

INSPECTION REPORT

Fenstanton and Hilton Primary School

Fenstanton
Cambridgeshire

LEA area : Cambridgeshire

Unique Reference Number : 110676

Headteacher : Mr J Pannell

Reporting inspector : Mr D Cann
20009

Dates of inspection : 8 – 11 November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707016

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school : Primary

Type of control : County

Age range of pupils : 4 - 11

Gender of pupils : Mixed

School address : School Lane
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Appropriate authority : Governing body

Name of chair of governors : Mr D Turner

Date of previous inspection : 18th – 22nd March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
D J Cann, Rgl	Art Physical education	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management Efficiency
G Smith, Lay Inspector	Equal opportunities	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staff, accommodation and resources
S Metcalfe	Under fives English Music Special educational needs	
L Lowery	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology	Curriculum and assessment
W Gale	Mathematics Religious education History Geography	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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What the school does well

By the age of eleven most pupils make good progress in mathematics and sound progress in English, science, information and communication technology and religious education.

- Children in reception receive a good start to their education and achieve the levels expected of them by the time they are five.
- The staff are committed and conscientious and the quality of teaching is good in a third of the lessons observed.
- The school benefits from the good leadership of the headteacher who is well supported by the governors and all members of staff.
- Pupils have good attitudes towards their work and behave well throughout the school. Relationships are friendly and enhance pupils' self-confidence.
- Teachers care for the pupils well and there is a good level of support and guidance. They promote pupils' understanding of moral values very successfully.
- The school has good accommodation which it uses very effectively to promote pupils' learning.
- There is a very good level of support for pupils with special educational needs.

• Where the school has weaknesses

Higher attainers are not sufficiently challenged especially in English and science at Key Stage 2.

- I. Pupils' speaking skills are not consistently developed through the school and especially at Key Stage 1.
- II. Lesson plans do not ensure that pupils make appropriate progress across all foundation subjects.

The school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses but the latter will form the basis of an action plan which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

• How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The roles of subject co-ordinators have been clearly defined and their involvement in curriculum planning is now well established. The curriculum has been thoroughly reviewed and identifies the skills to be taught in literacy and numeracy as well as other subjects. However, further refinement is needed to ensure that pupils of all abilities and ages are fully challenged. There has been a review of writing across the curriculum which has promoted pupils' skills well. There is a school policy on marking although it is not yet consistently implemented in all classes. The school evaluates its work effectively and has monitored teaching and learning to focus on appropriate classroom organisation. The school is in a sound position to make further improvements and meet its targets.

Standards in subjects

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

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools*
English	C	D
Mathematics	A	A
Science	C	D

Key	
<i>well above average</i>	A
<i>above average</i>	B
<i>average</i>	C
<i>below average</i>	D
<i>well below average</i>	E

*based on the number of pupils with free school meals

Children enter the school with skills which are broadly average overall although their skills in reading and speaking are often below those expected. By the time pupils reach five and seven years of age, they generally attain levels close to those expected in English and mathematics. By the age of seven, pupils attain levels in science, information and communication technology and religious education which are in line with those expected from similarly aged pupils. Inspection findings confirm that by the age of eleven pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in English and science and that pupils' attainment is higher in mathematics. In information and communication technology and religious education pupils attain levels which are in line with those expected from pupils of their age. Although the average attainment in English and science is lower than that achieved in schools with a similar number of free school meals, pupils' progress is broadly satisfactory. Average attainers and those with special educational needs make at least sound progress but higher attainers do not always progress well, especially at Key Stage 2.

• Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Good	Good	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Science		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information technology		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Of all the lessons observed, 99 per cent were judged satisfactory or better, 38 per cent were judged to be good or better and four per cent were judged to be very good. For pupils aged 5-7 years, half the teaching was judged to be good or better; for under fives, 29 per cent was judged to be good and for pupils aged 7-11 years, 36 per cent was judged to be good.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Pupils behave well in class and at play-times. They have positive attitudes to learning and most attend to their work well.
Attendance	Attendance and punctuality are good
Ethos*	There are good relationships and a purposeful atmosphere within the school which stimulates pupils' learning.
Leadership and management	The headteacher is very supportive of his staff and works closely with the governors to give the school clear direction.
Curriculum	The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils of all ages. Some teachers' planning does not ensure that pupils progress appropriately across all years. The use of assessment is generally good but is underdeveloped in non-core subjects.
Pupils with special educational needs	Well managed support for pupils helps them make good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	The school is good at developing pupils' appreciation of moral and social issues and satisfactorily develops their spiritual and cultural awareness.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The levels of teaching and support staff meet the needs of the pupils. The school has very good accommodation and good resources which are used effectively to promote pupils' learning.
Value for money	The school offers sound value for money

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

• The parents' views of the school

45 questionnaires (19 per cent of those distributed) were returned and 18 parents attended the parents' meeting.

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school • It keeps parents well informed about their children's progress • It encourages parents to play a part in the school • The staff are approachable • It promotes good standards of behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No aspects were highlighted as a

Inspectors support the views of the parents.

Key issues for action

In order to raise further the quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- I. develop ways of challenging higher attaining pupils to promote their progress in English and science at Key Stage 2;
(Paragraphs 8, 11, 16, 34, 104, 122)
- II. co-ordinate the development of pupils' vocabulary and raise their confidence to use it in all areas of the curriculum, especially at Key Stage 1;
(Paragraphs 32, 38, 39, 94, 97, 100)
- III. raise the effectiveness of teaching and improve lesson planning by:
 - IV. identifying exactly what skills and knowledge teachers want pupils to acquire in every lesson;
 - V. sharing and explaining learning objectives with pupils with a view to promoting their progress;
 - VI. defining assessment criteria precisely in order to measure pupils' progress more accurately.
(Paragraphs 40, 41, 47, 48, 49, 140, 141, 145, 150, 160, 165)

In addition the school should consider the following for inclusion in their development plans:

- VII. including subject action plans in the school development plan;
(Paragraph 68)
- VIII. providing time for co-ordinators to identify and exchange good teaching practice;
(Paragraph 69)
- IX. establishing longer-term development targets.
(Paragraph 68)

Introduction

Characteristics of the school

1. The school is situated in the village of Fenstanton, Cambridgeshire and the majority of pupils come from this and the neighbouring village of Hilton. There have been no significant changes in the characteristics of the school since the last inspection although numbers are slightly less. There are currently 259 pupils on roll (135 boys, 124 girls). Pupils are drawn from a range of backgrounds but socio-economic indicators for the area are generally above average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average at five per cent. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. However, there are 51 pupils on the school's register of pupils with special educational needs, seven of whom have statements.
2. The accommodation was constructed in the 1950s and has been extended to meet the school's needs of the curriculum. The headteacher is supported by a deputy headteacher and eight full-time qualified teachers. There are 14 part-time support staff and one administration officer.
3. The school's mission is to provide high quality teaching that will underpin the development of every child in the school. Its principal aims are: to promote caring, sensible and safe behaviour; to teach a well planned curriculum; to achieve high standards of pupil attainment; to provide a safe, secure, happy and stimulating environment.
4. The following have been identified by the school as areas for development:
 - to evaluate the school's performance against national and local indicators with a view to raising pupils' attainment;
 - to accelerate curriculum development including schemes of work in religious education and personal and social education;
 - to ensure subject co-ordinators monitor the planning in their subjects and identify the training needs for teachers;
 - to review the effectiveness of the subject-based timetable.
1. At the last inspection the following key issues were identified:
 - to continue the development of curriculum planning through: planning longer-term developments; the further involvement and clarification of the role of the subject co-ordinators; a review of writing opportunities both in and outside the topics; agreement about marking; a review of how and where skills are taught;
 - to continue to evaluate the work of the school through: monitoring teaching and learning, focusing on the appropriateness of classroom organisation for the needs and abilities of all pupils.

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	24	16	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	20	22	23
	Girls	14	14	11
	Total	34	36	34
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	85 (82)	90 (84)	85 (76)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	20	22	23
	Girls	13	13	14
	Total	33	35	37
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	83 (80)	87 (80)	93 (90)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

1

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

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	18	12	30

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	12	15	13
	Girls	10	12	10
	Total	22	27	23
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	73 (76)	90 (55)	77 (73)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	11	12	12
	Girls	10	9	9
	Total	21	21	21
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	70 (64)	70 (61)	70 (61)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	4.9
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.0
	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	4
Satisfactory or better	99
Less than satisfactory	1

" PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

" Attainment and progress

1. Pupils' attainment by the ages of seven and eleven are in line with national expectations in English, science and information and communication technology. In mathematics pupils attain the levels expected for their age at seven and levels above expectations by the age of eleven. Pupils attain the levels expected in the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. The school has maintained the sound levels reported at the last inspection.
2. Children's attainment on entry is broadly average but a number have below average skills in speaking and listening and in reading. By the age of five, children attain good levels in their personal and social development and their knowledge of language is satisfactory. They attain sound levels in early reading and writing but their speaking skills are not as well developed. In mathematics and their knowledge and understanding of the world pupils attain the expected levels. Pupils make sound progress in reception.
3. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national expectations in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils attain satisfactory levels in listening but levels which are below expectation in speaking. This is confirmed by the results of the 1999 tests and assessments and those from 1996-1998 where pupils' overall attainment is in line with national averages. In assessments, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is below average and their attainment in science is slightly above average. At the last inspection attainment was judged to be in line with national expectations in all subjects.
4. Pupils' attainment at Key Stage 2 is in line with national expectations in English and science. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is broadly in line with national expectations although they achieve above average levels in their work in number, shape and measuring. The inspection findings in English and science are in line with the results of tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999. In the mathematics tests, pupils attained levels which were well above the national average. Pupils of average and above average attainment within the 1999 cohort were well taught and a high number achieved levels above the nationally expected Level 4. In the period 1996 - 1998, pupils attained levels which were slightly above the national average in English and mathematics and in line with the national average in science. At the last inspection attainment was judged to be in line with national expectations in all subjects.
5. In comparing pupils' attainment with schools where there are a similar number of free school meals, the results of tests at the end of Key Stage 2 indicate that pupils' attainment in mathematics is above average. Extension activities given to pupils in mathematics have significantly promoted progress, especially of higher attaining pupils. Attainment in English and science is below average. The number of pupils attaining the expected levels is close to the average but the number of higher achieving pupils is significantly below average. However, the intake of pupils at the school is judged to be average despite the low proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.
6. Pupils' progress in English at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory in all aspects of the subject

except speaking. Their progress in reading is helped by their positive attitudes and most pupils develop appropriate skills. As writers they develop skills in writing reports, stories and poetry. They make good progress in their use of grammar and some successfully introduce direct speech into their writing. They learn to listen to instructions and stories.

However, in speaking, their vocabulary is not widely developed across all subjects and many still only communicate in incomplete phrases. The progress of older and higher attaining pupils is generally satisfactory and assisted by the setting of classes at Key Stage 1 in both literacy and numeracy.

7. Pupils' progress in English across Key Stage 2 is generally satisfactory but higher attainers do not make sufficient progress in their speaking and writing skills. Pupils' progress in reading is satisfactory overall. They read a broad range of texts which includes poetry, reports and plays. The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in writing at Key Stage 2 but older and higher attaining pupils do not develop appropriate skills in evaluating and redrafting their own work. They do not often revisit their work with the aim of improving structure and vocabulary. In speaking and listening, progress is satisfactory for the majority of pupils. They make good progress as listeners, being able to identify key points in discussions and using appropriate speaking skills to reply. However, pupils have insufficient structured opportunities to develop a breadth of vocabulary and employ it. Drama lessons are included in the timetable but there is no scheme of work to help teachers develop pupils' skills year by year.
13. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact upon attainment and progress. It is used effectively to widen the range of texts which pupils study and to expand their knowledge of different authors and of writing. However, the current allocation of time does not give pupils sufficient opportunities for extended writing. Targets for improvement have been set in English. Early indications are that while these are challenging, the school is in line to achieve the target of 86 per cent of pupils achieving Level 4 and above by year 2002.
8. Pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics at Key Stage 1. Assessments on entry to the key stage indicate that pupils achieve average levels. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and achieve the targets set for them in their individual educational plans. Higher attaining pupils progress well. Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 2, where the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive effect. Pupils make good progress in number and shape work. They have a good understanding of co-ordinates, symmetry and fractions and higher attainers use a number of strategies in their calculations. Pupils with special educational needs progress satisfactorily especially in recognising shapes and their properties.
9. Numeracy is well developed through the implementation of the Numeracy Strategy. Pupils are learning quicker methods of making mental calculations and are able to explain the techniques they have used. They are able to recognise increasingly sophisticated number patterns and the relationship between fractions. Teachers' planning is in line with the strategy and lessons have a good balance between whole class, group and individual work which is promoting pupils' progress.
10. Pupils make sound progress in science at Key Stage 1. They learn to follow instructions and carry out investigations and begin to think about whether their tests are fair. They start to record the results of their investigations using different simple methods. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils progress satisfactorily but progress within the key stage

is uneven. Not enough account is taken of the different ages and abilities of pupils within each class when planning the work. Consequently, higher attaining and older pupils often make less progress than they should since they do the same work as the rest of the class. Similarly pupils in Year 5 who are taught with Year 4 pupils do not have the same curriculum experience as those taught with Year 6 pupils.

11. In information and communication technology pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at both key stages. They make satisfactory progress. The range of opportunities for pupils to use computers in different subjects has been considerably increased since the last inspection and pupils have access to them on a regular basis.
12. In religious education pupils meet the levels expected in the locally agreed syllabus and make satisfactory progress. By the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils have an understanding of important days, such as birthdays and anniversaries. They know that harvest festivals are celebrations of the wonders of food, and that giving is important in Christianity. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can explain the main events of important Bible stories, for example the Creation, David and Goliath, and Moses and the Ten Commandments.
13. Pupils' progress in all other subject is at least in line with expectations although pupils' skills in design are not fully developed, especially at Key Stage 2. In art, at Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress and develop skills in a good range of media which they continue to extend satisfactorily through Key Stage 2. In design and technology pupils work with a range of materials but their ability to produce designs and diagrams is not well developed at Key Stage 2. In geography, history, music and physical education pupils make sound progress in both key stages. The rate of pupils' progress since the last inspection has been improved in art and design and technology but has slowed in music.
14. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when assisted by support staff and satisfactory progress overall. They achieve the targets set for them in their individual educational plans. Pupils focus on class activities with the emphasis on developing their linguistic, literacy and numeracy skills. They often use practical activities to reinforce learning carrying out tasks specifically prepared for them within the overall class task. Pupils listen with care and concentration to the teacher and other adults and perform tasks as asked. Pupils make good progress in listening to the shaping of words and using known vocabulary to construct new sentences and phrases. Pupils consolidate their listening skills in sharing a text, including observing stops, commas and other grammar markings such as speech and question marks. Pupils make significant progress in evaluating their own work, self correcting and developing their presentation skills. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

15. The previous inspection found pupils to be well behaved and to have positive attitudes to learning. This continues to be the case. Pupils are usually well motivated and they approach their work conscientiously.
16. All of the children in the reception class have experience of pre-school playgroups or nursery and, when they enter the early years class, they are enthusiastic and keen to enjoy new experiences. These children work well together and are able to share toys

amicably. They have good attitudes to learning. They listen carefully and wait for their turn to contribute, for example when they are acting out an elephant action rhyme during a music lesson. Their personal and social development is good, as is their behaviour.

17. Pupils' attitudes to their work are good at both Key Stages 1 and 2. Older pupils are usually willing to learn and apply themselves to their studies with high levels of motivation. Pupils with special educational needs work very productively, often in small groups, and the skill of their learning support assistants helps to ensure that they make good progress throughout the school. Boys and girls are equally enthusiastic and there is no significant difference in their attitudes to learning. Pupils enjoy practical activities, such as making water clocks or cooking. They appreciate one another's efforts; for example, during a drama movement lesson pupils spontaneously clapped other groups within the class as they moved from one 'freeze frame' to another. Occasionally, however, some of the older pupils can become lethargic and unresponsive. Although teachers work hard to motivate them, some pupils remain drowsy and are reluctant to contribute to class discussions.
18. Overall, the standard of behaviour is good. In many classes, pupils are bubbly and confident and all are usually interested in what is going on around them. Pupils are aware of the needs of others and are welcoming and friendly towards visitors. There is an air of close co-operation around the school and relationships are good. This helps to make the school a calm and pleasant place to be. When required to do so, pupils work well together both in pairs and in groups. They socialise well at lunch times and adults in school provide consistently good examples of how to behave. Pupils work well when unsupervised and approach staff with confidence to ask for help when necessary.
19. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory and they are willing to accept responsibility when opportunities occur. For example, older pupils volunteer to help younger ones on the school bus or during wet playtimes. Residential trips to outdoor activity centres or to Grafham Water encourage teamwork and provide very good opportunities for pupils to take on areas of responsibility. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the life of the community. Christmas and summer fairs are popular events and local senior citizens are invited to attend the Christmas production. Pupils raise funds for a range of local and national charities and this helps to develop an appreciation of the needs of others who may be less fortunate than themselves.
20. When pupils with special educational needs are supported within their classes or in withdrawal lessons they respond positively. They concentrate, listen carefully and take appropriate care of their presentation and quality of their work. Because of the support offered they are able to develop the personal skills of co-operative and collaborative learning. They share resources, take turns and value and respect the opinions of others. They are often keen to work and enjoy sessions. When working in a group, for instance when reading a shared text, they continue to follow the text and offer support to others reading even when it is not their turn to read. When unsupported in class some pupils become disheartened, uncertain about their tasks and insecure in their understanding of what they are to do. Those with emotional and behavioural needs are often unable to sustain concentration and are easily distracted by those round them, especially if the tasks set are not differentiated for their specific need.

Attendance

21. The previous inspection found attendance at this school to be very good. Since this

time, however, there has been a general increase in the national average, whereas school attendance has fallen slightly. Compared to the level typically found at other schools, however, overall attendance continues to be good. No unauthorised absences have been recorded over the school year.

22. When pupils are absent, it is usually because they have been ill or have been taken on term time holiday. There are no differences in attendance between pupils with special educational needs and that of their peers.
23. The majority of pupils arrive at school in good time and registration is quickly completed. Registration time is used constructively and the morning session gets off to a prompt start. Lessons and assemblies during the day usually start and end on time. This accurate time keeping helps pupils to make the most of their time at school and contributes to their positive attitudes to learning.
29. **Quality of education provided**

Teaching

24. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Of all the lessons observed, four per cent were judged to be very good, 35 per cent were judged to be good and 60 per cent were judged to be satisfactory. For pupils under five years of age, teaching was never less than satisfactory and 29 per cent of lessons were judged to be good. For pupils aged 5-7 years, half the teaching was judged to be good or better. For pupils aged 7-11 years, 36 per cent was judged to be good or better. The school has maintained the standards observed at the last inspection and addressed the inappropriate organisation of groups and activities. Overall planning has been improved but in individual lessons teachers do not always define learning objectives clearly enough.
25. Teachers clearly understand the curriculum for children under five and know how to use each opportunity to challenge children's knowledge and understanding. They extend children's skills effectively and give them confidence to investigate and explore the world around them. They have high expectations that the children will make progress and behave. Teachers' planning generally makes good use of comprehensive assessments. The assessments note whether children have finished tasks and the level of their understanding. There is an analysis of what the child has learned, what skills have been developed and what should be taught next to enable progress to continue. Both teachers of the under fives manage the children well. The children know the structures of working within their classrooms, the format for specific areas such as the technology and library areas and the links with health and safety that are built into the working practices.
26. In English lessons, teaching is satisfactory overall, with more good lessons observed at Key Stage 1 than at Key Stage 2. Teachers use the literacy strategy well in planning their lessons. In good lessons they establish a brisk and purposeful atmosphere and make the learning objectives clear to pupils. They differentiate the tasks for pupils of different abilities and generally provide activities which engage pupils' interest. Pupils with special educational needs are generally well supported in lessons and teachers make good use of the special needs support staff with whom they liaise closely. However, they do not always provide activities for higher attaining pupils which extend

their understanding. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and generally present this well. However, in some lessons teachers speak too quickly and do not place sufficient emphasis on the language which they want pupils to learn. Marking is inconsistent across the school and does not always indicate ways in which pupils can improve their work.

27. In mathematics, teaching is mainly good at both key stages. Teachers have a good understanding of the basic principles of the National Numeracy Strategy and planning is always in line with its recommendations. Lessons have a good balance between whole class, group and individual work. Teachers organise different tasks for pupils of different levels of attainment which usually provide an appropriate challenge for them. Classroom assistants support pupils with special educational needs well, recognising their weaknesses and reinforcing basic skills. Resources are allocated in advance, reducing the amount of time taken in starting activities. Teachers manage whole class sessions well and demonstrate and compare techniques clearly. Teachers ask good questions to enable pupils to demonstrate their knowledge and explore their understanding more deeply. Classroom management is generally good but in some lessons pupils are allowed to work too slowly and noisily, which reduces the amount of progress they make. Teachers are good at emphasising the correct mathematical terminology.
28. In science, the quality of teaching is sound overall at both key stages and many aspects of it are good. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they are well organised. Their relationships with pupils are good and they expect and obtain good behaviour. Their planning has improved since the last inspection and teachers now generally identify the learning objectives in each lesson and the assessment which should take place. However, they still do not take sufficient account of the different ages and abilities of pupils in the class, with the result that the work is often insufficiently challenging for the highest attainers. Teachers now use assessment well to measure pupils' progress, but have yet to make full use of the findings when planning future work. Most work is marked frequently but the quality of marking remains inconsistent and it does not always suggest ways of developing and improving work where it is necessary.
29. The teaching of information and communication technology across the school is effective. Teachers have a sound understanding of the subject and plan a broad range of activities which link well to the different subjects of the curriculum. Where support assistants and parents help pupils, they do so effectively ensuring that pupils are encouraged to become independent. Teachers ensure pupils have regular access to computers and at Key Stage 2 teachers make good use of the computer suite.
30. Teaching is satisfactory in religious education. Joint planning by class teachers supported by the subject co-ordinators results in a consistency of provision across classes. Good introductions are provided to each lesson. Teachers and classroom assistants work hard to support pupils, dividing their time well between pupils during group and individual work. Resources are prepared in advance and are ready for pupils' immediate use. Some imaginative activities are being developed to support the content of the curriculum. Subject knowledge is variable and some teachers are uncertain how to develop discussions about faith and belief, which can result in missed opportunities to help higher attaining pupils to develop a greater understanding of fundamental questions.
31. The main strengths of teaching arise from the good relationships which teachers have

with their pupils. They expect and obtain good behaviour in the majority of lessons and this creates a purposeful and supportive approach to learning. Teachers identify learning objectives well in subjects like English and mathematics and have a clear knowledge of the targets for learning in other subjects. Where teachers differentiate tasks for pupils of different abilities, they group pupils effectively to extend their learning. At Key Stage 1 the setting of pupils by year groups for literacy and numeracy has a beneficial effect on their learning. Teachers generally make good use of time and present lessons at a brisk pace. Joint planning across unit year groups is effective in ensuring a consistency of teaching.

32. The quality of questioning varies and is not always effective in developing pupils' speaking skills. In some English lessons teachers are good at questioning pupils about past work in order to recap on learning and to develop communication skills. In other lessons, teachers ask questions which only require one or two word answers. They do not ask for general comments and suggestions from the class in order to make pupils use their imagination and explain their ideas. In a drama lesson, there was no whole class discussion of the way pupils could approach the task set in order to develop their thinking and language. Pupils discussed the activities vigorously in groups but the opportunity to develop their vocabulary was missed. In physical education lessons, pupils are asked to observe one another but are not always required to offer comments or suggest ways of improvement.
33. Teachers make good use of appropriate technical terms in mathematics and science but pupils' vocabulary is not consistently developed across all subjects. Some good terms are introduced such as "optical mixing" in art but there is no co-ordinated programme for introducing new words to pupils and giving them the confidence to use them.
34. Teachers are well aware of what they want pupils to achieve during a sequence of lessons and include learning objectives in their planning. However, they do not always define the exact skills which they want pupils to acquire in individual lessons. Lessons are generally effective in promoting pupils' learning across a broad front but do not always focus on developing a precise skill or area of knowledge in order to ensure pupils progress session by session. Where teachers take the lead in planning a lesson for colleagues, this clarity is particularly important. Teachers include assessment intentions in their lesson plans but without an exact target these are sometimes inappropriate or difficult to measure. Teachers do not often spell out the lesson objective to pupils in a way which fully involves them in learning. Marking is still inconsistent and in subjects like English and science does not always indicate the way in which pupils can improve their work.
35. Teachers are good at preparing differentiated work for pupils of different attainment levels. However, extension work for higher attaining pupils often provides more work rather than more challenging work. Activities are not always prepared which help them to develop an insight into the subject and an understanding of underlying patterns. Limited use is made of information and communication technology to extend the learning of higher attainers.
36. Teaching is effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs. The special educational needs support staff have a secure knowledge of the curriculum. They have good knowledge of the pupils, their stages according to the Code of Practice and their

specific needs within that Code³. Teachers plan tasks that challenge and extend the skills of pupils and share that planning with support staff. Teachers use appropriate resources which meet pupils' individual needs. They generally have good behaviour strategies to encourage pupils to learn and make progress, but in some classes pupils are contained rather than challenged and extended. This applies especially to pupils with emotional or behavioural needs, particularly during work in foundation subjects.

42.

The curriculum and assessment

37. The school provides pupils with a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. It fully meets statutory requirements and reflects the aims of the school. Improvements since the last inspection have included reorganising the curriculum so that it is subject rather than topic based. Curriculum policies have been reviewed and rewritten to ensure that medium and short term plans specify the learning objectives. The roles of subject co-ordinators have been developed to allow them to monitor teaching and learning in their subjects. Opportunities to develop creative writing have been identified and new strategies for assessment have been introduced in all subjects.
38. There is a good programme of activities for children under five in the reception classes. It covers all the areas of learning outlined in national guidance. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the development of literacy and numeracy skills and their personal and social development. Appropriate emphasis is placed on English, mathematics and science throughout the school. The school has enhanced its computer resources and provided a computer suite for Key Stage 2 pupils. This has increased pupils' opportunities to carry out worthwhile activities and has developed their skills. Religious education is taught to all pupils and follows the local authority's agreed syllabus. The school is implementing the national strategies for literacy and numeracy well. This is having a positive impact on the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, not only in English and mathematics, but also in other subjects of the curriculum.
39. The curriculum is successful in promoting pupils' intellectual, spiritual and cultural development. It prepares them well for the next stage of education and for the responsibilities and opportunities of adult life. There is a good programme of personal, social and health education, including sex education. However, the current allocation of time in some class timetables restricts the development of pupils' skills in art, design and technology and physical education. Homework is being increasingly set and, at the end of Key Stage 2, this is preparing pupils for transfer to secondary schools. Full access to the curriculum is provided for all pupils and, where necessary, specialist support is provided for those pupils with special educational needs.
40. There is sound provision for extra-curricular activities. These include, at different times of the year, football, netball, badminton, chess, drama, poetry, art, recorder groups and a club which produces the annual school magazine on computer. Visitors to the school

³ Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education 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.

Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involve external specialists as well as staff within the school.

such as the mobile planetarium and visits to places of educational value such as Stibbington add a valuable dimension to pupils' learning experiences. The residential visit to Grafham Water Outdoor Pursuits Centre makes a positive contribution to the personal and social development and the sense of achievement in the oldest pupils.

41. Curriculum planning is satisfactory overall. There are useful policies for all subjects, either recently agreed or reviewed to ensure they remain up to date and relevant. Staff have worked hard to produce a curriculum map which ensures that all areas of the programmes of study for National Curriculum subjects are covered and that where there is appropriate repetition of content, it is at a higher level. The school is aware of the need to further refine this to ensure that it contains sufficient detail to ensure that pupils of different age groups in the same class are appropriately challenged. Medium term planning has improved and now identifies what pupils have to learn and some assessment opportunities. It successfully ensures that pupils in parallel classes share the same experiences. However, the school recognises that it must closely monitor the teaching of Year 5 pupils to ensure that there are no gaps for pupils in the different mixed age classes.
42. The quality of medium and short planning is variable. Some is very detailed and clearly shows that the work of pupils of different ages and abilities in the same classes will be different. Some is too general and it is not clear how the needs of all pupils will be met. The school has moved towards addressing this issue which was highlighted at the last inspection, but is not consistently successful in achieving this. The needs of the higher attainers are not being met in some classes. In English and some of the foundation subjects, pupils are not being challenged to explore patterns and language as deeply as they could. In mathematics there is more attention to the needs of the higher attainers and they were stimulated to achieve high results in the tests and assessments at Key Stage 2 in 1999. Planning for literacy and numeracy is generally good throughout the school and takes into account the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities in classes. Planning for information and communication technology is good and teachers give pupils different experiences linked to work in a broad range of subjects.
43. The school meets the statutory requirements for assessment. Systems have been introduced through a range of tests and tasks from entry into school to end of Key Stage 2. Baseline assessment is carried out on reception pupils and informs the planning of work for those children. The school regularly uses progress tests at Key Stage 2 and reading tests throughout the school. This enables them to track an individual's progress and to identify problems early. Optional assessment material is being used with Key Stage 2 pupils. In addition, the school now agrees key learning objectives for non-core subjects and pupils' achievement is measured against these, using an appropriate range of strategies, on a half-termly basis. Teachers keep careful records and are able to write well-informed comments on pupils' reports. Careful analysis of this data has enabled the school to set targets which are challenging but achievable. Information from assessment is being used effectively to 'set' pupils for work in literacy and numeracy. This ensures that pupils are broadly working at an appropriate level in these areas. However, the school has yet to make full use of its wealth of assessment data to ensure that the work planned for pupils of different abilities is well matched to their needs. The structure of planning half a term ahead does not encourage teachers to use informal assessment data to influence their plans over the short term.
44. Pupils with special educational needs have an equal opportunity to access the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early in their school

career and offered appropriate support from both the school staff and outside agencies as appropriate. They are supported with a challenging curriculum when withdrawn by the special educational needs teacher on a weekly basis. When in class, learning support assistants contribute effectively to learning. Pupils with special educational needs take part in the full range of extra-curricular activities in line with their particular interests. This gives them a particular opportunity to develop their social skills, especially when playing as a member of a group in a sporting or arts based activity. The assessment of the progress of pupils with special educational needs is recorded appropriately and matched to their individual education programmes and statements by the special educational needs teacher, class teachers and monitored by the special educational needs co-ordinator.

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

45. There are satisfactory arrangements for pupils' spiritual development. Most aspects of the school's collective worship policy are implemented in assemblies. There are clear moral and religious themes. Important Christian festivals are celebrated and significant dates, such as pupils' birthdays, are recognised. Brief periods are provided for reflection, thought and prayer, but these tend to be too short to allow pupils to develop a full appreciation of spirituality. During lessons in religious education and personal, social and health education, pupils are encouraged to discuss key elements of life, such as bereavement and suffering. Sometimes the more sophisticated opinions of older and higher attaining pupils are not explored in sufficient detail to benefit the whole class. The meaning of poems about the natural world and human experience are explored well in English lessons. Pupils' achievements are widely celebrated, in assemblies when certificates are awarded and at the end of lessons such as literacy and numeracy sessions. Interesting wall displays provide good examples of pupils' achievements. Pupils are encouraged to think of those less fortunate than themselves. The school has a good policy for raising money for charities, which places the emphasis on pupils' contributions and commitment.
46. There are good arrangements to promote pupils' moral development. The code of conduct is consistently implemented in all aspects of school life which positively encourages good behaviour. It is particularly in evidence when pupils are moving around the school and during lunchtimes, when they are sensible and show consideration to others. The code is discussed in assemblies at the beginning of each school year and is well developed into class rules. Pupils show a very good understanding of school rules and have a well developed sense of right and wrong. Lessons in religious education encourage the discussion of important moral issues, as when pupils consider stories such as 'The Good Samaritan'. Pupils discuss the seriousness of actions which harm others during lessons on personal and social education.
47. There are good arrangements to promote pupils' social development. Teachers' lesson planning includes a clear focus on group and paired work. Pupils are encouraged to share resources and co-operate in role-play activities. Pupil-organised team games are much in evidence in the playground and friendly competition often occurs throughout the school. All pupils are required to contribute to the organisation of rooms and equipment, and take responsibility for tidying up at the end of lessons. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions, and higher attainers often help others in mixed ability groupings. When reading stories and in personal and social education lessons, there are good opportunities to discuss how individuals can work together to bring about

improvements, such as in making effective contributions to protecting the environment.

48. The arrangements for pupils' cultural development are satisfactory. The school has good arrangements to promote an understanding of local culture. The importance of looking after villages is emphasised regularly and pupils have a good understanding of their local area, its facilities and lifestyles. There are frequent visits to sites of interest, including Stibbington, Grafham Water and Kentwell Hall, which enable pupils to gain a broader awareness of their local heritage. The art work on display and the music used in assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to gain an appreciation of the culture of the British Isles and Western Europe. Pupils' awareness of Asian and African cultures is less well developed. In geography, where pupils study Kenya and St Lucia and in art, where African masks have been made, there is clear planning for multi-cultural understanding. In religious education, pupils are given a basic understanding of the main world religions, but across the school there is a lack of consistent planning to extend multi-cultural understanding.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

49. The previous inspection found that this school provided effective support and guidance for its pupils and this continues to be the case.
50. Teachers and support staff work very well together as a team and parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting spoke favourably about the way in which their children are looked after during the school day. There are good links with pre-school provision and considerable care is taken with children under five. Members of staff help young children to become accustomed to school routines. The young children quickly feel happy and secure and develop a positive approach to school. This helps them to make steady progress in all areas of learning.
51. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are satisfactory overall. The school uses a range of assessment procedures but the extent to which these are used when deciding what individual pupils will do next is variable. In particular, this affects the work that is provided for the higher attaining pupils. There are, however, good procedures for the early identification of pupils who may need additional support with their learning. Good teamwork between class teachers, other classroom and learning support staff ensures that pupils with special educational needs receive high quality personal and academic guidance. The level of support given to individuals and small groups of pupils is particularly good. Within reception, detailed records of each child's baseline and subsequent achievements are maintained and this information helps teachers to track the progress made during their first year in school.
52. Procedures for monitoring older pupils' personal development are informal but effective. There are good links with a range of social, educational and health professionals. Pupils' annual reports include a section which relates to their attitude to work and personal achievement and this gives parents a good indication of the way in which their child is developing.
53. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are simple, but effective. Class teachers reward good work or effort with praise or through the award of merit marks. There is close liaison between teachers and all members of staff, including mid-day supervisors and school bus escorts. This means that behaviour is managed very consistently throughout the school day. Attendance is effectively monitored and promoted.

54. Procedures for child protection and health and safety are good and statutory requirements are met. The special educational needs staff offer particular support to pupils before their transfer to the next stage of their education. The special educational needs co-ordinator ensures that a final annual review of their statements and individual educational plans occurs before transfer and that the new documentation goes with them into the next stage. He makes contact with the next school and has meetings to discuss pupils' specific needs and learning plans. The school support service is also aware of the forthcoming transfer and works to ensure continuity of support.

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

55. The school works effectively with parents. They, in turn, indicate that they are satisfied with all aspects of the school's provision.

56. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory overall. The school prospectus and governors' annual report make interesting reading, but do not contain all the information which is statutorily required. On the other hand, regular newsletters are provided and these help to keep parents fully up to date. Termly consultation evenings are well attended. Pupils' annual reports are very informative and provide parents with a good idea of how their child is getting on. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved at all stages of identification and support. Their attendance at the termly and annual reviews is very good and close links with external agencies help to underpin the high quality provision for pupils with special educational needs.

57. The extent to which parents are involved with their child's learning is satisfactory. Several are able to offer voluntary help during the school day and good use is made of their talents. Parents regularly hear their children read and the home/school diary constitutes a valuable channel of communication. The school has recently canvassed parents' opinions on the level of homework set and a very clear policy has recently been introduced. The parent-teacher association is active and funds raised have been used to enhance the learning environment by, for example, providing well decorated and designed areas for cooking and equipment for the fun fitness trail.

58. The school receives good financial and moral support from the local community. The summer and Christmas fairs are very well attended and significant sums of money are raised. The local vicar regularly leads assemblies and the school is rented out to various groups during the evening. A range of visitors comes to the school, for example St John's Ambulance and representatives from the police and fire service. These links enrich the curriculum and make a satisfactory contribution to the quality of education provided.

59. The school maintains close contact with the parents of pupils on the special educational needs register in reviewing their children's progress. Parents are invited to contribute to the preparation of individual educational plans and are actively involved from Stage 2 onwards. The school readily makes appointments for parents with health and other officials and members of the school support service attend review meetings if the parents so wish.

65. **The management and efficiency of the school**

65. **Leadership and management**

60. Good leadership by the headteacher, the newly appointed deputy headteacher and the governors provides the school with clear educational direction. At the last inspection, the headteacher provided strong and sensitive leadership and was well supported by governors and the senior management team. This has been successfully maintained through a period of extensive staff change which has included the illness and retirement of the previous deputy headteacher.
61. Following the last inspection the school redefined the roles of the subject co-ordinators in order to facilitate the process of curriculum development. Teaching through cross-curricular topics has been replaced by subject-based teaching. This has improved pupils' progress in a number of areas, especially in literacy and numeracy. Curriculum management has been improved by appointing co-ordinators and 'shadows' for every subject who work together effectively. All policies have been reviewed and while the progress on developing schemes of work varies from subject to subject, it is mainly satisfactory. Several changes in teaching staff since the last inspection have necessitated the redeployment of staff. However, current responsibilities are evenly distributed and appropriate to teachers' skills.
62. The headteacher and staff have created a purposeful atmosphere which stimulates pupils' learning. The school has a commitment to high attainment and this is clearly included in its aims, policies and plans for the future. The school's aims have been the subject of recent re-evaluation by staff and governors. This has led to a clearer definition of the school's objectives and to setting appropriate targets within the school development plan. The plan is prepared after discussion with staff and governors and is a valuable tool for school improvement. It is generally well constructed and identifies timings, the staff responsible, cost implications and criteria by which to assess success. The plan concentrates on developments in the core subjects and does not detail the programmes agreed for foundation subjects which devalues the work being done in these areas. In addition, the plan does not specify opportunities to review how successfully new initiatives have been implemented over a period longer than six months. These and other longer term objectives are not included in order that the school identifies where it would like to be in a few years' time.
63. Monitoring of teaching has been carried out by the headteacher as part of the appraisal system. This has been successful in raising professional standards and identifying the development needs of individual teachers. Areas identified in teacher interviews have been effectively incorporated into the in-service training programme for the school. Time has been allocated to teachers with particular subject responsibilities to enable them to carry out agreed monitoring tasks on resources and planning. However, the school does not have a regular programme to promote the exchange of good practice between teachers.
64. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and have a well developed committee structure. Meetings are regularly held and decisions properly minuted. Governors keep themselves well informed of events in the school and maintain informal contact with the headteacher and staff. All governors attend induction training and courses to keep them informed of their duties.
65. The headteacher very effectively co-ordinates the school's special educational needs provision. The special educational needs policy is in place and is subject to frequent

review which ensures that it matches the requirements of the Code of Practice. The special educational needs co-ordinator checks pupils' individual educational plans, which are realistic, attainable and regularly reviewed. They address pupils' needs in English and mathematics as well as their personal development, behaviour and physical development. The special educational needs co-ordinator supervises and monitors the work of the staff assigned to pupils with special educational needs. He monitors the use of resources, the timetabling of pupils' withdrawal sessions and links the work of the school with the support service and other outside agencies. There are regular reviews for pupils with statements of special educational need as well as reviews for all pupils who have an individual educational plan. The special educational needs co-ordinator is available to other teaching colleagues with advice and suggestions for the curriculum and development within their classes to ensure that pupils are appropriately supported when in class.

71. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

66. The school has sufficient experienced and appropriately qualified teachers to enable the National Curriculum to be delivered effectively. Since the previous inspection, there have been several changes of staff and almost half the classroom-based teachers have joined the school over this period.
67. There is a good mix of relatively newly qualified and very experienced teachers. There is a good number of non-teaching assistants who are suitably experienced and very well trained. They provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs. Relationships within the school are good and, by working closely and very co-operatively, the staff forms a very good team. There are thorough procedures for the induction of new members of staff and arrangements for appraisal meet statutory requirements. Professional development is well funded and all members of staff benefit from a wide range of courses available. The school secretary and headteacher work well together to ensure that the school's day to day systems work smoothly.
68. The overall quality of the accommodation is very good. Classrooms are large enough for the number of pupils on roll and many open onto the large central open plan area. This area is very well used for individual support and small group work and its design includes a very useful area for design and technology. In addition, funds raised by the parent- teacher association have helped to create a computer suite and a newly installed area for cooking. School grounds are spacious and include wild life and conservation areas. The above ground swimming pool provides a useful resource during the summer months although the older pupils use the leisure centre in St Ives. There is, however, no external play area for the under fives. The caretaker takes great pride in the appearance of the school and its grounds. The school is very well maintained and decorated. It is exceptionally clean.
69. The school is well resourced overall and the teachers make efficient use of the available books and equipment. Access to learning resources is good and good use is made of nearby places of interest, such as Kentwell Hall and Grafham Water.
70. The special educational needs co-ordinator has attended specific training with regard to his responsibilities and offers specific and targeted support to pupils with special educational needs. The support staff are well trained and receive regular advice from the headteacher and the school support service who work within the school. Support teachers are skilled in working with these particular pupils, however, could do more with

more time. They visit the school part time two days a week. There is a governor with oversight of special educational needs matters who has attended appropriate training in supporting the school. Accommodation for teaching pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and resources are good.

76. The efficiency of the school

71. The school has maintained the good standard of efficiency noted at the last inspection. Financial planning is good. Local population changes have resulted in a falling roll over the last four years which has reduced income. Expenditure has been adjusted appropriately and also takes account of the priorities in the school development plan. There is close liaison between the headteacher, the chair of the finance committee and the governors to prepare the budget and make any changes in the light of changing needs. While spending on teachers is just below the national average, expenditure on support staff is well above average. The school monitors this carefully to ensure efficient use is made of this expenditure. The school maintains a small but appropriate reserve.
72. The school makes very good use of the accommodation both indoors and outdoors. It has organised a good programme of improvements, drawing on the generous support of the parent-teacher association to recently create a food technology area. A central area is very well used for group teaching as well as art and design and technology activities. Specialised areas such as the library, music/computer room and reception support room are timetabled for classes and well used to extend pupils' learning. The school does not have an outdoor play area for children under five. Resources are well used, accessible to pupils and very well maintained and stored.
73. Financial administration is very good. Records of main accounts and the school fund are very carefully maintained by the school secretary. The headteacher and governors check financial statements regularly and monitor expenditure effectively. The school makes good use of the local education authority financial services but the accounts have not been audited since 1996. The school fund is audited annually. Day-to-day administration is very efficient. Parents express their appreciation of the welcome which the school gives and the approachability of the school office.
74. Funding for pupils with special educational needs is used appropriately. Seven support staff are funded directly by the local educational authority for statemented pupils and the school provides funds for a further three staff. The money allocated for staff development is properly used and accounted for and the school augments this expenditure from its own funds.
75. Pupils have broadly average skills on entry and their attainment is in line with national expectations by the age of eleven. They make satisfactory progress through the school. Given the quality of education and the average level of unit costs, the school represents sound value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

81. Areas of learning for children under five

76. The school provides well for children in their first year of schooling and they reach levels that are appropriate for their ages in all the areas of experience for children under five. Children follow a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which provides suitable opportunities in all the six areas of learning from the early years curriculum, the 'Desirable Learning Outcomes'⁴. There were no key issues for action concerning provision for children under five in the previous inspection report. It was felt that sound foundations were laid in the reception classes. These standards have been maintained.
77. When they enter the school into the reception classes in the academic year in which they are five, the children have a range of social and early learning skills. Most of the children coming into the school have attended a pre-school playgroup or nursery, but not all. Attainment on entry to the reception classes in general is at expected levels for their ages and abilities with attainment in speaking being lower than their personal and social skills. The school successfully fulfils its aim to make the transition from home to school a happy and positive experience.

Personal and social development

78. The children's personal and social development underpins their school career and children make good progress overall. By being in classes where activities are arranged by theme or part of a carousel of tasks and working in small groups, they develop consideration for others and their opinions and form constructive relationships with each other. They co-operate, share equipment and resources and work well. By being given the opportunity to share and help around the classroom, especially at tidy up times, they have high levels of self-esteem and are confident. They discuss their own and others needs and feelings. By the time they are five they attain the levels expected.

84. Language and literacy

79. The majority of children attain levels which are appropriate for their age and some exceed them. Progress is at least satisfactory overall and it was good in a third of the lessons seen. Children are able to express clearly their opinions, needs and achievements although sometimes they need much prompting and have only a limited vocabulary. They listen carefully to stories and retell them in their own words. Children enjoy sharing their news and are generally able to wait their turn to contribute to a class discussion. Using the home corner, which during the inspection was a veterinary surgery, children are building up a suitable vocabulary into simple sentences. They examined animal toys and gave the teacher suitable sentences to explain what they thought.
80. In their reading, children know the sounds of initial letters and some blends. They use picture cues and follow illustrations to tell stories. All children know that the words carry meaning and enjoy sharing a book with an adult or class friend. Children's writing skills are developing alongside their reading skills. They form the shapes of most of the

⁴ [Desirable Learning Outcomes – DLOs – the curriculum prescribed for pupils in their early years – six areas – Language and Literacy, Mathematics, Personal and Social Development, Physical Development, Knowledge and Understanding of the World and Creative Development.](#)

alphabet, correctly orientating the letters without mixing up capital with small letters. They are making good attempts at writing their ideas with some completing words well. Through the Literary Strategy children are identifying patterns in spelling, practising their handwriting skills and starting to build up the range of words that they know by sight. This prepares them well for the next stage of education.

81. Teaching is good. Teachers involve children in both planned and spontaneous discussions which help to focus their attention. They are good at encouraging them to listen and respond as they work. Teachers share books with children, especially big texts, which they read with them as a group and as individuals. Teachers make children aware of the link between a symbol and the sound, using well known rhymes and familiar words. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to develop and extend their writing skills from these reading sessions. The general assistants and parent helpers also give appropriate support developing conversations and discussions as the children work in small groups with them.

87. **Mathematics**

82. Children attain appropriate levels by the age of five and make satisfactory progress overall. They can accurately count up to 10 and sometimes beyond. They identify numbers by their written shape and they sort toys, beads and counters into sets using various criteria such as colour, shape and size. Children know the names of shapes such as triangle, square, cube and hexagons and are able to construct more complex shapes using these simple ones. Children complete and construct patterns using beads and other items. They sing number songs and participate in counting games. They add or take from small numbers using counters and use correct language such as more than, less than. Through sand and other activities children develop an understanding of weight, volume and capacity.

83. The quality of teaching in mathematics is satisfactory. Lessons are planned appropriately from the numeracy project and adults provide first hand experiences such as singing number rhymes, counting up and down and number recognition activities. The use of correct language is encouraged and children are taught to read and record numbers appropriately using pictures, numerals and objects.

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

84. Children are attaining appropriate standards by the age of five and make satisfactory progress. They are aware of the needs and habitats of various creatures, from cats and dogs to humans. They investigate taste, trying out various substances for bitterness and sweetness and record their opinions together. Children are aware of the roles of the police, fire brigade, doctors, nurses and teachers. They compare then and now with equipment such as wash boards, scrubbing brushes and photographs of modern appliances. They use their senses to explore, handle and investigate materials such as flour, dough, fruits, metals, wood, sand, water and fabric. Children use various construction materials to produce models of the world around them. Children look for patterns in the natural world, look at change and use photographs to compare baby with adult animals. Teachers provide a range of opportunities for children to explore the environment inside and outside the classroom and the children talk, draw, paint and model what they see using a range of materials. Good attention is paid to safety issues when artefacts, objects and computers are used so that the children learn to handle such equipment carefully.

90. **Creative development**

85. Children attain appropriate levels and make sound progress. They enjoy singing action songs and rhymes. They listen to music, identify what they like and reproduce what they can hear. Children use paint and other media effectively to copy the artistic works of others and devise their own. They explore colour and texture, manipulate brushes and use other resources to form collage and free hand pictures and patterns. They work safely with glue and scissors, joining materials with a stapler where required. They use the home corner for role play, acting out the actions and speech of those they have seen, including parents and teachers. They care for the toy animals as they imagine adults would behave.

91. **Physical development**

86. Children attain the levels expected from children of their age and progress satisfactorily. They have a sound level of gymnastic skills such as balancing, jumping, skipping and hopping. They have a satisfactory sense of spatial awareness and are developing appropriate ball control skills. Children's eye/hand co-ordination is developed further by the use of tools and equipment such as scissors, brushes, pencils, paint and malleable materials. They are able to use construction kits and other equipment including junk modelling. Children are not able to experience free investigative play using climbing frames or toys in a secure area as the school does not possess such a secure space. Their experience of climbing and adventurous outdoor work is restricted by the weather at playtimes and by having to share such equipment with pupils from other classes. They have timetabled physical education sessions in the hall and are able to use any equipment there that is appropriate for their ages and sizes.
87. Children's response to their work is positive. They are involved with the tasks set and concentrate well for considerable periods of time. They persevere and apply themselves to what they are asked to do and because of the support given, enjoy the challenge of their tasks. Children share their work with others in the class. The majority are happy to read back their writing and show their illustrations. They enjoy experimenting with different forms of writing, in art, design and science. Children have positive relationships with staff and are happy to solve problems, learn from their mistakes and try again. They are proud of successfully completing tasks and developing manipulative skills.

93. **English, mathematics and science
Information technology and religious education**

English

88. In the 1999 end of key stage tests and assessments for seven year olds, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or above was in line with national averages in reading and above the national average in writing. Attainment in speaking and listening was below average in teachers' assessments. When compared with schools where there is a similar number of pupils with free school meals, pupils' attainment is below average in reading but in line with the average in writing. The attainment of higher achieving pupils is in line with the national average. When compared to similar schools their attainment is average in writing but below average in reading.

95. Pupils' attainment in tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 show that standards are in line with the national average in terms of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 and the more challenging Level 5. When compared with schools with a similar number of free school meals attainment is below average. The number of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 is close to the average but the number reaching Level 5 is below average. There are no significant variations between the achievement of boys and girls.
95. 89. In the previous inspection, attainment at the end of both key stages was judged to be in line with national expectations in speaking and listening and reading. Pupils attained appropriate standards in writing although the range of writing was limited. The results of tests and assessments indicate that pupils' attainment has risen over time, apart from a slight dip in 1998. The school has identified weaker areas through monitoring teaching and teachers' plans. It is implementing strategies to raise standards further although it still has not fully implemented its plans to improve pupils' extended writing. The school has introduced the National Literacy Strategy satisfactorily and this is starting to have a positive effect on standards. More pupils are gaining higher levels than in previous years but pupils' standards, at the end of both key stages, remain in line with national averages overall. Targets for improvement have been set in the subject. Early indications are that while these are challenging, the school is in line to achieve the target of 86 per cent of pupils achieving Level 4 and above by year 2002.
90. On entry to the school, pupils often have lower than expected speaking skills. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is broadly satisfactory overall, but speaking skills are not as well developed as listening skills. Pupils have the tendency to answer questions with one word answers even when questions encourage pupils to develop their ideas fully. They listen to and follow simple instructions accurately but have limited skills in adapting their speech to different audiences. Younger pupils often only use quite limited vocabulary to make their needs known. Older pupils have an awareness of the different vocabulary required in responding to different questions. They express emotions and humour in their speaking. Pupils use language correctly in mathematics, such as hexagons and isosceles triangles. In science, pupils use words like condensation, spine and sternum. In other subjects, the range of pupils' vocabulary varies and is not always well developed.
91. The majority of pupils have limited early reading skills on entry although they generally enjoy sharing a book with an adult. By the end of Key Stage 1, they reach broadly satisfactory levels overall. Pupils like to read from a wide range of texts, identifying the characters, recalling the plot and predicting developments in stories. Pupils follow the school reading scheme and develop a good understanding of phonics, building up vocabulary from the National Literacy Strategy. Higher attaining pupils generally recognise their errors when reading and correct themselves. They discuss their reading, explaining terms such as author and illustrator and some already have favourite texts or authors. By the end of the key stage, pupils use the library to find suitable books. They use alphabetical skills to locate information within books. The school works hard to encourage parents to share in reading. Pupils take books home regularly and parents are given the opportunity to complete a home reading diary, sharing comments with teachers and pupils. Teachers' records contain formative comments to guide reading further and the results of termly formal assessments made by the headteacher of all pupils.
92. Attainment in writing is satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1. Handwriting skills are

developed appropriately and there is no difference in the writing style of pupils with special educational needs and others in their class. Nearly all form letters correctly and neatly. Pupils give attention to the correct grammar in their work using such technical language as vowels, adjectives and nouns. They use punctuation well such as capitals and full stops. Pupils use writing patterns from phonics work in their spellings, building up to writing key vocabulary from the National Literacy Strategy. The Literacy Hour is helping pupils to develop a wider vocabulary and improve grammar and punctuation as well as extending their knowledge of a range of texts and authors. Pupils recognise the components of a story and change text to make nonsense poems.

93. Overall, pupils' progress at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Pupils make sound progress in reading and writing and listening but their progress in speaking is less successful. The results of tests and assessments at Key Stage 1 indicate that pupils' attainment is improving in all aspects of the subject. They are developing the skills of listening to instructions and stories. They progress in speaking and take turns to contribute to discussions instead of shouting out. However, pupils' vocabulary is not widely developed and many still only communicate in incomplete phrases. Pupils' progress in reading is helped by their positive attitudes. Pupils' progress as writers is satisfactory overall. They develop the ability to write reports, stories and poetry. They make good progress in their use of grammar and some successfully introduce direct speech into their writing.
94. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is satisfactory overall, with listening skills better developed than their speaking skills. Pupils listen attentively, show understanding of the main points in discussions and respond appropriately to questions. The majority of pupils are able to hold an extended conversation when describing specific events or giving their opinions, especially when they are able to refer to written material to help them. However, many conversations are not held in Standard English and not all pupils speak in sentences which are grammatically correct. Pupils listen carefully to instructions and use the correct technical language in subjects such as mathematics and music. Pupils have experience of debating a topic and present an argument simply and appropriately. However, teachers do not provide sufficient formal opportunities to extend pupils' skills in this aspect of English. Many teachers ask questions which require one word answers rather than giving pupils the opportunity to develop their speaking skills by having to explain their ideas.
95. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment in reading is satisfactory. Pupils read a varied range of literature. The majority identify and talk about characters and the plot in a story and predict what might happen next. More able pupils are beginning to use deduction and inference in their textual analysis. Older pupils are able to use text to extract information choosing between fact and opinion. Library skills are appropriately taught and pupils can select books using the Dewey system and obtain information using content and index pages. Older pupils can explain the use of a glossary. The library is used as a valuable teaching resource. Higher attaining pupils develop good reading skills. The majority of pupils recognise their own errors and self-correct but they do not all read aloud with fluency and expression. Pupils have experience of an increasing range of authors and styles of writing. In considering Macbeth pupils had the opportunity to read and then write in both the original style and then in a modern version using non Shakespearean vocabulary and phraseology. Most pupils read regularly at home to an adult. Higher attainers read with enthusiasm and confidence and with a good understanding of what they have read, being able to discuss and explain their

preferences. Many older lower attaining pupils are not keen on reading, lacking confidence. They do not read widely and their knowledge of authors is restricted to a small number of popular authors, usually explored in class or recommended by friends.

96. Pupils' standards in writing by the end of Key Stage 2 are satisfactory. They write for an increasing range of purposes throughout the curriculum but there is still only a limited amount of extended writing. Pupils do not extend stories beyond a single lesson and there is little evidence of drafting, editing and redrafting. Older pupils undertake timed writing but again only within a lesson time span. Pupils recognise the components of a story, the beginning, development and conclusion, and older pupils write in paragraphs to organise their ideas and opinions clearly. Attention is given to grammar, punctuation and spelling across the key stage. In Years 5 and 6 pupils make comparisons between the language, vocabulary and grammar of Shakespeare and that which is used today. They develop their understanding of punctuation well. They know the differences between prose, poetry and report writing.
97. Pupils' progress across Key Stage 2 is generally satisfactory but higher attainers do not make sufficient progress in their speaking and writing skills. In speaking and listening, progress is satisfactory for the majority of pupils. They make good progress as listeners, being able to identify key points in discussions and using appropriate speaking skills to reply. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop a breadth of vocabulary and the confidence to use it. Pupils have regular drama lessons but these are not structured to ensure that pupils improve their speaking skills year by year. Pupils' progress in reading is satisfactory overall. They are reading an increasing range of materials and considering poetry, reports and playscripts. The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in writing at Key Stage 2 but older and higher attaining pupils have limited skills in evaluating and redrafting their own writing. They do not often revisit work once marked, with a view to improving the structure and expressions. Older pupils generally make good progress in their handwriting and presentation skills but in some younger classes letters are sometimes malformed and incorrectly joined. Pupils develop report writing skills, especially when making a précis of a longer text. Pupils make good progress in compiling and using a glossary and practise skimming and scanning techniques
98. The National Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact upon attainment and progress. The strategy is giving structure to the development of skills by widening the range of texts studied, expanding the range of authors and styles and closely linking reading to writing. The current allocation of time does not give pupils sufficient opportunities for extended writing.
99. Pupils' response is good at both key stages. Most respond well to the work set and have ideas which they are willing to share when given the opportunity to do so. Pupils are generally enthusiastic and willing to contribute to their own learning. While they work well independently, pupils are not afraid to ask for help or offer support to others. Generally they stay on task, listen carefully to their teacher and other adults, answer questions politely and behave well. Pupils concentrate hard, persevere and become absorbed in well structured sessions. They share resources and generally have good relationships with their teachers. In weaker lessons frustration occurs when pupils are unchallenged by their tasks which leads to a lacklustre response in some discussion sessions.
100. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good or better

in over half of lessons seen. In Key Stage 2 teaching is predominantly satisfactory with two lessons out of five judged to be good. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. They know the curriculum and pupils' abilities and generally set tasks which are appropriate to the different abilities within classes. Teachers are good at organising resources and adult helpers. In the better lessons teachers establish a brisk pace with high expectations that by the end of each session pupils have improved writing or reading skills. They set tasks which require pupils' active involvement and establish time limits for the work set. Teachers make the learning objectives clear to pupils. There is a high proportion of direct teaching and teachers use questions effectively to challenge and guide pupils further. Teachers know pupils will behave well and expect them to listen, think, use existing skills and make progress. In weaker lessons teachers tend to overdirect pupils' activities. They do not always match tasks to pupils of different abilities, especially for the higher attainers. Some teachers have a weak personal delivery, speaking too quickly and with insufficient emphasis on key vocabulary. Some use language which is too complicated especially for younger pupils.

101. Teachers use the literacy strategy planning sheets for medium and short term planning with long term planning drawn from the English policy and National Literacy Strategy curriculum. The strategy ensures tasks for pupils are differentiated by pupils' prior ability and teachers structure their groups within lessons accordingly. This still means, unfortunately, that there is some lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils as the strategy is still dependent upon teachers' knowledge and skills in catering appropriately for such pupils. Pupils with special educational needs have work planned in line with their individual educational programmes and are supported by learning support assistants for literacy. To support the curriculum for these pupils the co-ordinators have provided a range of high interest, low vocabulary texts. Teachers use a good range of non-fiction texts to promote the attainment and progress of boys.
102. The school uses a range of formal and informal assessments and these are used to form groups within classes for literacy work. Each pupil produces a piece of unaided writing per term which is moderated across the school. Regular spelling tests occur with assessments going into teachers' mark books and 'level descriptor' files. A reading record system is in place. These records are detailed and can be used diagnostically, showing where pupils need to improve. Results of national tests are analysed by the headteacher and areas of weakness identified which are then targeted for improvement, for example extended writing. The approach to marking is inconsistent across the school and the quality is unsatisfactory in many classes. This does not contribute to pupils' progress. The co-ordinators monitor developments in English. They see teachers' plans, collect samples of work and combine the two to monitor pupils' progress, giving feedback where appropriate. This also helps the co-ordinator to ensure resources match projects and to plan staff development.

Mathematics

103. Pupils reach levels of attainment in line with national averages by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In their work on number and shape, pupils reach above average standards by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' attainment in the 1999 tests were well above the national average with a high number of pupils achieving levels beyond the expected Level 4. The cohort benefited from a significant amount of very effective extra teaching support for part of the year, which particularly addressed the needs of pupils with average and above average ability. The results of 1999 are a distinct improvement on the results achieved in 1998. Standards are slightly better than those that were

observed in the previous inspection.

104. By the end of Key Stage 1, the vast majority of pupils can recall addition and subtraction facts to 10, and are able to use this knowledge in mental arithmetic sessions. Most can recognise tens, hundreds and units, and round up and down to the nearest 10. The majority are able to use simple strategies for additions and subtractions, such as counting up in fives and tens. All pupils can measure using non-standard units, such as cubes and lines on graph paper. Higher attainers make good use of the most common standard units, such as centimetres. All pupils recognise basic geometric shapes and use the correct terminology to describe them, for example rectangles and cylinders. The majority of pupils can represent information in bar charts.
105. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1. Assessments on entry to the key stage indicate that pupils have ability broadly in line with the average. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make progress at a similar rate, and, by the end of Key Stage 1, are confident in their recognition of numbers up to 20 and in their addition of single units. Higher attaining pupils begin to recognise simple number patterns and can complete single unit multiplication.
106. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils reach levels in line with national averages in applying mathematics and in data handling. All pupils know about common mathematical symbols. They are able to check their work and recognise some of their mistakes. Higher attainers are frequently able to use more than one strategy in their calculations. All pupils can compile and interpret bar charts. Some struggle with more complex line graphs.
107. Higher than average numbers of pupils are reaching expected levels in number and shape work by the end of Key Stage 2. Nearly all pupils can interpret first quadrant co-ordinates. Significant numbers of pupils are able to read and manipulate co-ordinates in the other quadrants. The majority of pupils can complete long multiplication and reverse their calculations. They can reduce fractions to their lowest terms. All pupils can name the main properties of common shapes, such as the number of sides, and understand reflective symmetry. The majority can plot shapes using rotational symmetry. Most can read the scales of a variety of measuring instruments.
108. Pupils are making good progress at Key Stage 2, where the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive effect. Pupils are learning quicker methods of making mental calculations and are able to explain the techniques they have used. They are able to recognise increasingly sophisticated number patterns and the relationship between fractions. Pupils with special educational needs show a growing capacity for recognising shapes when they form part of a larger object.
109. Pupils have satisfactory attitudes to learning and, in lessons where their interest is sustained, their attitudes are frequently good. Nearly all pupils try hard during the brisk mental mathematics sessions, enjoying the tasks they have to complete. Most pupils are willing to explain their difficulties and listen carefully to the advice they are given. There is a purposeful atmosphere during most group activities, although a minority of pupils are slow to get on with their work and do not always concentrate when adults are not in close proximity. Pupils with special educational needs establish good relationships with others and sustain their concentration when working with classroom assistants. Pupils take a pride in the presentation of their work and usually ensure that calculations and graphs are clear. They enjoy sharing information, and higher attainers

often offer help to the less able.

110. Teaching is good. Teachers have a good understanding of the basic principles of the National Numeracy Strategy and planning is always in line with its recommendations. Lessons have a good balance between whole class, group and individual work. Core, extension and support tasks are always planned for, which usually provides work at the right level for pupils' range of abilities. Classroom assistants support pupils with special educational needs well, recognising their weaknesses and reinforcing basic skills. Resources are allocated in advance, reducing the amount of time taken in starting activities. Whole class sessions are well managed, with good use of white and black boards to demonstrate techniques. Good questioning enables pupils to demonstrate their knowledge, and subsequent questions explore pupils' knowledge more deeply. During group work, some pupils are allowed to work too slowly and noisily, which reduces the amount of progress they can make. Throughout lessons, the correct mathematical terminology is emphasised, especially when shapes are being explained. Assessment based on the learning objectives of the numeracy strategy is completed regularly and, on occasions, is used to adjust planning.

117. **Science**

111. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The results of statutory assessments in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that pupils achieved levels in line with the national average. The number of pupils achieving Level 2 and above and the number achieving the higher Level 3 were both average. The results, however, are below those of schools of a similar type nationally, but the intake of pupils in this school is judged to be average despite the low proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. Pupils do particularly well in experimental and investigative aspects of the subject.
112. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with national averages in terms of the number of pupils achieving Level 4 and above. The number of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 is above the national average. Like the Key Stage 1 results, these figures do not compare favourably with those of schools of a similar type nationally, but the scrutiny of work indicates that pupils' attainment is appropriate for their abilities.
113. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged to be satisfactory at the end of both key stages. The school has maintained this position, with results over the last three years improving slightly. This is the result of a more structured scheme of work and careful analysis of test results. The school has used these to identify and then compensate for curriculum weaknesses.
114. Pupils make sound progress overall at both key stages. At Key Stage 1 they learn to follow instructions to carry out investigations and begin to think about whether their tests are fair. They start to record the results of their investigations using different simple methods. Pupils find out about life cycles of animals and can classify a range of items as to whether they are alive or not alive. As they move through the school they are able to justify their decisions and can give a list of factors which they would consider when making such decisions. Pupils can identify from which materials a range of items are made. In Years 3 and 4 pupils can talk about the properties of different materials and by Years 5 and 6 they can use this knowledge to explain why some materials are suited to a particular purpose whereas others are not. Key Stage 1 pupils learn which foods are healthy or unhealthy, whereas Key Stage 2 pupils know that foods contain different

nutrients and that these have different functions in the body. Key Stage 1 pupils learn about push and pull forces. In Years 5 and 6 they know about friction and gravity and are able to measure force using a Newton metre.

115. Although progress is satisfactory across the key stages, it is uneven within them. Not enough account is taken of the different ages and abilities of pupils within each class when planning work. Consequently, higher attaining and older pupils often make less progress than they should since they do the same work as the rest of the class. Similarly pupils in Year 5 who are taught with Year 4 pupils do not have the same curriculum experience as those taught with Year 6 pupils.
116. Pupils' attitudes to learning are always satisfactory and often good. Pupils generally behave well, listening carefully and following instructions. They show interest and are keen to undertake practical work. They value each other's contributions in discussions and are able to work collaboratively in pairs and small groups.
117. The quality of teaching is sound overall at both key stages and many aspects of it are good. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they are well organised. Their relationships with pupils are good and they expect and obtain good behaviour. They plan interesting tasks and make good use of resources and the facilities available. Their planning has improved since the last inspection and teachers now generally identify the learning objectives in each lesson and the assessment which should take place. However, they still do not take sufficient account of the different ages and activities of pupils in the class, with the result that the work is often insufficiently challenging for the highest attainers. Teachers now use assessment well to measure pupils' progress, but have yet to make full use of the findings when planning future work. Teachers take care to encourage all pupils to contribute in lessons and ensure they value what is offered. Most work is marked frequently but the quality of marking remains inconsistent and it does not always suggest ways of developing and improving work where it is necessary.
118. Literacy and numeracy skills are well taught in science. Pupils learn a range of ways of recording the findings of their investigations. They are encouraged to use appropriate technical vocabulary. They are able to use different types of graphs and charts and learn to use thermometers and Newton meters.
125. **Information and communication technology**
119. Attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages. Significant improvements have recently been made in the school's provision of computer hardware. The new computer suite for Key Stage 2 pupils is a very good resource and the facilities for Key Stage 1 pupils are currently being enhanced. The range of opportunities for pupils to use computers in different subjects has been considerably increased since the last inspection and pupils have access to them on a much more regular basis.
120. In Key Stage 1, pupils acquire a satisfactory range of skills in all aspects of the curriculum. They can name the parts of a computer and are able to use a mouse quite competently. They can find their way about the keyboard and can use capital letters. During the inspection Year 1 pupils were writing sentences about themselves with some help. By the end of Year 2, pupils can save, retrieve and print with help. In Key Stage 1, pupils use the computers for number work and to help with reading. They use a simple graphing program to show information they have collected such as the months of

children's birthdays in the class. They also learn to give instructions to make a programmable toy move in different directions. Progress for these pupils is good. They regularly use computers in small groups with adult help on hand. Much new learning takes place and pupils quickly gain confidence when working with computers.

121. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' basic skills in using a range of software are sound. The vast majority are secure in their knowledge of how to retrieve and save their work. Pupils in Year 6 can combine text and images and have written poems, plays and stories using word processing. They are able to use CD-Roms to access information to support work in science and history. They use computers to compose their own music. They are able to give a series of instructions to an on-screen robot. They use data bases and spreadsheets with confidence, choosing the best way to display their results. They can use the Internet to obtain information and have used a digital camera. Plans indicate that they will have used the scanner and will have used the computer to monitor the results of a science investigation before they leave the school. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 confidently use a word processing package. They are able to change the font, colour and size and can make some of their writing bold in order to emphasise it, as they did when changing a playscript into text during the inspection week. They also produced pictures using a paint program and used palm-tops to find out the definitions of new words. Pupils of all ages and abilities are making good progress in developing their general skills using the computer suite and class sets of palm-top computers. They are learning new techniques quickly and are becoming increasingly independent and able to use their initiative as they move through the key stages.
122. Pupils display good attitudes towards their work. They enjoy using computers and are keen to try new programmes and techniques. They listen carefully to the instructions they are given by teachers and other adults. They concentrate well and develop independence in using the resources. They apply themselves well to the tasks and take a pride in producing work which looks good. Many examples of very good collaboration in lessons were observed with pupils working effectively in pairs and the more competent pupils quick to help those who had difficulties.
123. Teaching is effective across the school. All teachers have a sound understanding of the subject and plan a broad range of activities which link well to the different subjects of the curriculum. Where support assistants and parents help pupils, they do so effectively ensuring that pupils are encouraged to become independent. Teachers are well organised and confident when using the chosen software. They ensure pupils have regular access to computers. At Key Stage 2, teachers take advantage of their designated day for using the computer suite. Teachers provide a good balance between providing instruction and giving pupils the opportunity to learn through 'hands on' experience. Teachers plan activities which make a positive contribution to the development of literacy and numeracy skills.
130. **Religious education**
124. By the end of both key stages, pupils meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. They make satisfactory progress. Pupils make the best progress in developing an awareness of the main features of the principal religions and appreciating the wonders of the natural world. Less progress is made in understanding the fundamentals of belief and the philosophy which underpins religions. Standards are similar to those observed during the last inspection.

125. By the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils have an understanding of important days, such as birthdays and anniversaries. They know that harvest festivals are celebrations of the wonders of food, and that the giving of food and other gifts is important in Christianity. Pupils are beginning to appreciate the wonders of creation and show a genuine interest in, and sympathy for, animals such as whales. They are learning to reflect upon the importance of birth and the growth of babies. They understand some of the events connected with Advent and Christmas.
126. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can explain the main events of important Bible stories, for example the Creation, David and Goliath, and Moses and the Ten Commandments. Their written work on the significance of these stories is rather superficial. They can describe the main events of the Passover and know it is a very important festival in Judaism. All pupils can describe the main features of the local church and higher attainers can explain the significance of some of its religious symbols. Pupils know about the main methods of prayer in the major world religions and important places of pilgrimage. They are able to make some simple moral judgements when selecting stories of good and bad world events, although some pupils are inclined to select their own favourites rather than focusing on more important aspects. Most pupils understand the importance of charities and can explain how they help people less fortunate than themselves.
127. Pupils have satisfactory attitudes to learning. Younger pupils listen carefully to stories and enjoy watching videos, such as one featuring whales ‘singing’. Most pupils will try to answer questions and make contributions to discussions. A few show limited interest and contribute only when directly asked to. Pupils enjoy working together and establish good relationships with each other. They are prepared to listen to each other’s ideas and suggestions. Pupils’ written work is relatively brief and does not show the degree of understanding they demonstrate in discussions.
128. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers plan themes in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus, which provides a good balance to the curriculum. Joint planning by class teachers supported by the subject co-ordinators results in a consistency of provision across classes. Good introductions are provided to each lesson. Teachers and classroom assistants work hard to support pupils, dividing their time well between pupils during group and individual work. Resources are prepared in advance and are ready for pupils’ immediate use. Some imaginative activities are being developed to support the content of the curriculum. Subject knowledge is variable and some teachers are uncertain how to develop discussions about faith and belief, which can result in missed opportunities to help higher attaining pupils to develop a greater understanding of fundamental questions.

135. **Other subjects or courses**

135. **Art**

129. There has been satisfactory improvement in pupils’ experience of the subject since the last inspection. At Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress and develop a broad range of skills and knowledge. At Key Stage 2 they make satisfactory progress, working in a variety of media and learning about the work of different artists. As recommended at the last inspection, the school has adopted a scheme of work which provides useful

guidance to teachers. Procedures for regularly assessing pupils' progress have been introduced. The school recognises that the scheme of work and the recently introduced assessment procedures require review to ensure that pupils' skills are developed appropriately across the year groups.

130. Pupils at Key Stage 1 have a good appreciation of colour, matching shades of green and yellow to represent the leaves on a tree. They consider the patterns and colours of bark in order to represent tree trunks in a lively and detailed manner. They observe the work of many artists and appreciate the different styles employed. For example, pupils looked at paintings of water before attempting to make patterns of their own. They were intrigued by the use of colour in Impressionist paintings and accurately used the phrase "optical mixing" to explain the process involved. They carry out very good observational drawings of fruits and insects and turn their drawings into three-dimensional tiles. Pupils attain good levels in their work using collage, clay and fabrics.
131. At Key Stage 2, pupils make sound progress in observational drawing, using colour, chalk and pencil to represent a variety of subjects such as shoes, fruit and faces. In their sketch books pupils experiment with pencils, water colour and pastels to create different textures and shading and to match these to sections of photographs. They develop a sound knowledge of printing techniques. They start by taking rubbings and progress to making prints with string patterns and designs cut into polystyrene tiles. Pupils make some very good pottery animals and artefacts taking their ideas from work done locally and from South America. Pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding of the work of different artists. Older pupils study the work of Picasso and compare his use of colour with that of other artists. They appreciate the bold colours of African paintings and the different styles of decorations used on masks. Pupils use a satisfactory range of vocabulary to describe the work they have studied.
132. Pupils approach their work with enthusiasm. They maintain concentration well and are keen to try out new media and approaches. Pupils take pride in their finished work and enjoy the pictures of famous artists.
133. The quality of teaching is sound with some good lessons at both key stages. Teachers have a good knowledge and interest in the subject and they convey this well. They make good use of picture resources to show pupils the work of a variety of artists. They introduce pupils to an appropriate range of media including clay and three-dimensional work in collage and card. They base their lesson plans on the objectives outlined in the scheme of work. They have a clear idea of the longer term intentions but do not always define what skills they want pupils to develop in every lesson. As a result lessons do not always ensure that pupils progress as rapidly as possible. Teachers use technical terms such as "optical mixing" but do not have a clear programme for extending pupils' vocabulary with which to describe their own work and that of other artists.
140. **Design and technology**
134. Design and technology is an important part of the school's curriculum. Since the last inspection the school has adopted the scheme of work produced by the local authority. This has helped pupils to acquire skills and knowledge which are progressively more difficult as they move through the school. However, it also means that the vast majority of teaching develops pupils' practical skills and opportunities for pupils to design their own artefacts are limited. Pupils experience an interesting range of relevant activities, often linked to ongoing work in other subjects. They work with a broad range of

materials including food, textiles, resistant materials (such as card, wood and clay) and simple electrical components. They make satisfactory progress overall at both key stages, although they are much more competent at making than they are at designing, particularly at Key Stage 2. Pupils develop an appropriate understanding of the materials they use and they produce items which have a satisfactory quality of finish.

135. Key Stage 1 pupils are able to select appropriate junk materials and finishing techniques in order to produce shape monsters. The quality of these is good. During the inspection they were mastering a paper folding technique which would enable them to make 'spring like' arms and legs on the 'puppets' they were making. They are able to choose from a narrow range of materials and know how to use fine corners in order to make stable and strong structures based on rectangles. Pupils draw sketches of what they intend to make, sometimes labelling them to show how they will make them.
136. Pupils at Key Stage 2 undertake a wide range of activities linked to other subjects, for example windmills linked to geography, gargoyles linked to religious education and history and healthy foods linked to work in science. They acquire an increasingly broad range of practical skills and through practice, refine them and achieve a better quality of finish. Their ability to work independently and safely increases, as does their ability to evaluate what they have done and suggest how it could be improved. Their ability to design, in terms of thinking of different alternatives, increases considerably but their ability to produce diagrams which are well drawn, carefully annotated and accurately measured is under-developed. This is an area which the school knows it needs to address.
137. In all the lessons observed, pupils showed genuine interest and enthusiasm for the activities. They particularly enjoy doing practical work. Generally they work well together, sharing ideas, materials and tools and helping and supporting one another. Pupils handle tools safely and try to produce items which are of a good quality. When given the opportunity, which is not often enough, they can show real initiative and imagination. Older pupils show independence as well as the willingness to contribute ideas when working in groups.
138. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good lessons observed. Teachers make best use of the time available but sometimes they do not have enough time allocated in the timetable to allow the pupils to achieve appropriately high standards. The school is aware of the need to review the time allocation to ensure that either more time is allocated to the tasks or activities are amended so that it is possible to achieve appropriate standards in the time available. Teachers demonstrate new skills competently and place an appropriate emphasis on safety. Good use is made of support assistants and parent helpers. They are well briefed and make a positive contribution towards pupils' learning. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to review the current curriculum in order to ensure there is a better balance between designing and making activities. Currently there is too much emphasis on practical tasks, where pupils are directly taught particular making skills and too few opportunities for them to show initiative and put into practice what they have learnt. The school has developed an assessment system whereby key learning objectives are identified for each half term and pupils are assessed against these.

145.

Geography

139. Very few lessons could be seen during the period of inspection, because in most

classes the emphasis during the period of inspection was on history. Judgements are mainly based on evidence from a scrutiny of pupils' work. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress and reach levels which are in line with expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Standards are similar to those observed in the previous inspection.

140. By the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils describe significant physical features from photographs and pictures. They describe what they like about particular scenes. They understand the main weather symbols, such as those for sun, rain and cloud. Most pupils can follow directions on a grid or simple maps; a few become confused by a sequence of directions.
141. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can use atlases to check for information and identify some of the major continents and countries in the world. They plot routes, using compass directions. Most pupils relate flat world maps to the globe although a few become rather confused by the comparisons. Pupils can identify the growth of towns from plans and aerial photographs. They are aware of some of the reasons for the growth. Pupils know the main features of their own village and the surrounding area. They know the main crops grown and can compare these with those produced in Kenyan villages. Pupils have an outline idea of how the sea and mountains shape land usage and settlement in Kenya. They know that physical features can be changed by major geological movements such as those which occurred in the African Rift Valley. They know that human activity can have a major impact on the environment and have considered this in relation to their own locality.
142. Pupils make satisfactory progress at both key stages. Younger pupils show an increasing ability to distinguish between their own local area and those of far off places. They show an ability to make increasingly detailed observations of physical features. Pupils at Key Stage 2 develop an ability to link physical features with human activity, and develop greater knowledge of areas of the world.
143. Too few lessons were seen to make a firm judgement on teaching and pupils' attitudes to learning. Curriculum planning is based on the local education authority's scheme of work. Some learning objectives are not sufficiently clear to ensure that pupils are able to make distinct progress in developing their geographical skills. Good links are established with history, and, in some lessons, teachers make good use of activities to develop skills in both subjects.
150. **History**
144. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. They attain standards which are similar to the sound levels observed at the last inspection.
145. By the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils can make comparisons between past and present. They are particularly strong in identifying contrasts between their own lifestyles and that in past times, especially in terms of household chores, clothes worn or food eaten. All pupils can recall some major events of the past and higher attainers are able to retell stories with a range of events in the correct sequence. A majority of pupils can give the main reasons why people in the past acted as they did. They know that washing clothes was an arduous process because washing machines had not been invented. Many pupils are able to empathise with the hardships experienced by people in past times and appreciate how hard children as well as adults had to work. All pupils can understand

some aspects of their own family's history and can explain the passage of time from their grandparents to their own time. Some have difficulty in understanding how their family can be traced back to earlier times.

146. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils recall the main events of the reign of Henry VIII. Lower attaining pupils can describe his marriages and difficulties with the Church. Higher attainers explain some of the most important reasons for his dissolution of the monasteries. All pupils are able to provide opinions on whether they regard him as a good or bad king; some pupils are aware that the events of the reign can be interpreted in different ways. They know that explorers of the time had a limited knowledge of the world and were heavily dependent on simple forms of navigation. Most pupils know that the voyages of discovery were intended to bring wealth and prestige to monarchs. A few pupils know that some discoveries came about by chance. The majority of pupils have gained a sense of chronology about a period of history and can use dates in their correct sequence when writing about events. They understand how Tudor monarchs inherited the throne from their predecessors.
147. Pupils are making satisfactory progress at both key stages. On entry to Key Stage 1, they have only a vague sense of past and present, but by the end of the key stage they are confident in identifying comparisons in lifestyles. During Key Stage 2, pupils show a growing capacity to cope with a range of historical facts and develop an understanding of some of the main reasons for major events.
148. Pupils have satisfactory attitudes to learning. They settle down quickly and listen carefully to teachers' explanations at the beginning of lessons. They ask sensible questions when unsure about their work. Pupils enjoy handling historical artefacts, such as those used by previous generations when washing clothes, and show genuine curiosity in how they were used. They respond promptly to direct instructions from adults, but sometimes waste time and become rather noisy during group work. Pupils listen to each other's opinions with interest and higher attainers sometimes offer helpful suggestions to others.
149. Teaching is satisfactory. There is sound planning of learning objectives and activities based on the school and local education authority's schemes of work. Teachers have satisfactory knowledge of the subject, although there is a tendency to spend too much time on simple comparisons between past and present when pupils have already shown that they can master this skill. A wide range of worksheets, pictures, posters and videos are used in lessons, including opportunities for pupils to consider primary source materials. Books are usually only used for demonstration purposes or to read extracts to pupils. Class use of books is restricted by the lack of whole class sets. Worksheets are of an appropriate level of difficulty for most pupils and those for lower attainers usually contain more accessible reading material. Teachers do not always provide more difficult tasks to challenge higher attainers. There are good arrangements for group working, which encourage pupils to co-operate and discuss their findings. Teachers are skilled in their questioning and draw thoughtful responses from pupils. Regular assessment opportunities are planned in the scheme of work, and these are undertaken by class teachers. Informal assessment is not regularly used to inform teachers' planning.
156. **Music**
150. There were limited opportunities to observe teaching during the inspection and

judgements are based on an examination of planning and samples of pupils' work. By the end of both key stages, pupils are making satisfactory progress overall. However, progress is not as good as it was at the last inspection when attainment was above the expected levels both compared with national standards and with pupils' abilities.

151. The majority of pupils sing tunefully, with awareness of pitch of note and tempo. Pupils identify higher and lower sounds if they are pitched wide apart. Pupils clap quite complex rhythms and sing and play percussion in various sized groups. In most lessons, they maintain a steady beat though many have problems in maintaining a changing rhythm. Most pupils use a range of percussion instruments to perform their own compositions, making progress as group performers. They learn to take turns and consider the opinions of others. When composing, pupils consider raising and lowering volume and use specific terms such as crescendo, diminuendo, piano and forte in planning the sounds of percussion instruments. They record their ideas on paper by annotating their scores and reproduce them in performance. Pupils are making good progress in developing their listening skills. They identify a range of songs and music by different composers. By listening to their own and other's performances they are developing the skills of analysis and appreciation and suggest different ways of achieving the same effects.
152. Pupils enjoy the subject and respond well in the majority of lessons. Girls' behaviour at Key Stage 1 is particularly positive which helps to promote the progress of the whole class. Pupils become very involved with tasks trying to solve problems such as how to play drums and cymbals quietly. They are happy to rework their own compositions after the first performance. They practise their skills and stay on task and when others enjoy listening to them they show pride in their completed work. Most composition is in groups and the majority of pupils co-operate well with each other. Some become very bossy with those who do not take sessions seriously.
153. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with teaching at Key Stage 2 being good or very good in half of the lessons observed. Teachers' knowledge of composition skills is good. They have a secure knowledge of the curriculum and structure lessons well in order to link practical work to the learning objectives which they set. Teachers have a keen awareness of the limitations of lesson time and provide appropriate resources to enable pupils to make rapid progress. They hold high expectations that by the end of lessons pupils will have increased their range of skills. Teachers use plenary sessions well for reinforcing learning. In most lessons they have good management skills and effectively deploy other adults to support specific groups and individuals. Unsatisfactory teaching occurs when teachers' planning is vague and tasks lack sufficient challenge to maintain pupils' interest and hold their attention.
160. **Physical education**
154. Pupils make satisfactory progress across both key stages. By the ages of seven and eleven their attainment in gymnastics, games and dance is in line with that attained by pupils of their age. By the age of eleven most pupils attain the expected levels in swimming. Pupils' attainment has been maintained at a satisfactory level as was noted at the last inspection.
155. At Key Stage 1 pupils perform simple gymnastic activities safely. They move on hands and feet devising their own movements which conform to teachers' instructions. They jump, swinging their arms to gain height and bending their knees on landing. In games,

most pupils throw, bounce and catch balls with a satisfactory level of control. Some throw and catch with a good level of ball control and work effectively with partners. Pupils follow instructions well and select equipment such as bean bags, quoits and large balls in order to practise their skills.

156. At Key Stage 2 pupils know why they warm up before exercise and the effect which it has on their heart rate and breathing. Pupils develop sequences of gymnastic movements. Most have a good sense of control and work safely. They perform forward and backward rolls carefully and maintain their balance well. In games, pupils develop dodging, attack and defence skills in hockey and netball. They work well in small groups, discussing and developing tactics and techniques. They are aware of the importance of body position and how to support one another. In dance, pupils follow instructions well. They perform the steps of an early Elizabethan dance with enjoyment and a good sense of rhythm. They work happily with one another adapting their movements to those of others in their group.
157. Pupils' attitudes are positive. They like all aspects of the subject and take part enthusiastically. They attend to instructions well and are keen to follow them and interpret them sensibly. When asked to do so they willingly demonstrate their skills to the class.
158. The quality of teaching is sound at both key stages. All teachers have a satisfactory knowledge of the subject and some have a good understanding of games skills and often present these well. Lessons are conducted at a good pace. Teachers break up activities to explain and demonstrate the skills which they want pupils to acquire. Timing is appropriate in dance and games sessions but the constraints of the timetable restrict the usefulness of some gymnastic sessions. Pupils spend time changing and moving to the hall for sessions which last only 25 minutes and must finish before their learning is well established. The amount of time available also curtails cooling down and evaluation activities in some sessions. Teachers make good use of pupils to demonstrate activities. However, they do not encourage others to observe and comment on what is good and what can be improved in such demonstrations. Teachers use resources well in all the sessions observed and make good use of the school's indoor and outdoor facilities. Planning draws effectively on the guidelines which have been prepared. However, in individual lessons, teachers do not always identify exactly how they want to extend pupils' skills. Thus lesson plans pursue the objective of extending throwing and catching skills but do not define in what way. As a result teachers do not give pupils precise targets to help them improve.

165. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

165. **Summary of inspection evidence**

159. The inspection team comprised five inspectors, including a lay inspector, who spent a total of 20 inspection days in the school.
160. Members of the team:

- observed 82 lessons;
 - attended registration sessions, whole school and key stage assemblies;
 - had lunch with pupils and observed behaviour in playgrounds at playtimes and lunchtimes;
 - held discussions with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, all teaching staff with subject responsibilities, the chair of governors and three other governors;
 - reviewed the written work of a representative sample of pupils in each year group and heard them read;
 - held informal discussions with pupils and analysed a large amount of documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection.
1. Before the inspection the registered inspector held a meeting attended by 18 parents and the inspection team considered 45 responses from parents to a questionnaire asking for their views of the school.

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	259	7	51	12

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.9

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked each week	182

Average class size:	28.8
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Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
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	£
Total Income	389,123
Total Expenditure	392,797
Expenditure per pupil	1,476.68
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,485
Balance carried forward to next year	9,811

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

240

Number of questionnaires returned:

45

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	55	7	2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	42	50	2	4	2
The school handles complaints from parents well	20	28	40	5	7
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	16	64	11	9	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	24	60	7	9	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	18	67	13	2	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	18	62	16	4	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	14	66	9	9	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	33	52	11	2	2
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	33	52	9	2	4
My child(ren) like(s) school	50	44	2	2	2