68. By the time they are in the reception class, they show increasing ability to concentrate and persevere with given tasks. They are willing to take turns and many are able to negotiate the sharing of apparatus and equipment. Most children happily involve others in their

activities. They respond well to the teacher's high expectations and cooperate well in large and small groups. A small minority of children reacts in an immature way, expecting immediate gratification of their needs at the expense of others.

69. The quality of teaching of personal and social development is good. Adults establish good relationships in both nursery and reception. They effectively promote high standards of behaviour by their good example and high expectations. They are calm and friendly and treat children with respect, developing trust and confidence. As a result, children's behaviour and self-help skills develop at a good rate. There are frequent opportunities in the nursery for children to take responsibility for themselves, such as when they place their finished paintings on the drying rack themselves. They show increasing social skills and independence when they help themselves to a drink and apple and select their names to identify their place.

76. **Language and literacy**

70. Children in the nursery make good progress in speaking and listening. They listen attentively and enjoy stories and rhymes. Most make themselves clearly understood and express their thoughts confidently. They are eager to respond to questions from adults. Children often initiate conversations with adults or with one another using

well-constructed sentences and a reasonably wide vocabulary. In reading, children enjoy looking at familiar picture books, predicting what comes next and making exclamations of delight as they turn the pages. They are developing suitable pencil control when they trace patterns and draw pictures. A few are able to write their own names.

71. In reception, children concentrate for long periods of time during literacy sessions, enjoying their language work. They communicate their ideas with careful deliberation. Children enjoy sharing their chosen books and talking about the pictures. They are beginning to recognise initial letters, their own and others' names and the most able recognise some familiar words. They are beginning to copy words that are written for them and a few attempt some words independently. By the time they are five, most have reached the standard expected of children of this age and some, beyond.
72. The quality of teaching for language and literacy is good for all under-fives. Adults listen carefully to children and draw out responses through good use of praise and skilful questioning, giving them confidence to contribute. They encourage children to listen carefully and to concentrate on the books they are reading, developing good attitudes to literature. During a story about the three bears in the nursery, the nursery nurse encourages children to use their

imaginations to a good extent, providing reassurance to an anxious minority. She provides a very good role model for speaking and develops children's vocabulary well, being alert to opportunities to develop and extend pupils' spoken language. In the reception class, the teacher provides a variety of structured activities to systematically develop children's knowledge of letter sounds.

### **Mathematical development**

73. In mathematical development, children make satisfactory progress. In the nursery, children participate in number rhymes and games and by the time they leave, the majority has a secure knowledge of number symbols to five. Children are beginning to recognise simple shapes such as squares and circles. They count numbers on a dice and select the appropriate number of spiders during a game. They can sort objects according to colour and size. In the reception class, children have a wide variety of mathematical experiences. They continue to experience sorting and matching activities and many are able to recognise simple patterns and predict which shape or colour will come next in a given sequence. They begin to estimate and compare numbers, checking their guesses to understand the principle of 'more' and 'less'. The majority achieves the Desirable Learning Outcomes by

the time they are five.

74. Teaching of mathematical development is sound. Teachers in both the nursery and reception make good use of a suitable range of resources to promote understanding. Adults in the nursery develop children's counting skills and number language during table games and other activities, such as sand and water. This is not reinforced or extended sufficiently, however, through appropriate practical or play activities, where children can apply their learning to everyday situations. In reception, the teacher gives good demonstrations and questions children well to establish understanding of recognition of mathematical patterns. She keeps children clearly focused on mathematical learning and takes every opportunity to use number language.

#### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

75. Children make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They see living things grow and care for plants and animals. In both the nursery and reception, they explore the properties of a suitable range of materials, such as sand and water. The majority talk freely about their families and their homes and know the days of the week and when their birthdays will be. In reception, children use information technology to support their learning of shapes, sequences and language. They operate simple controls to create and develop patterns with

increasing fascination. Opportunities are provided for children to learn more about the area in which they live through local walks and visits to places of interest. They are likely to achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the time they are five.

76. Teaching is sound. There is a suitable range of interesting activities, based on a particular theme, to promote a growing awareness of the world in which children live. Teachers frequently engage children in purposeful conversation. Teachers and adults do not always take advantage of opportunities to add valuable first hand experiences as they arise. Some activities lack purpose and relevance and, as a result, children's progress is reduced.

### **Physical development**

77. Children in both the nursery and the reception class make sound progress in the physical area of learning. They show increasing confidence and control as they walk, run and pedal their wheeled toys at varying speeds around the nursery playground safely. They use their imagination when they climb and balance on a variety of suitable equipment and use building blocks creatively. Children have a growing awareness of space during their outdoor activities. There are sufficient opportunities to develop skill in handling a variety of small tools and equipment. Children use



crayons, scissors, glue spreaders and brushes appropriately. Most are able to cut along a given line appropriately. Their skills are further developed in reception, when children show good levels of control and co-ordination as they run forwards, backwards and sideways and stop and start on command. They show a good sense of balance during controlled apparatus work.

78. Teaching is satisfactory. In the nursery, there is a suitable range of equipment and apparatus. The teacher monitors the activities appropriately and makes effective use of a voluntary helper who makes purposeful interventions to develop and encourage improvement of physical skills. She also supports progress in language development and social skills. Teaching in reception is sound with clear learning objectives and good use of time and resources.

### **Creative development**

79. In the area of creative development, children make sound progress overall. In the nursery, children experiment with paint, crayons, paper and card as they paint, print and colour a suitable range of materials. They learn to mix colours when they paint freely at an easel and create their own spiders for display. They show enjoyment as they experiment with thick and thin paint. Children produce paintings and drawings based on their close observations of snails that are of a high standard. During whole

group sessions they join in singing rhymes and enjoy experimenting with percussion instruments. They enthusiastically participate in role-play activities, such as when they become absorbed in painting the outdoor shed and fence and talk on the telephone in the home area. In reception, some 'lose themselves' in imaginative play as they recreate domestic situations in the home corner. Most children achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the time they are five.

80. Adults provide good opportunities for children's creative development and teaching is satisfactory. When children paint, teachers give close guidance through careful planning and organisation of materials. Teachers often direct children to a particular outcome and limit the choice of materials to achieve a certain effect. This is suitably balanced by opportunities for free expression and imagination. Teaching is most effective when the teacher makes good use of a volunteer helper with natural expertise to encourage them to count and sing during outdoor activities.

87.

## **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **87. English**

81. In the 1998 National Curriculum tests, overall attainment in reading was above the national average and broadly in line with similar schools. Attainment in writing was above the national average and above average compared with similar schools. Pupils' average National Curriculum levels in the years from 1996-8 were consistently better than the national average. In the 1999 tests, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level, or above, in reading and writing was below the national average and well below average for similar schools. Inspection findings do not reflect the 1999 results in reading or

writing. Evidence indicates that the percentage of current Year 2 pupils attaining the expected level in both reading and writing is above average. In the last inspection, the substantial majority of pupils were found to be achieving standards that met national expectations.

82. The disappointing results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests can be attributed to the particular cohort of pupils in that Year 2 group. Almost 30 per cent of the pupils had special educational needs. The school identified the specific needs of pupils in the year group and responded appropriately, by streaming the age group for English and by directing specific classroom assistant support to the year group. These measures enabled most pupils to make sound progress in relation to the difficulties that they faced. However, despite quite intensive support, many pupils did not attain the nationally expected levels. This accounts for the apparent downturn in the school's results.
83. On entry to school, children's language and literacy skills are generally well developed. Pupils make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing in Key Stage 1. There are no significant differences in the progress of pupils of different background or ethnicity, nor of boys and girls over time. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is sound; pupils are well supported and make sound progress towards the targets identified in their individual education plans.
84. Pupils' developing literacy skills make a satisfactory contribution to their work in other curriculum areas; for example, pupils write careful accounts of their work in science and history. This work successfully enables pupils to practise and extend their writing skills. They transfer their speaking and listening skills satisfactorily to other areas of learning; for example, in religious education, pupils readily share their feelings about darkness and light. Pupils' handwriting and presentational skills are used appropriately in work for display. Some appropriate computer programs are being introduced to support literacy teaching but information technology is not currently widely used in the presentation of pupils' work in English.
85. Year 2 pupils listen attentively to stories told with animation by their teachers. They readily answer their teachers' well-targeted questions, displaying careful listening by their responses. They confidently explain their ideas in simple terms, with generally clear articulation and an appropriately wide vocabulary. In reading, most pupils attain the nationally expected level and a significant minority attains a higher level. By seven, most pupils read familiar, simple texts with accuracy and understanding. They use their increasing knowledge of phonics, as well as pictorial and contextual clues, to establish the meaning of new words, although a minority of pupils needs support in this. Some pupils develop their own interests in stories and favourite books and all have experience of both fiction and non-fiction texts. In writing, the majority of Year 2 pupils attain the level expected. Pupils write in both narrative and non-narrative styles and in a variety of formats, including letters, stories, poetry, book reviews and reports. Pupils have regular opportunities for extended writing. They often express a range of ideas, using varied and imaginative vocabulary with confidence. However, a minority of pupils displays inaccurate sentence structure and a lack of basic punctuation. Pupils' handwriting is accurately formed and most pupils write in a consistently joined script by the end of the key stage.
86. Pupils make sound progress in the development of their speaking and listening skills. They listen well in a range of situations and are particularly absorbed when listening to stories in lessons or assemblies. Throughout the key stage, they demonstrate attentive listening by joining in with repeated refrains and answering questions appropriately, during the introduction to the literacy hour. However, they rarely pose questions of their own. Although a small minority of the younger pupils use immature speech patterns and a limited vocabulary,

most are clearly understood as they talk about their work, for example, when painting and making 'wrapping paper' for their 'garden centre' role play area. Older pupils talk with interest and increasing clarity about the texts they share in the literacy hour. However, as pupils move through the key stage, they have few regular opportunities to address a range of audiences, other than in harvest festivals, Christmas concerts or reading aloud in assemblies.

87. Pupils make sound progress in the development of their reading skills, with some pupils making good progress. They are well supported at home and regularly take home books to share with their family. This has a positive impact on their progress. Pupils make good progress in extending their knowledge of phonics. However, they make slower progress in developing their ability to use their knowledge independently when approaching new words. Most pupils are reading books that are well matched to their attainment and read with increasing accuracy. Older pupils are developing sound skills in using given fiction and non-fiction texts to find the answers to questions. Pupils of all ages enjoy sharing books in the introduction to the literacy hour and also join in readily with small group reading activities with their teacher. All pupils have ready access to a satisfactory collection of sound quality fiction books and a selection of well chosen texts to support topics are displayed in classrooms. Also, all classes have regular timetabled library sessions and, as a result, pupils make steady progress in developing their library research skills. By the age of seven, and often younger, they use index and contents pages competently when locating information in non-fiction texts.
88. Pupils make satisfactory progress in writing throughout Key Stage 1. The youngest pupils begin to form letters correctly and from the early stages, there is an emphasis on pupils having ample opportunities to express their ideas in writing. Older pupils sequence their thoughts and are beginning to plan their writing effectively, as a means of organising and developing their ideas. Pupils make steady progress in learning to read and spell high frequency words and those relevant to their literacy and topic work. However, this is not always reflected in the standard of spelling used in their written work.
89. Pupils have a good attitude to learning. They are attentive and eager to participate when lessons are introduced. When given the opportunity to do so, most pupils readily explain the work they have achieved, in the plenary session of the literacy hour. The majority of pupils engage purposefully with their tasks, even when the teacher is focusing on another group. However, in some classes, when the teacher's expectations of pupils' involvement are insufficiently high, a significant minority of pupils quickly loses concentration when not directly engaged in an activity. This reduces the amount of progress that they make. Pupils take care with their handwriting and generally present their finished work neatly. The majority of pupils are well behaved; they respond positively to their teachers and co-operate effectively and sensibly when required to do so, as in group reading activities.
90. The quality of teaching is sound overall. In some lessons, teaching is good. In these sessions, teachers are specific about what they want pupils to learn, resources are very well selected and teaching points are made and reinforced in a lively way; as when Year 1 pupils considered different purposes of print, focusing particularly on a wide range of labels. Throughout the key stage, teachers have a high level of interest in their pupils' learning. Their subject knowledge is good and they often use questioning effectively to promote learning and check pupils' understanding. Well-planned opportunities successfully promote pupils' skills in extended, independent writing. Teachers respond to pupils' efforts with consistently supportive and encouraging direct feedback. This builds pupils' confidence and shows them how to improve their work. Work in books is carefully marked and regularly assessed and annotated. Teachers keep records of individual pupils' progress in language and literacy development. They use this

information appropriately to track progress and direct support. Regular homework satisfactorily promotes pupils' reading and spelling development. Support staff work closely with class teachers, are well deployed throughout the school in support of individuals and groups of pupils, and effectively promote pupils' learning. Well-planned visits to school by theatre groups and story tellers, initiatives such as World Book Day, Book Fairs and school concerts, with opportunities for pupils to perform dramatically, all successfully motivate pupils' interest and promote sound progress.

91. Teaching is less successful in one or two lessons when pupils are not sufficiently well managed and so detract from group discussions by persistently calling out. This reduces the progress that they make, particularly in the speaking and listening component of their work. Occasionally, when work is not well matched to pupils' prior attainment, tasks are insufficiently challenging and pupils are unable to make satisfactory progress. This was only the case in one lesson during the inspection and is not a weakness that is evident in the teaching of English as a whole, where the matching of work to pupils needs has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory overall.

98. **Mathematics**

92. Attainment in the 1998 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 was in line with the national average and with the performance of pupils from similar schools. An above average percentage of pupils reached the expected level for their age but fewer pupils reached the higher level 3. Results for 1999 are lower than the previous year's. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in the most recent tests is close to that found nationally, although the percentage reaching the higher level is well below average. This is largely explained by an increase in the numbers of pupils with special educational needs. Until this year, the trends over time have been for pupils to make satisfactory, even good progress overall, with the vast majority attaining the levels expected for their age. Inspection evidence shows that current Year 2 pupils are likely to maintain these standards of attainment by the end of the key stage.

93. In number work, most pupils have a secure knowledge of place value by the age of seven and accurately position beads on an abacus to represent numbers up to, and in many cases beyond 100. They see relationships and patterns in numbers and recognise odd and even numbers. Pupils can count confidently in twos and in tens and higher attaining pupils know that even numbers can be shared equally between two. They show a secure knowledge of number bonds up to twenty. They use these effectively in solving addition problems, although they are less secure with subtraction. Lower attaining pupils do not readily recall number facts accurately and are dependent upon concrete aids and adult support.

94. In shape and measure work, Year 2 pupils know faces, corners and sides of simple plane and solid shapes. They explore tessellation and symmetry and identify right angles. They draw and measure lines of a given length accurately and confidently use standard measures to weigh objects. Pupils apply their mathematical knowledge through work in other subjects. For example, they construct time lines and weigh out wartime rations of sweets in history and they record data about where they live and patterns of local traffic in a simple form in geography.

95. Pupils' progress is satisfactory overall. This includes pupils with special educational needs who are making sound progress towards their individual targets. In the reception class, older pupils count, sort and match and are able to accurately reproduce and predict patterns of colour, shape and number. They make sound progress and add to their understanding of number progressively, when they identify missing numbers in more complex patterns in Year 1. Occasionally, in the same year, pupils are given tasks

suitable for much younger pupils and progress in a very small minority of lessons is unsatisfactory. With increasing skill, pupils move on to using number lines to help them with addition and subtraction. By the time they reach Year 2, they gain confidence and higher attaining pupils round numbers up and down in order to accurately add and subtract larger numbers.

96. The school is currently making improvements in the provision for mathematics, but these have yet to become established and so are only just beginning to have an impact on standards. Through the school's response to the National Numeracy strategy and through improved planning, there is a greater emphasis, on enquiry and more open-ended investigations. These have yet to become an integral part of the curriculum. There is currently too little evidence of pupils asking questions, solving problems, making predictions and selecting and using equipment for themselves. This prevents pupils from showing initiative and independence in their work in mathematics and limits pupils' attainment and progress. There is satisfactory use of information technology to support pupils' understanding of data handling, although there is scope to extend this aspect of pupils' work as part of the planned information technology initiative.
97. Pupils' attitudes towards mathematics are good. They show genuine enjoyment and pleasure in the subject, which for many, is their favourite. Pupils are totally involved in whole class work in the majority of lessons and respond with enthusiasm. They are eager to answer questions and participate fully in number games, such as guessing numbers covered by 'bugs' in Year 1. In group work, pupils enjoy challenging activities, such as making up sums of money using the least number of coins. They show less enthusiasm for undemanding tasks, such as making lists of odd and even numbers and this sometimes results in inappropriate behaviour and a lack of interest. They are generally dependent on the direction from teachers or other adults and rarely show initiative or independence in their work. This means that pupils are easily distracted when not listening to specific instructions or information or carrying out specific tasks. Written work in books is well organised.
98. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In over a third of lessons teaching is good. It is unsatisfactory or poor in a very small minority of lessons. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is beginning to have a positive effect on the quality of teaching and on pupils' progress. Most lessons are well structured to allow time for mental and oral work as a class, individual work and a plenary session to reinforce new learning. Number language is developed effectively in most lessons, resulting in pupils having a good understanding of mathematical vocabulary. In lessons where teaching

is good, in both year groups, teachers have established good relationships with pupils, giving them confidence to contribute answers to good, open questions. This allows pupils to extend their thinking and so improves their progress. Teachers encourage pupils of all abilities to contribute. They provide a wide range of activities to motivate pupils, maintain their interest and reinforce clear learning objectives. In a mixed year group, the teacher makes good use of home made resources to effectively demonstrate counting on and back. Group tasks are planned to differentiate between pupils of differing abilities and in most lessons there is suitable challenge for higher attaining pupils, enabling them to make satisfactory progress. Teachers make appropriate use of experienced classroom assistants, who provide support and encouragement to pupils during group activities. There is some inconsistent practice in marking pupils' work. However, it is usually constructive and, at its best, in a Year 2 class, it is positive and encouraging. It challenges pupils to think for themselves by asking questions when mistakes are made.

99. Occasionally, group activities are not sufficiently linked to the main part of the lesson or matched accurately to pupils' previous learning and this

results in unsatisfactory progress. In a lesson where teaching was unsatisfactory, this resulted in insufficient challenge in the tasks and in a lack of interest and consequent inappropriate behaviour on the part of pupils. In an isolated poor lesson the teacher pitched the lesson at a very low level and was unsuccessful in gaining the attention of pupils or engaging them in the planned tasks.

106. **Science**

100. Pupils' attainments in science are above average by the end of Key Stage 1. In recent years, the percentage of seven year old pupils that attains or exceeds the nationally expected standard is greater than that found in schools nationally and greater than that found in similar schools. This is consistent with the results of the most recently published Teacher Assessments in 1999. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs make good progress. This is particularly apparent in the range and depth of knowledge and understanding that they gain about life processes and living things, materials and their properties and about physical processes.
101. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils gain satisfactory skills of scientific investigation. They respond to suggestions about how to find things out. They make observations of objects, events and living things, noticing similarities and differences. All pupils



show the ability to record their findings independently, and higher attaining pupils produce a good standard of writing as part of their work in science. This is a consistent strength of work in science that makes a significant contribution to pupils' developing literacy skills. Pupils gain and apply scientific skills through a range of appropriate practical, first-hand experiences, such as the mini-beast hunt, making re-cycled paper, planting seeds and charting the growth of sunflowers.

102. By the time that they are seven years old, most pupils show impressive levels of knowledge and understanding of other areas of science. They know that living things grow and reproduce and illustrate this by explaining how seeds grow into new plants or describing the life cycles of butterflies or worms. This forms a good basis for the elementary sex education that also forms part of the science curriculum. Pupils identify ways in which worms and other mini-beasts are suited to different habitats. They know the basic conditions that are essential for growth and development and apply this to changes in living things and to healthy eating in humans. Most pupils accurately describe the characteristics of different materials and explain how they are suited to different purposes. They know that materials such as wax

can be changed from solid to liquid by the effect of heat and that this change is reversible. They accurately name other materials that will react in the same way. Pupils describe how sound and light travel and in doing so use words such as 'vibrations', 'echo' and 'reflection' appropriately. A consistent strength of pupils' learning in science is that it is based on understanding at a conceptual level. This is illustrated by the fact that many pupils can apply their specific knowledge in order to make general statements or classifications. For example, pupils in Year 1 confidently classify sources of light as 'natural' or 'artificial' and higher attaining pupils explain why 'fire' could belong to either group. Similarly, pupils in Year 2 use their understanding of mini-beasts to classify creatures as insects.

103. Pupils' attitudes to science are generally good. Throughout the key stage, pupils respond well in science lessons. The majority listens well to their teachers and they are confident in offering suggestions and ideas, particularly in Year 2. Pupils are excited by their work. This is apparent when pupils in Year 2 gasp in amazement when a candle in a jar 'goes out' and in their enthusiasm to explain why this has happened. Most pupils settle quickly to their work, are well motivated and respond positively to praise. Pupils show interest when they talk about past work. Pupils co-operate effectively when working in groups, and most behave well. They take pride in their work; most recorded work is presented tidily and there are examples of good quality writing in pupils' recording in upper Key Stage 1.
104. The overall quality of teaching is good. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge. As a result, their explanations are clear and accurate and they use scientific terms appropriately. However, inaccuracies in the information given by the teacher were a contributory factor to unsatisfactory teaching in one lesson, as this undermined the basis of pupils' understanding. Teachers manage pupils effectively so that the majority of pupils behave well and apply themselves to their work. Pupils in Year 2 are excited by lighted candles, but the teacher successfully channels their excitement into well-focused observations and comments. Teachers' planning includes appropriate opportunities for

pupils to gain knowledge, understanding and skills in practical tasks and this reinforces pupils learning effectively. However, some of the impact is lost when teachers control these activities too tightly. There is scope for teachers to place greater emphasis on pupils planning and directing their own work, as this would give more opportunities for them to apply their scientific skills and develop independence in their response to tasks in the curriculum as a whole.

105. Where teaching is most effective, as in some classes in Year 1, planning is closely linked to on-going assessment and so tasks are matched to pupils' prior attainment. This ensures that all pupils in the class can succeed and make progress. Teachers make clear to pupils what the main aims are at the beginning of each lesson, and this enables pupils to have a clear focus on the objectives. Teaching features good use of questioning to encourage pupils to think carefully. This is a key strength that enables pupils to develop conceptual learning. Teachers effectively welcome and value pupils' ideas and suggestions whether or not they are scientifically accurate. This builds pupils' confidence and adds to the progress that they make. This is apparent when pupils are asked to explain the basis of their thinking about sources of light and how they should be classified. Most teachers use a good range of resources effectively, both to interest and motivate pupils and to extend pupils' investigative skills.

112. **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

112.

112. **Information Technology**

106. The standards of pupils' attainment are in line with national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understanding and use of computers develops appropriately. They use the mouse and keyboard competently and describe what they are doing. Pupils use word processing programs with confidence and perform simple on-screen editing to produce a satisfactory standard of finished work. Pupils enter information and store and retrieve data. They respond to signals and commands to make a picture and then select the correct options to print it. They know how to program the computerised robot. Pupils' competence in the use of other information and communication technology apparatus, such as listening centres, is satisfactory.

107. The progress of pupils of all abilities, including pupils with special educational needs, is satisfactory. Pupils make sound gains in the acquisition of computer skills and the knowledge and understanding of how to use the computer to good effect. Younger pupils in the reception and Year 1 are introduced to the basic computer skills of using the mouse and keyboard. By Year 2, pupils use the word processor and enter data into a simple information-handling program with increasing confidence. They use a graphics program as part of their work in art and begin to develop an understanding of control technology by programming the 'roamer' robot.

108. Pupils' attitudes to information technology are good. They enjoy working with computers and get a high degree of self-satisfaction and self-esteem from the results that they achieve. Pupils listen attentively to instructions and concentrate hard. They are reliable and responsible and their behaviour is good when working independently. Pupils work well together and communicate freely. They give each other constructive help that allows them to complete tasks successfully. This quality of response is an important contributory factor in securing satisfactory progress, as much information technology work runs alongside other classroom activities, with occasional input from the teacher or classroom assistant.

109. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Most teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject. They use this to good effect in the direct teaching of skills, when they present clear, authoritative

information and confident demonstrations that enhance the quality of pupils' learning. Where teachers are less confident, this reflects in the limited use of information technology as an aid to pupils' learning across the curriculum as a whole, though this is satisfactory overall. Information technology projects complement work in subjects such as English and mathematics, as pupils use the computer as a means of practising particular skills. Teachers plan effectively, choosing software and activities to support curriculum areas appropriately. Teachers organise and manage information technology activities well. They have clear expectations of pupils' capacity to work independently, yet give effective support when needed. Day-to-day assessment in information technology is too informal. The scheme of work for information technology is incomplete and there are no systems for assessing pupils' attainment in the medium and short term. This means that, at present, planning for information technology is largely related to coverage of the required curriculum rather than to pupils' prior attainment, and this limits the rate at which higher attaining pupils make progress.

110. The school is on the brink of a major development in the use of information technology in pupils' learning. The project has been carefully prepared by the headteacher and co-ordinator for information technology. It includes the acquisition of extensive additional hardware and software resources,

appropriate additional staff training in their use and the introduction of agreed procedures for assessing pupils' attainment. This initiative has the potential to add to the quality of teaching and so further improve pupils' attainments and progress in information technology and to benefit pupils' work across the curriculum as a whole.

117. **Religious Education**

111. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment exceeds the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. These findings mark an improvement since the last inspection, when attainment was found to be in line with expectations. Pupils know major feasts and seasons of the Christian calendar, including Christmas and Easter, and the significance of celebrations such as Harvest Festival. They know that the Bible is a special book for Christians. They are familiar with a number of Old Testament stories, such as the stories of Noah's Ark and Daniel in the Lion's Den. They recount events in the life of Jesus and are familiar with stories he told, for example The Good Samaritan. Pupils have a good level of knowledge for their age of major world religions, particularly Judaism and Islam.
112. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in learning about aspects of Christianity. The youngest pupils are introduced to simple artefacts and symbols of Christianity, such as the cross, candles and the Bible. Older pupils consider the importance of light to Christians. Throughout the key stage, pupils' understanding is promoted by well-

planned visits to the local chapel and the parish church. Pupils' knowledge of significant Christian celebrations is progressively built on as they move through the school. By the age of seven, they are familiar with detailed accounts of the events surrounding the birth of Jesus, aspects of his life as a teacher, his friends and the time leading up to and shortly after his death. In reception, pupils are introduced to quiet, thoughtful moments and throughout the key stage they reflect on a range of experiences and concepts.

113. By the end of the key stage, pupils sensitively discuss such moral and social issues as 'sharing', 'fairness' and the concept of 'charity'. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in learning of customs, traditions of worship and major festivals of world religions, that are given focus in school as they occur during the year. In the reception class, pupils are introduced to Diwali; in Year 1, pupils learn about Jewish feasts, such as the Passover; and in Year 2, they gain a more detailed knowledge of Muslim traditions, such as those surrounding Ramadan and Eid. There are no significant differences in the progress of pupils of different gender, ethnicity or background. Pupils with special educational needs are sensitively supported and make satisfactory progress in their learning.
114. Pupils respond positively to religious education. They show interest in the stories they hear and demonstrate careful listening by answering questions thoughtfully. They take care with the presentation of their work. They readily share their thoughts and feelings in discussion and respect each other's views. This effectively enhances the quality of relationships within the school and contributes effectively to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.
115. The quality of teaching overall is good. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding is sound. The newly developed scheme of work successfully guides teachers and long and medium term planning is good. However, occasionally in lesson planning the teacher is insufficiently specific about what she wants the pupils to learn in the course of the lesson. In consequence, teaching points lack sharp clarity and pupils' progress in that session is more limited. Teachers use questioning effectively to check pupils' understanding and knowledge. Pupils are well managed and positively encourage all pupils' contributions. Lessons are well organised. A particular strength in the teaching is the way a good range of resources are selected to motivate and interest pupils. This is effectively reinforced by imaginatively planned practical activities, such as 'building' a Jewish sukka shelter, in the role play area. Assemblies, sometimes led by the local vicar, stimulating displays and work across the curriculum, further enhance pupils' learning; for example, the reception pupils made sweets, plates to hold them and diva lamps as part of learning how Diwali is celebrated. The subject makes a very valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **Art**

116. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment is in line with expectations for their age and they make satisfactory progress in art throughout the key stage. These findings reflect those of the last inspection. Pupils' work in lessons and in carefully mounted displays throughout the school, shows a satisfactory range of two-dimensional work. This includes the use of various media, including pastels, chalk, charcoal and pencil. At the beginning of the key stage, pupils work effectively with powder paints, mixing to achieve particular colours and experimenting to achieve different effects; for example, smudging to produce the colour and texture of a pumpkin. Pupils develop their awareness of pattern, as when they represent the cross sections of a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, highlighting the patterns in these natural forms, using pastels on black paper.

117. Throughout the key stage, pupils produce close observational work, often in support of topic work, such as drawings and paintings of a snake and other creatures, when learning, 'All about Animals'. Pupils also have experience of three-dimensional work, for example, clay modelling of small lamps, linking with work in religious education. Opportunities are taken to compare art from other places and times, and pupils are introduced to a range of famous artists, including Monet, Van Gogh and Picasso. Older pupils thoughtfully interpreted the work of L. S. Lowry, producing busy townscapes in an appropriate range of muted colours. There are no significant differences in the progress of boys and girls of different ethnicity, background and prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs are appropriately encouraged and make progress in line with others in their classes.
118. Pupils enjoy art. They are attentive to their teachers and follow instructions carefully. They concentrate well and this is reflected in their attention to detail and in the quality of their finished work. They are keen to use the recently introduced art-based computer programs. Pupils are proud of their achievements. Older pupils in the key stage appraise their work thoughtfully and readily consider ways of improving it. Throughout the key stage, pupils work together co-operatively, using and sharing resources and equipment sensibly.
119. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the subject. Their planning includes appropriate provision for the teaching of skills, processes and techniques. However, subject documentation gives insufficient guidance to teachers to ensure that pupils' knowledge and understanding is progressively built on as they move through the key stage. Lessons are well organised and resources are appropriately prepared in advance. This allows teachers and pupils to make good use of the available time. Pupils' interest is successfully stimulated by teachers' careful linking of art to other areas of the curriculum; as when Year 2 pupils produced posters warning of the dangers of fireworks, which linked well with their study of the Gunpowder Plot in history. Teachers manage art lessons well. They encourage pupils' efforts and value their achievements. This helps to establish a purposeful environment, in which pupils focus well on the work in hand. Pupils are encouraged to work together collaboratively and to tidy up on completion of their work. Pupils' learning in art also successfully contributes to their broader spiritual, social and cultural development; for example, they observe with wonder the beauty of the natural world found in mini-beasts and plants.

## **Design and Technology**

120. By the time that pupils are seven, they attain appropriate standards for their age. Most pupils make satisfactory gains in the skills of designing and making as they move through the school. The design process is particularly well established and many pupils make good progress in this aspect of their work. However, whilst most pupils acquire an appropriate repertoire of making skills, their progress in this area is limited by the

lack of a scheme of work to support teachers' planning for the progressive development of skills and by the school's lack of resources for this area of the curriculum.

121. Pupils throughout the key stage use quite detailed drawings to show their design intentions and to record what they have made. By Year 2, these usually approximate well to the finished product. They design patterns for wall paper and borders and make simple posters. Pupils use an appropriate variety of construction apparatus to make simple models, such as those of imaginary houses and other buildings. They use malleable materials to make cakes and biscuits for the class 'Café'. They cut, shape and join paper and card effectively to make furniture for imaginary rooms or roundabouts, slides and swings for a model playground. They cut, shape and join felt to make representations of Jewish skullcaps.
122. Pupils respond well to the teaching of design and technology. They become absorbed in their projects and their work rate is high. They take care and show pride in the quality of their finished models. They are attentive when the teacher or classroom assistant offers advice and this adds to the progress that they make. They show appreciation of other pupils' work when this is shown during the plenary session.
123. The teaching of design and technology is good. Teachers' planning presents a good balance of designing and making activities, although there is scope for greater attention to the progression of skills. There are good links to other areas of the curriculum. This gives greater coherence to pupils learning and has a positive impact on pupils' progress. In one particularly successful lesson in Year 1, the teacher planned four different, but related tasks. These held pupils' interest and ensured that all were purposefully occupied throughout the session. They enabled pupils to learn or develop a range of appropriate skills. Throughout the lesson, there was a clear focus on the links between designing and making and this resulted in a standard of work that was high for pupils of that age.
130. **Geography**
124. No geography lessons were seen during the inspection. Evidence is taken from pupils' past work, planning documents and discussions with staff and pupils. This indicates that most pupils make satisfactory progress in pupils' knowledge and understanding of places, themes, geographical features and environments.
125. Pupils are developing an appropriate awareness of their immediate locality. They show interest in their environment and enjoy visits to local farms and places of interest. They learn their own and the school's addresses and post codes. They observe physical features of the surrounding area and present simple drawings, maps and plans neatly and carefully in folders showing pride in their work. These increase in complexity as pupils move through the school. Younger pupils follow their route to school and make block graphs of the streets in which they live. They make good progress when they go on to look at patterns of traffic and to ask and answer questions using the information on their graphs. Pupils place features on maps produced by teachers, including the countries of the British Isles. They are familiar with geographical terms and vocabulary and express their likes and dislikes about their environment appropriately. The majority of pupils knows the countries of the British Isles and identifies significant places, such as London and Eckington accurately on a map. By the time they leave school, pupils have a

growing knowledge of other countries through their study of North American Indians, for example. They compare the geographical features of far away places. They make little use of information technology to support and extend their learning.

126. There is insufficient evidence against which to make overall judgements about pupils' response or about the quality of teaching in geography. Those pupils who talked about their work showed interest in the subject and their completed work showed appropriate care in its presentation. Teachers assess pupils' work appropriately to check their factual knowledge.



## History

127. The school makes effective provision for history. Pupils make good progress and attain a high standard of knowledge and understanding for their age. Planning is topic based and linked closely to science and geography. This gives added coherence to pupils' learning. Teachers ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to develop a strong sense of the past through visits to places of interest, the examination of fascinating and varied artefacts and involvement in role-play and drama. Pupils carry out historical enquiry and begin to make deductions from original sources from the Victorian period of history. They have a growing understanding of what everyday life would be like in the past and compare it with their own lives. They know, for example, that washing the clothes would be hard work and that they would be unable to use a toaster a 100 years ago because there was no electricity. Pupils in Year 2 recall pertinent facts about significant people and events, such as the Gunpowder Plot. They use historical terms, such as past, present and future, appropriately when discussing historical events. In their books, pupils accurately record dates and events during the past century on a time line, developing a sense of chronology to a satisfactory level. Pupils write about aspects of World War II based on the first hand experiences of their grandparents and visitors to the school.
128. Pupils respond with interest and excitement to good demonstrations and enthusiastic, animated presentations of different periods of time. They look forward with eager anticipation to each activity. They enjoy participating in role-play and drama, when they are transported back in time, in their imaginations. They imagine how it would feel to be an evacuee. Pupils ask thoughtful questions and discuss reasons for the actions of people in the past, showing a growing understanding.
129. Teaching is good overall and on occasion, excellent. When a teacher in Year 1 takes pupils on a journey in a time machine, the experience is so striking that some pupils almost believe that they have been back in time. Teachers successfully bring the past to life by using a very good range of resources to interest pupils and arouse their curiosity. They encourage pupils to think for themselves by asking open questions. Teachers are skilled at story telling ensuring attentive pupils and good concentration. Good relationships give pupils confidence to make suggestions and comments about the use of objects, such as a stone hot water bottle or a toasting fork.

## Music

130. Pupils' attainment in music is appropriate for their age and most make satisfactory progress overall in Key Stage 1. These findings generally reflect those of the previous inspection. There are no significant differences in the progress of pupils of different gender, background or ethnicity. Pupils with special educational needs are sensitively supported and make satisfactory progress.
131. Pupils' singing is the strength of the music curriculum. They perform songs together well and tunefully sing a wide range of songs that they know by heart. They control their voices and sing with confidence, appropriate expression and understanding. They occasionally practise and perform songs in two parts. In other areas, pupils' knowledge and understanding is less well developed, though satisfactory overall. Pupils demonstrate an increasing awareness of pitch and dynamics as they move through the key stage. The youngest pupils learn to beat a steady pulse and in Years 1 and 2 they make satisfactory progress in clapping short musical patterns by ear.
132. Opportunities for using instruments are limited. In some classes, younger pupils successfully learn to identify a range of percussion instruments by the sound they make, but in other classes,

opportunities for learning to name and handle instruments appropriately are lost. This slows the rate at which pupils gain skills of composing and playing. Year 2 pupils satisfactorily used their voices and untuned percussion instruments to create the effect of fireworks, although many pupils demonstrate a lack of skill and control in using instruments. Overall, there is insufficient well-planned progression in the development of pupils' performing and composing skills, as they move through the school. Pupils have opportunities to listen to and appraise music and describe their responses thoughtfully. Music is played as pupils enter and leave assemblies and pupils of all ages have regular opportunities to listen to and enjoy these selected pieces of music. This music is usually carefully chosen to reflect the theme of the assembly, but it is not always clearly introduced and so opportunities are lost for raising pupils' awareness and developing their musical understanding further.

133. Pupils sing with vigour and particularly enjoy action songs. Their approach to making music is positive. However, although pupils are keen to participate in musical activities, their concentration wanes very quickly when they are not actively involved in singing or playing an instrument. In most instances, when their teachers request their attention pupils respond readily and behave sensibly. Pupils are well motivated and many Year 2 pupils are keen to be in the choir and participate enthusiastically in a range of activities in the community, which often involve giving up their free time to practise after school.
134. The quality of teaching throughout the school is satisfactory overall. Teaching in singing lessons is often good. Pupils' efforts are encouraged and praised. Songs are varied and selected for their relevance and appeal to appropriate age groups. The singing is accompanied in a lively way on the piano and lessons generally proceed at a brisk pace. This maintains pupils' interest and brings the best out in their performance. Subject documentation has been recently revised to provide greater guidance for teachers. However, there has been little time for its impact to be felt. Consequently, in class music lessons, teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are variable and at times the management of musical activities is insecure. Where teaching is most successful, expectations of pupils' attention and involvement is high and lessons provide activities which interest and motivate pupils, such as an instrument quiz in a Year 1 class. Teaching is less effective when pupils are given limited opportunities to select and arrange instruments and sounds for themselves, or to discuss and evaluate their work and how to improve it.

### **Physical Education**

135. The majority of pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress in physical education. Inspection evidence and teachers' planning for physical education indicate that all elements of the National Curriculum programmes of study for Key Stage 1 receive appropriate attention.
136. All pupils respond to their teachers' instructions quickly. They work safely individually, in pairs and in small groups. Pupils move in a variety of ways and this establishes an appropriate foundation for the development of gymnastic and expressive movement in Key Stage 2. Older pupils are confident and show increasing precision in their work. For example, they control their bodies well as they perform jumping, landing and rolling sequences. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils develop satisfactory co-ordination of hand and eye, so that they throw and catch with a reasonable degree of accuracy. They play small games and understand the importance of following rules. They transport and set up apparatus correctly. They use gymnastic apparatus safely and purposefully, although their development in this area is limited by the school's lack of mats for use during floor and apparatus work. They use space well and show appropriate control of movement and balance. Pupils seldom bump, trip or fall.

137. The majority of pupils respond well to the teaching of physical education. They enjoy their work and join in energetically. They are animated, yet give their attention promptly, when required to do so. This allows teachers to make the best use of available time. Most pupils listen carefully and respond well to suggestions given by the teachers. They participate enthusiastically but work with an appropriate degree of discipline and control. They rise to the challenge to work hard and to produce original solutions. This adds to the overall quality of pupils' work. They sustain their effort and concentration throughout the lesson. Pupils' behaviour is consistently good.
138. The teaching of physical education is generally sound. Pupils with special educational needs receive satisfactory support. This enables them to join in most activities and to make sound progress. Teachers' planning is generally sound. It identifies appropriate objectives, and when these are shared with pupils, they give a clear focus to teaching and learning that improves pupils' progress. Teachers give clear explanations and they monitor pupils' response carefully. This ensures that all pupils are able to work confidently and to make appropriate progress. Teachers' awareness of individual pupils is good. This results in good individual coaching that helps pupils improve aspects of their technique. Teachers manage their pupils effectively. Most have successfully established positive patterns of behaviour and response and they use an appropriate balance of praise and challenge. This allows the lesson to 'flow' and effectively maintains the pace of pupils' learning.

145.  
**DATA**

145. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

139. The inspection of Birk Hill Infant School took place between 1st and 4th November 1999 and was carried out by a team of four inspectors.

The evidence includes:

- the scrutiny of policies, planning, schemes of work and other documents relating to aspects of the school's work;
- the inspection of 52 lessons in part or full;
- the inspection of 4 assemblies;
- listening to the reading of a 10 per cent sample of pupils, selected by the school from each age group to represent the range of attainment within the school;
- the inspection of a 12 per cent sample of pupils' completed work, selected by teachers to represent the full range of attainment within the school;
- discussions with pupils in each year group about aspects of their work;
- discussions with the headteacher, governors and staff with management responsibilities;
- discussions with 15 parents prior to the inspection about arrangements made for the education of their children;
- the responses of 57 parents who returned the parents' questionnaire.

147. **DATA AND INDICATORS**

147. **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 – Y2	148	2	10	23
Nursery Unit	49	0	0	n/a

147.

**Teachers and classes**

147. **Qualified teachers (YR – Y2)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	21

147. **Education support staff (YR – Y2)**

Total number of education support staff:	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	62

147. **Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	49

147. **Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of education support staff:	1
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	32.5

**Average class size:** 25

147. **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998 / 99
	£
Total Income	306188.00
Total Expenditure	313784.00
Expenditure per pupil	1660.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	14956.00
Balance carried forward to next year	7360.00

147. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out: 155

Number of questionnaires returned: 58

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	36.3	60.3	1.7	0	1.7
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	62.1	36.2	0	0	1.7
The school handles complaints from parents well	27.8	57.4	11.1	3.7	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	19.2	71.9	5.3	1.8	1.8
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	26.8	62.5	5.4	3.6	1.7
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	33.2	59.3	5.6	0	1.9
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	24.1	50.0	20.4	3.7	1.8
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	26.4	54.7	13.2	3.8	1.9
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	46.5	44.6	7.1	0	1.8
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	30.9	60.0	5.5	1.8	1.8
My child(ren) like(s) school	56.1	42.1	1.8	0	0