

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Cheveley Church of England (Controlled)  
Primary School**

Cheveley, Newmarket

LEA area : Cambridgeshire

Unique Reference Number : 110785

Headteacher : Mrs T Carpenter

Reporting inspector : Mr T Taylor  
4262

Dates of inspection : 11<sup>th</sup> - 14th October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707024

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school : Infant and Junior

Type of control : Voluntary Controlled

Age range of pupils : 4 to 11

Gender of pupils : Mixed

School address : Park Road,  
Cheveley.  
Newmarket.  
Suffolk CB8 9DG

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Appropriate authority : Governing Body

Name of chair of governors : Mr. M. Muncey

Date of previous inspection : April 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Tony Taylor Registered Inspector	Under-Fives English Science Religious Education Art Music Physical education	Special educational needs Teaching Leadership & management Efficiency
Susannah Stevens Lay Inspector		Equal opportunities Attendance Attitudes, behaviour & personal development Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development Support, guidance & welfare Links with parents & the community
David Fisher	Mathematics Design & technology Information technology Geography History	Attainment & progress Curriculum & assessment Staffing, accommodation & learning resources

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- The pupils' attainment in National Curriculum tests in mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2, is above average.
- The leadership provided by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors is good.
- The school encourages parental support well and parents make a very good contribution to the school's life and work.
- The provision for the children under five is very good.
- The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The curriculum is well planned. Good emphasis is placed on the development of the pupils' literacy skills.
- The school promotes the spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils well.
- The quality of the teaching overall is good.
- The quality of the information provided for parents is good.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Standards in information technology are unsatisfactory.
- II. The school's staffing problems have not been fully resolved.
- III. The curriculum co-ordinators roles have not been established sufficiently to ensure that the work in classrooms is monitored and evaluated effectively.
- IV. The assessment procedures used by the teachers to influence their planning are not fully in place.
- V. Pupils who are withdrawn from classrooms for additional support with reading sometimes miss out on other important activities.
- VI. The standards of handwriting, and general presentation of work, are not sufficiently high.

**Cheveley School is a good school. Its many strengths outweigh the weaknesses. The latter will form the basis for the Governors' action plan which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.**

The school has many good features. Among these are the strong leadership provided by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the good support provided by the staff and governors, and the generally good teaching. Additionally, the parents and volunteers who work in the school support it well. The school provides a sound all-round education for its pupils.

The resources for information technology are not adequate to meet the current needs for the subject and the increasing needs of the pupils. The provision for the subject has not kept pace with developments sufficiently. The school has recognised this and has taken action to improve the overall provision.

The school has experienced some instability in staffing over a long period. This has not yet been resolved. Improvements to the school's planning have helped to alleviate the difficulties. While the withdrawal of pupils from classes for extra reading practice is a positive strategy to ensure their continuous progress in reading, important parts of other

lessons are often missed. Consequently, the progress of the pupils in other areas of learning is sometimes slowed.

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

The school has improved in a wide range of ways since the last inspection. The pupils' behaviour has been significantly improved. This was an issue at the last inspection. There has been some improvement in the planned opportunities for the pupils to work more closely together, which was another issue. The teachers' expectations for good pupil behaviour and a strong work-ethic are now high. The standard of the pupils' speaking and listening skills has been improved. The pupils' attainment in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2 has been improved. The ethos of the school has developed positively, and it is now good. The standards in information technology have fallen below the good level found during the last inspection.

### Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

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

The school achieves satisfactory standards in English overall. The standards are close to those found nationally and comparable with those of schools of similar type and size. The standards the school achieves in National Curriculum tests in mathematics and science are well above the national average and above those of similar schools. The inspection found that standards in the three core curriculum areas are satisfactory overall. There is consistently good attainment at the early Reception and Year 1 stage and at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in information technology are unsatisfactory. The pupils' standards of handwriting and presentation of their work are not high enough.

### Quality of teaching

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

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

The quality of the teaching is good overall. It is often very good. In five per cent of the lessons observed during the inspection, the teaching was unsatisfactory. The unsatisfactory teaching related to issues of classroom management, and to teachers not building sufficiently on the pupils' previous knowledge and understanding. Ninety-five per cent of the teaching was at least satisfactory and often good. Twenty-eight per cent of the teaching, well over a quarter of that seen, was very good indeed.

The teaching is very good at the Reception stage and at Key Stage 1, and in the later part of Key Stage 2. Much of the teaching at the other stages is good. The teaching of information technology is insufficiently rigorous at all stages, and is impeded by the inadequacy of the school's resources, which do not match current teaching and learning needs.



## Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good. The pupils generally behave well. This is an area that the school has improved significantly since the last inspection.
Attendance	Satisfactory. It matches the national average. The pupils are punctual and lessons start promptly.
Ethos*	Good. The climate for learning is very positive. The good relationships in the school have a positive influence on the pupils' learning. The school is committed to maintaining the high standards already achieved, and improving others.
Leadership and management	The leadership of the headteacher is purposeful and sensitive. The deputy headteacher provides very good support. The governors are very committed to the school and to ensuring that the pupils receive the best education possible. The teaching staff, learning support assistants, and parent helpers have clear roles within the school, and their work has a very positive and beneficial impact on the pupils' learning. The role of the curriculum co-ordinators has not yet been fully developed due to some instability in staffing.
Curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The curriculum is broad and balanced. It meets the statutory requirements in all but information technology. The school has noted the need for the development of this aspect and has a planned initiative to raise standards. The curriculum for the children under five is good. The planned assessment procedures are good, but they are inconsistently applied throughout the school.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school identifies the needs of the pupils early. It takes great care to produce individual education plans and to set realistic targets for improvement of the pupils knowledge, understanding and skills. This aspect is well managed and good support is provided by outside agencies.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good overall. The spiritual, moral and social elements of the pupils' development are good and the cultural development is satisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	There are sufficient, qualified and experienced staff to deliver the curriculum, but there has been, and continues to be, some instability in staffing, due to illness and staff mobility. The accommodation is good. The recently added teaching areas are very good. The resources are satisfactory overall, except those for information technology. The Parent Teacher Association provides invaluable support, as do the many parents and governors who work regularly in the school.
Value for money	The school provides satisfactory value for money. The school achieves at least satisfactory and often good standards in all areas of the curriculum, except in information technology. The administrative systems are efficient. The unit cost per pupil is average.

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

## The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<p>VII. That the school encourages parents to play an active part in its life and work.</p> <p>VIII. That the school encourages appropriate attitudes and values.</p> <p>IX. That the school achieves high standards and ensures that the pupils make good progress.</p> <p>X. That the school keeps them well informed about events and their child's progress.</p> <p>XI. That the school has improved the behaviour of the pupils.</p> <p>XII. That the pupils with special educational needs are well supported.</p>	<p>XIII. That there are mixed-age</p> <p>XIV. That sometimes complaints are</p> <p>XV. That they do not feel fully</p>

The parents and local community are justified in their confidence that the school is doing a good job. The standards overall are satisfactory and often good. The quality of the education, particularly the teaching, is good, and the school is efficient. The school has improved in many areas since the last inspection.

During the inspection, no evidence was found to indicate that the mixed-age classes limit the pupils' overall progress. The work is carefully planned in all aspects to ensure that the cycle of learning is matched to the individual needs of the children. Appropriate individual targets for improvement are set.

The evidence of the inspection is that any parental complaints are carefully considered. The numbers of complaints are few. Problems cannot always be resolved to suit some parents but the actions taken are made in the best interests of all groups.

The inspection found that the amount and quality of the information provided by the school about its work, and the standards and progress of the pupils is very good. Regular newsletters are provided. The school development plans are exhibited on a notice board, and clear information is provided about the curriculum. The governors issue regular and informative reports, and there are meetings for parents on important issues and developments, such as the National Literacy initiative, and the school's behaviour initiative. Parents are encouraged to help in the school, and many do. The Parent-Teacher Association is a further resource for parental involvement. The school's efforts to promote dialogue, and the involvement of parents, are strong.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to promote better standards and improve the quality of education provided, the Governors, headteacher and staff should:

- ensure that the statutory requirements for information technology are met and that standards are raised; (*Paragraphs: 4; 21; 47; 52; 69; 72; 81; 84; 100; )*)
- ensure that the assessment procedures, and the teacher's practice of assessment, are consistent across the school; (*Paragraphs: 28; 37 )*)
- review the current practice of the withdrawal of pupils from lessons for extra help with reading, to ensure that this does not interrupt the continuous progress of the pupils in their learning across the range of the curriculum; (*Paragraphs: 25; 57*)
- improve the standard of the pupils' handwriting and presentation skills; ( *Paragraphs: 9; 69; 77; 81*)
- develop the roles of the co-ordinators in the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum to ensure that the highest standards possible are achieved; (*Paragraphs: 37; 46; 78; 83; 96; 104 )*)

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the school**

1. Cheveley Church of England Primary School is located near Newmarket and draws pupils from the villages of Cheveley, Ashley, Kirtling, Woodditton and Saxon Street. There are currently 134 pupils on roll. The school caters for girls and boys from the age of 4 to 11 years. There are 55 pupils on the school's register of special needs, which is above average. None has a statement of special educational need. The majority of the pupils are of European cultural heritage. The pupils attainment on entry is average and their socio-economic background is comparatively good, compared to the national picture. There are 12% of pupils eligible for free school meals, which is average. The pupils normally enter the school in the year in which they are five years of age and they are taught in a combined Reception and Year 1 class. At the time of the inspection, there were eleven children under five. The school has experienced a substantial amount of instability in its staffing over a long period, due to staff illness and staff mobility. It has not been possible for the school to fully resolve this situation, but it is being improved. Targets for improvement have been set and the school is well placed to match them.
2. As an introduction to its aims, the school states that its central purpose is "to provide the highest quality of education within a Christian context for the children who attend the school."

### 3. Key Indicators

#### Attainment at Key Stage 1

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	18	6	24

National Curriculum Test/Task		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	7	4	14
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	13	10	20
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	59	45	91
	National	80	81	84

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	6	7	12
	Girls	5	6	6
	Total	11	13	18
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	50	59	82
	National	81	85	86

#### Attainment at Key Stage 2

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	11	6	17

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	6	9	10
	Girls	5	6	5
	Total	11	15	15
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	65	88	88
	National	65	59	69

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	7	9	10
	Girls	5	6	6
	Total	12	15	16
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	71	88	94
	National	65	65	72

## Attendance

		%
Authorised	School	4.4
Absence	National comparative data	5.6
Unauthorised	School	0.2
Absence	National comparative data	0.5

## Exclusions

	Number	
Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory age) during 1998	Fixed period	0
	Permanent	0

## Quality of teaching

	%	
Percentage of teaching observed which is :	Very good or better	28.0
	Satisfactory or better	94.8
	Less than satisfactory	5.2

### 3. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

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

##### Attainment and progress

4. At the time of the last inspection, overall standards of attainment were appropriate at the Reception stage and satisfactory at Key Stages 1 and 2. Some weaknesses were identified in English. The pupils had poor listening skills. At Key Stage 1, pupils had difficulty with mental recall of number bonds. At Key Stage 2, attainment in information technology was reported to be good.
5. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection. The pupils are now achieving above average standards in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2. The pupils' listening skills have improved at both key stages and almost all the pupils show improvement in their mental computation skills. Standards in information technology have declined. They are now below the expected level at both key stages. The pupils have limited opportunities to develop their skills and understanding.
6. The pupils' attainment on entry to the Reception class is broadly similar to that expected of children of this age. They make good progress due to the very good quality of the teaching, which contributes significantly to their overall development. By the age of five, most of the pupils achieve the levels prescribed in the Desirable Learning Outcomes and their development is often above that expected for the age group.
7. The results of National Curriculum assessments during the period 1996 to 1998, show that the standards achieved by the pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 have remained below or well below the national averages. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have been better over the same period. Here, the English results have remained in line with the national average level, and the mathematics and science standards have been maintained at levels well above the national average.
8. The 1998 Key Stage 1 results indicate that the pupils achieved low standards in writing, well below average standards in reading and average standards in mathematics. Much better results were achieved at Key Stage 2. Mathematics and science standards were very high in comparison to national averages and to those achieved by schools of similar type and size. At Key Stage 2, English results were in line with both the national average, and with that for similar schools.
1. The comparative statistics for 1999 are not yet available. The indications are that the sound and often good standards have been maintained at Key Stage 2, and that the standards are rising at Key Stage 1. The current inspection shows that there has been a significant improvement in writing and spelling overall, and that the school's application of the National Literacy Strategy is meeting with some success. The pupils at Key Stage 1 attain average standards in English, mathematics and science. They also achieve satisfactory standards in religious education, art, geography, music and physical education. Attainment in information technology is below the expected level. Insufficient evidence was gained to make judgements about design technology and history at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, the English, mathematics and science standards remain similar to the average previous levels. The pupils achieve appropriate standards in religious education, art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. Standards in information technology are

unsatisfactory.

2. During the inspection, the pupils made good progress in most lessons. In a very few lessons, the pupils' progress was less than satisfactory. This was due to insufficient attention being paid to the previous attainment of some pupils, and the setting of tasks which failed to motivate them. The children under five make continuously good, and often very good progress. They are well prepared for the start of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. At Key Stage 1, and in the early part of Key Stage 2, the pupils' overall progress is satisfactory, except in information technology. The pupils make good, and often very good overall progress in the later part of Key Stage 2. However, their progress in information technology is unsatisfactory. Their knowledge understanding and skills are insufficiently developed.
3. The number of pupils on the school's register of special needs is almost twice the national average. The pupils with special educational needs make generally good progress. This is due to the good quality of the support which they receive. Some more able pupils at Key Stage 1 are insufficiently challenged. The school has set appropriate and realistic targets for the future improvement of standards in English and mathematics. There has previously been a significant variation in achievement of boys compared to girls at Key Stage 1. This group is now in Year 4. The school is monitoring the progress of this group of pupils, and is providing additional support. The strategy is already helping to improve standards in writing and spelling.
4. Overall, the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are appropriate to their age and stage, and they use them to support their learning in other subjects. For example, the pupils in Years 4 and 5 use their mathematical skills to analyse census information in geography lessons. Older pupils analyse data when comparing the climate and population of India, Egypt and England. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 use their literacy skills effectively to enhance their work in geography and history. However, the standards of handwriting, and the general presentation of work, are not as high as expected at any stage.

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

5. The majority of the pupils in the school have good attitudes towards their work. They are well-behaved, enthusiastic and eager to learn. A small minority of pupils at Key Stage 2, lack application and show immature and irresponsible attitudes. They are not seen as role models by the majority of pupils, including those under five, whose positive attitudes make a substantial contribution to their satisfactory progress and attainment. The pupils concentrate well on their work, show initiative, and respond well in question and answer sessions. The previous inspection report indicated a weakness in attitudes, behaviour and personal development in the school. The current inspection findings confirm that there has been a significant improvement in all these areas, which are now good overall. The pupils attitudes to their work in literacy and numeracy are positive. There have been no recent exclusions.
6. The behaviour of the vast majority of the pupils is good and this has a direct beneficial impact on the quality of life in the school. The teachers and other staff have high expectations for the good behaviour and the orderly conduct of the pupils. The pupils respond well to rules. They are courteous, polite and self-disciplined in the classrooms and the playground. The tendency towards disruptive behaviour of a small group at Key Stage 2, who show limited self-discipline and immature attitudes, is generally well



managed. The class management is not always firm and consistent and these pupils tend to drift off-task. The other pupils do not allow this uncooperative behaviour to affect them, and they continue to work sensibly. The permanent staff manage behaviour well. The pupils are encouraged to develop self-discipline and to develop good listening skills from the moment they enter the school. Bullying is known to be unacceptable and the pupils know that they can approach a 'squaddie' or a staff member if they have concerns. The school has a rota of pupils who act as helpers. They are known as 'squaddies'. The pupils respect one another, the staff and the school. All the displays and resources around the school are treated with care and pride.

7. The pupils' personal development is good. Opportunities for the pupils to take on responsibility are readily accepted by the helpers and by the student council members. They take their duties seriously and carry them out conscientiously. A very young pupil whose first language is not English was observed being supported by a team of 'squaddies', and younger and older pupils, during break periods. They were helping to teach her English, play hopscotch and count. The laughter and general merriment accompanying these activities, illustrates the good degree of success in relationships, and reflects the caring attitude of the pupils towards one another. The older pupils provide very good role models for the younger pupils, and are patient and kind in their attitude towards them. The pupils with special educational needs join in all aspects of the life of the school and are fully integrated into the day-to-day activities.
8. The relationships are good between the pupils and the staff, and amongst the pupils. The pupils work and play well together, sharing resources and helping one another in a positive and constructive manner. The teachers consistently emphasise politeness and consideration for others. They encourage the pupils to take responsibility for helping one another, for example when finding words in a dictionary at Key Stage 1. The good quality of the relationships is epitomised by the fact that the children under five settle happily into the school routines and adopt the standards of the orderly and caring community.

## 16. **Attendance**

9. The school has maintained its satisfactory record of attendance well. It is consistently in line with national attendance rates or slightly better. This has a good impact on the pupils' attainment and progress. The pupils are eager to attend, and they arrive punctually. Registration takes place promptly in all classes, and the start to the day is efficient and friendly. The marking of registers meets statutory requirements, and lessons start and finish on time.
10. The previous inspection noted that attendance documentation systems required fuller completion and that starting times were imprecise. Both of these issues have been effectively addressed by the school. This is an improvement.

## 18. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### 18. **Teaching**

11. The overall quality of the teaching is good. Ninety-five per cent of the lessons seen during the inspection were of a satisfactory standard or better. Many were very good.

A small percentage were unsatisfactory overall, but even here there were some strong aspects. The unsatisfactory elements arose where insufficient attention was given to building on the previous learning of the pupils, and the provision of tasks which failed to motivate some of them. The pupils' progress was then, unsatisfactory.

12. Well over forty per cent of the lessons seen were good and more than twenty-five per cent were very good. It is evident that the quality of the teaching has improved emphatically since the last inspection, when just seven per cent of the teaching seen fell into the very good category. This is a credit to the leadership and to the hard work of the teachers. It has been achieved despite the instability in staffing over recent years. During this inspection, it was necessary for the school to employ teachers temporarily to fill the posts of teachers absent due to illness. The temporary teachers contributed much to ensuring that standards did not fall. Additionally, the teachers' planning, criticised at the last inspection, is now very strong. This ensures that incoming teachers have clear guidelines for their work and, that standards and the progress of pupils can be maintained.
13. The work of the teachers of the children under five, at early Key Stage 1 and in the later part of Key Stage 2, often reaches a very high standard. Here, the lessons are not only well planned and the learning objectives carefully pursued, but the lesson activities are made very interesting. The pupils are encouraged to contribute their ideas, and the work is often given a practical basis which calls for 'hands-on' experiences. For example, a science lesson in Reception might include squirting paint through a pipette to explore pushes and pulls, and the effect of gravity. At Years 5 and 6, readings of Shakespeare include enacting scenes from the play and transcribing the older English into a modern day idiom. At the latter part of Key Stage 1, and at the lower end of Key Stage 2, the teaching is satisfactory and often good.
14. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects is generally secure and their expectations for behaviour and a strong work ethic are high. Only rarely does the good behaviour slip from its normal high standards for some pupils in the middle of Key Stage 2. A small group have a limited ability to concentrate and persevere with their learning, and they sometimes try to challenge the teachers' authority. Relationships are generally very good and the teachers' organisation of lessons is always conscientious. The methods they use to encourage the pupils to learn are always satisfactory and very often they are imaginative. This has a significant, positive impact upon the progress made by the pupils. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, targets are regularly set for what is to be achieved in the time available, and the resources are generally well matched to the needs of the pupils and to the curriculum. Homework is used appropriately to support the learning in classrooms. The teachers' use of assessment is developing well and the information collected is being increasingly used in planning future work. This is not yet a consistent feature in all classes, however.
15. The work of the peripatetic teacher of music, and the support given to the teachers by the learning support assistants, make an invaluable contribution to the pupils' learning opportunities. The school benefits from the work of numerous governors and parents who voluntarily assist in the school. These features have a very positive impact on the pupils' progress. Now that planning and assessment procedures have become firmly established, the combined work of the teachers and the support staff is beginning to have a good impact on standards, except in information technology. Here, the teachers do not promote the use of computers sufficiently to support learning across the range of the curriculum. The teaching pays good attention to the development of

the pupils' literacy skills and is increasingly focusing on the effective development of their numeracy skills. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported, and the carefully planned teaching for this large group is ensuring their generally good progress.

## 23. **The curriculum and assessment**

16. The curriculum overall meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum, for religious education and sex education. It is broad and generally balanced in its content, and ensures that the pupils have access to a wide range of learning experiences. It prepares them well for the next stage of their education. The school has considered the time allocation to subjects and gives additional time to English. The National Literacy Initiative has been effectively introduced and further time has been made available to develop the pupils' reading and writing skills. The National Numeracy Initiative has also been introduced. These are having a positive effect in raising standards, but tend to restrict the coverage of the foundation subjects. A weakness in the curriculum is the unsatisfactory provision for information technology. The school's planning and provision for this aspect has not kept pace with recent developments.
17. The curriculum for the children under five is good, and is based firmly in the six areas of learning that young children are expected to experience. Good opportunities are planned and provided for the children to learn through structured play. There is a strong emphasis on the development of the children's literacy and numeracy skills. A very positive feature at this stage is the involvement of parents in the learning processes. For example, parents are invited to attend, and help, in a reading session on a weekly basis. This is good practice and is welcomed by both children and parents. Effective use is made of assessment to help the teachers' planning and in meeting the individual needs of each child.
18. The work in literacy and numeracy is successfully helping to develop the pupils' listening and speaking skills, their knowledge of vocabulary and grammar and their mental computation skills at all stages. It is also extending their strategies for solving problems.
19. The school has curriculum policies and schemes of work for all subjects. These are central to the teachers' planning, which has improved considerably since the last inspection. It is now a strength. The teachers plan effectively and the learning objectives are shared beneficially with the pupils. The good planning does much to ensure the continuity of the pupils' experiences, even when permanent staff are absent. Homework is used effectively to support the work done in classrooms. The majority of parents who replied to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and attended the pre-inspection meeting confirm this.
20. The curriculum successfully promotes the pupils' personal and social development. There are planned opportunities for the pupils to work collaboratively and to take responsibility. There is an agreed sex education policy and the pupils are made aware of the dangers of drug abuse. The school aims to develop the pupils' independence and creates opportunities for them to express their views through a school council, and in class discussion times. The curriculum generally provides equality of opportunity, but the withdrawal of pupils for additional help in their learning, frequently results in them missing parts of lessons. This situation is in need of review and revision.

21. There is a range of extra-curricular activities that enhance the pupils' learning opportunities. These include music, games, including competitive sport, and drama. The pupils participate in team sports and compete against neighbouring schools. A further strength of the curriculum is the range of educational visits which support learning, especially in geography and history. The visits include an opportunity for older pupils to attend a residential outdoor pursuits centre.
22. There is good provision for the pupils who have special educational needs. The school is careful to plan the provision for these pupils as there are more than twice the national average number on the school's register of needs. Regular consultation takes place with the local education authority's support services, who help effectively in devising the pupils' individual education plans and in supporting the teachers in their work. The individual education plans are regularly reviewed and updated.
23. The school has developed good assessment procedures. There is a draft policy which provide the teachers with clear guidance. The present instability in staffing has meant that their continuous use across the range of the curriculum has been disrupted. This is unfortunate, but the school has plans to establish them fully, once the staffing has been stabilised. The teachers keep records of the pupils' progress and their reports to parents are detailed and informative. The headteacher monitors all assessments and has established a system to track the pupils' progress and ongoing achievements. This is used effectively to set targets for development.
24. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the curriculum significantly and has developed the procedures for assessment well.
32. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**
25. There is good overall provision for the pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's ethos is good. This is a marked improvement over the findings of the previous report when the pupils' disobedience and rudeness were having an adverse effect on the ethos and upon achievement, and there were limited opportunities for reflection. The school's present commitment to improved standards and quality is reflected in the pupils' generally good responses and their positive personal development. This improvement is endorsed by parents. Through lessons in religious education and in collective worship, the pupils are taught tolerance and understanding and to consider the feelings of others. Additionally, in personal and social education and in science, they are given opportunities to reflect upon the experiences of others and to appreciate the wonders of nature.
26. The school's provision for spiritual development is good throughout. The pattern of well planned and well delivered assemblies, which are clearly Christian in content, contributes significantly. Religious education lessons provide good opportunities to explore themes and beliefs with sensitivity. Personal and social education lessons help to develop trusting relationships and allow time for reflection. The pupils' work in art, design and technology, music and English often explores spirituality through words and ideas. The sense of wonder is well illustrated, for example, by the interest and excitement of the younger pupils in their tasks of dropping balls of play dough or paint to explore change and effect. Close links with the church and regular visits by the vicar, as well as a range of educational visits provide further enrichment of the spiritual dimension.
27. The provision for the pupils' moral development is good. The pupils are given a clear

understanding of right and wrong from their earliest arrival in school. They learn to work and play well together, and to show consideration and understanding of each others' needs and achievements. In the personal and social education lessons the pupils are carefully guided to consider their own rights, and their responsibilities towards others, especially those less fortunate than themselves. They are also made aware of moral issues, of the dangers of smoking and drug-taking, and of the reasons for school and society rules, to ensure fairness.

28. The school's provision for the pupils' social development is good, and it is consistently reinforced. The pupils are encouraged to accept responsibilities and to work for the good of the school and the community. The school promotes an ethos of praise and reward for the responsibilities taken, for positive behaviour and mature attitudes. The pupils respond to this ethos well and the minority who show an indifferent attitude are not emulated. The pupils have access to the student council where they may air grievances or put forward ideas for general consideration. The very good examples set by all the adults and older pupils create good role models for the pupils.

29. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The pupils are given opportunities to understand their own and earlier cultures through lessons in art, history, geography and music, and through visits to places of interest. However, there is a need to develop further the pupils' experiences of cultures and traditions other than their own, and to further their awareness and feelings for different forms of artistic expression found within other cultures.

37. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

30. The staff have continued the commitment to the welfare of the pupils noted during the last inspection, and improved upon it. Good support is given to all the pupils, including those with special educational needs. They take advantage of all the educational opportunities and they are well supported in their literacy development. The good quality of the relationships between staff and pupils has a direct impact on the standards achieved, and the progress of the pupils. The orderliness of the school as a whole reflects its good ethos.

31. The children under five are welcomed into a secure environment where careful procedures are in place to ensure their welfare and the promotion of positive values. The parents appreciate the quality of the pastoral care given to their children and the consideration given to the youngest by the staff and the older pupils. Good humour and respect are noticeable throughout the school and the atmosphere provides strong encouragement for all the pupils to progress in their learning. The older pupils are supported effectively in their transfer to secondary school. Many retain links with the school after they have left and, on occasions, they continue to seek help and guidance.

32. The school has developed clear, well documented procedures for encouraging positive behaviour and the staff are trained and knowledgeable in their interpretation and implementation. The promotion of positive values has resulted in a significant improvement in standards of behaviour. The monitoring of the pupils' progress, which was found to be in need of more rigour and focus at the last inspection, has been addressed. The pupils' academic progress is monitored both formally and informally by the staff, who work closely as a team. There are strategies in place for the use of assessment to inform the school's and teachers' planning, but these are not fully

effective in all areas, due to some instability in the staffing. It has been difficult for the school to develop and maintain the procedures with any continuity. Potentially higher attaining pupils are more effectively challenged and supported at the Reception stage and in the latter part of Key Stage 2 than elsewhere. The school is very aware of this situation and has developed good contingency plans to improve it, for example, by setting individual targets for the pupils' development.

33. There are good procedures in place to monitor attendance and the support of parents has been enlisted to ensure regular, punctual attendance. Good arrangements have been established to ensure the general well-being and safety of the pupils, for example, in physical education lessons and at playtimes, and in the tasks the pupils perform around the school, such as handling chairs at lunch times. The pupils are, consequently, tidy in their daily use of the resources. The staff are vigilant and aware, and sensitive to, the needs of the pupils. The procedures for child protection are effective and are well understood and efficiently followed. The grounds are litter-free, and the pupils are enabled to enjoy fully the resources of the school, and they take pride in their surroundings

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

34. The links with parents, and the quality of the partnership the school has with them, is a strength of the school. The parents are very supportive and are satisfied with the general attainment and progress the children make. The parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting spoke warmly of the encouragement the school gives them to be involved.

35. The quality of information provided by the school is very good. It is regular and informative and has included details of the national literacy initiative. Plans are in hand to provide information about the national numeracy initiative. Information is sent out giving the details of topic work and the 'themes' to be tackled, and includes tips for helping the child. Parent helpers and volunteers are given a very full 'briefing' booklet and a regular timetable. The parent/child reading sessions in the Reception and Year 1 class are attended by large numbers of parents. This involvement is valued and they feel that they understand what the school is trying to do. They are very supportive. Annual written reports to parents on their child's progress are very good. They are informative, pertinent, and they highlight areas for improvement.

36. The active Parents, Teachers and Friends association draws in people from the local community as well as parents. It raises invaluable funds for such items as outdoor climbing apparatus and playground markings. The Community Room in the school, used by local groups and the playgroup, ensures that the school is at the heart of the community. The pupils are often beneficially involved in the community in their topic work, and at festival times, and strong links are maintained with the local church. The school's multi-cultural links are few, although visitors from other faiths have visited the school to talk about their beliefs. Some of these visitors have been parents. These findings are similar to that found at the previous inspection.

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

44. **Leadership and management**

37. The good leadership provided by the headteacher is both purposeful and sensitive. The deputy headteacher provides very good support. As a team, these two senior managers are very active in setting targets for the school's development, and in trying to ensure that the targets are achieved. The progress of some of the developments has been hindered by the recent instability in staffing, caused by long-term illness and staff movement. Nevertheless, appropriate structures and systems for the development of the curriculum and teaching have been put in place. The needs of the school have been firmly identified and consistent action has been taken to bring about improvements. It is evident that the school has improved significantly in many aspects since the last inspection. This is largely due to the persistence, resourcefulness and hard-work of the headteacher and the deputy. Their commitment and professionalism is commendable. They, in turn, are supported well by a resourceful and hard-working staff, and by the committed and involved governors. The leadership provides a clear educational direction for the school. The school has improved the pupils' general behaviour, the opportunities for collaborative work by pupils, teachers' expectations, assessment procedures, core subject standards at Key Stage 2, teachers' planning and the overall ethos of the school, many of which were issues raised at the last inspection. The school's capacity for further improvement is good.
38. The governors take an active part in overseeing the school's work. Many assist regularly in the school. Their involvement in monitoring the curriculum, and the quality of the education provided, is increasing. Good procedures have been put in place to ensure this with the membership of the deputy headteacher in the work of the governors' curriculum committee, for example. A governor has taken on the responsibility of overseeing the school's literacy initiative and very positive work has taken place here to ensure parental understanding and involvement. A similar initiative is planned for the current numeracy initiative, started in September 1999. The school's work is monitored efficiently by governors, and the initiatives and the budget requirements are set out clearly in the prioritised school development plan. These priorities relate effectively to the school's aims, values and policies. The school's aims and policies are reflected well in its work. The accommodation has been extended to provide appropriate and well-appointed learning areas for each age group of pupils.
39. A further aspect of the good management of the school is the increasing involvement of the curriculum co-ordinators in determining aspects of the school's development plan. The work of the co-ordinators does not currently involve the support and monitoring of teaching and curriculum development, due to the very recent appointment of some staff to their posts, but the school has clear plans for the development of this aspect. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have established the terms of reference and procedures for this work, and have started the processes. This is another example of the effective management.
40. The school's ethos is good. There is a strong commitment to improving standards. There is also a strong commitment to improving the quality of education, through staff development and the pursuit of consistent practice throughout the school, for example in assessment procedures and the development of the curriculum co-ordinators' work. There is still work to be done in these areas. The management of the provision for special educational needs is good. Very effective use is made of the local support services. This, the good care taken in identifying the needs of pupils early on in their school career, the establishment of individual education plans, and the involvement of the pupils and parents in setting targets for development, significantly enhances the progress of the pupils who have specific learning needs.

41. An area in which the management has not kept pace with essential changes is in the provision for information technology. Here, the teaching skills and resources have not been developed sufficiently to match the needs of the required curriculum. This is understandable in circumstances where staffing has been a difficulty, and when a series of other national initiatives have taken precedence. However, the school has recognised the need and has included it as a priority in its' development plan. Money has been acquired from the National Grid for Learning initiative, and from the school's own resources, to ensure that the teaching and learning in information technology is improved in the near future. Apart from information technology, the statutory requirements are met.

49. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

42. The school has suitably qualified and experienced staff, a good level of accommodation and a satisfactory range of resources for most subjects, with the exception of information technology.

43. There are a sufficient teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum, of the children under five, and of the pupils with special needs. The teachers have appropriate qualifications for the age range of the pupils and their subject responsibilities. They share their expertise in religious education, music and physical education effectively. At the time of the inspection, the school experienced acute staffing difficulties due to illness and staff mobility. Two of the five teachers were temporary staff and two had been in post for less than half a term. The school has developed good strategies to monitor newly qualified staff, and to induct new teachers. The appraisal procedures meet statutory requirements and effective arrangements are in place to support the professional development of all staff. The priorities in development are efficiently linked to the priorities in the school development plan, and all staff participate in a wide range of in-service training. For example, the deputy headteacher is attending a course for potential headteachers.

44. There are sufficient learning support assistants who are well qualified in their roles. Both the teachers and the parents view them as an invaluable resource. They do much to enhance the learning opportunities of the pupils and ensure their overall good progress. All the staff make a very positive contribution towards providing a balanced curriculum and they are committed to raising standards. The caretaker and administrative staff are very efficient and they support the school well. They help to create the welcoming atmosphere of the school.

45. The school has a good range of accommodation. It provides a positive learning environment. It is well maintained, clean and tidy. The accommodation for the children under five is good and includes an enclosed area for outside play. The two school libraries, one for fiction and one for non-fiction, are well organised and they are used effectively. There is a good sized hall, and rooms which are used for music and group work. The outside area is adequate. An adventure playground is used in the summer months and there is a wildlife area. This area is in need of further development. The school makes good use of the village sports field for games activities.

46. There are adequate resources for all the curriculum areas, with the exception of information technology. During the inspection, some computers were out of order, some equipment failed and some was under-used. Overall, the equipment does not match the current learning needs. The resources for the children under five are satisfactory, and the school has ensured that there are sufficient good quality



resources to promote literacy.

47. Since the last inspection, there have been improvements in staff development. The accommodation has been substantially improved, and there are better resources for design and technology, geography and history. The school has not managed to keep up to date with the need to improve resources for information technology. This is a weakness, and is one factor which has resulted in the fall in standards for the subject.

**55. The efficiency of the school**

48. Apart from the unsatisfactory aspect of the information technology provision, which is under-developed, the school is efficient. It is increasing its efficiency steadily. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection, despite the difficulties of some instability in staffing. These improvements have done much to enhance the learning opportunities for the pupils and improve their quality of education. The use of funding to support the pupils with special educational needs and to support staff development is good. The resources are used well and the good deployment of the teaching and non-teaching staff has a beneficial impact on the standards achieved and progress of the pupils.
49. The financial planning is carefully done and the school development plan clearly and positively focuses on appropriate developments. The Governing Body maintains a firm overview of spending and has retained substantial funds to meet the costs of the planned developments, as for example, with information technology. Regular financial reports are provided for the governors and the headteacher, and for the curriculum co-ordinators, about the level of funds available. The co-ordinators have prescribed annual sums with which to develop the resources for the subjects and aspects for which they are responsible. This is efficient and helps to ensure the purposeful involvement of all.
50. The financial controls noted during the inspection are efficient. The administrative staff are efficient, and carry out their work of supporting the school very well. The school's systems and procedures work efficiently. However, while the school ensures that school-funds are regularly audited, the main funds have not, evidently, been audited by the local education authority services for more than eleven years. No audit details were available to the inspection team to ensure the verification of financial procedures.
51. The teaching and support staff, including those from outside agencies who support the provision for the pupils with special educational needs, are deployed efficiently and effectively. Considerable use is made of voluntary parental and governor help also. This is effective in providing pupils with extended learning opportunities. In some instances, however, the support of voluntary helpers means that some pupils are withdrawn from classrooms to read, for example, and they subsequently miss out on parts of important work in lessons. This tends to create a disjointed pattern in some of the pupils' learning and slow the continuity of their progress in other areas. This is not efficient.
52. The headteacher teaches for the equivalent of two days each week. She manages a heavy workload efficiently. The deputy headteacher has too few opportunities to manage her large workload, in combination with the headteacher, so that the pace of developments can be increased to achieve a greater impact on overall standards. The

school is aware of the need for increased managerial time.

53. The socio-economic circumstances of the pupils are relatively favourable. The pupils' attainment on entry to the school is average, as is their overall attainment in relation to national expectations, except in information technology. The attitudes, behaviour and personal development, and the overall progress of the pupils is satisfactory, and often good. The quality of education provided by the school is good, while the unit cost per pupil is average. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

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

54. The children under five are taught in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. At the time of the inspection there were eleven pupils under five years of age. Most have experienced early education at the pre-school playgroup which takes place on the same site as the school. The overall attainment of the children on entry is generally average, although there is evidence of a wide range of abilities. The children enter school in the year in which they are five. The school has previously staggered the entry of the children over a period of some weeks to ensure a smooth introduction to school. This year, all the children entered full-time at the same time. This has been a successful development. They are firmly and sensitively introduced to school life and to the routines of learning. The youngest children learn well from the good role models provided by their older classmates.
55. Initial (Baseline) assessments are made of their stages of development shortly after starting, and the results are used well to guide the teachers' planning in meeting their needs. The learning environment is lively and well organised and the curriculum is carefully based on the Desirable Learning Outcomes recommended for children at this stage of their education. The quality of the teaching is generally good, and often very good. The activities provided are lively and interesting. The lessons are well managed, and effective use is made of the good resources. The environment is cheerful and inviting and it is well organised. These features do much to promote the children's progress. Their progress is good. A further very good feature is the way in which the school has involved the parents in the early education of the children, through voluntary support and, for example, the parents and children's weekly shared reading sessions. This is good practice. The children's literacy skills are promoted well throughout the curriculum.

### **63. Personal and social development**

56. The children have positive relationships with the adults who help them, and with their peers. They respond well to the challenges provided by the lively activities, and are learning to work effectively as individuals or as part of a group. They concentrate well and develop positive attitudes to learning. They are developing a respect for themselves and each other, and are learning to share fairly, and to be aware of the effect of their actions upon others. The children behave very well. They make positive contributions to discussions and activities, and are confident in expressing their feelings. The teaching is very good, and emphasises the need for good relationships, for caring, good behaviour and effort with enjoyment.

### **64. Language and literacy**

57. The children are provided with many opportunities to listen and to talk. Most can describe what they are doing and join in with familiar stories. They follow instructions well and share ideas and feelings. They can make confident choices at appropriate moments. They are learning to explore and investigate ideas, and to give opinions. The children are acquiring a keen love of books. This is much encouraged. They use and share books daily and the parent and children's weekly reading sessions enhance this keenness well. They handle books with care and many can already determine the information provided on the front cover of many books as well as in the illustrations inside. They understand how a book is organised. Many are keen to explore the

mechanical books which are available, using a stylus and in built audio tapes, and so have an early introduction to information technology. They also have good opportunities to make marks and to write. Some have learned to recognise both lower and upper case letters, and most are able to form recognisable letters and write their own name. The children's early literacy skills are effectively promoted. The teaching is very good.

**65. Mathematics**

58. The children are learning to compare objects for size and quantity, and to make patterns. Most have a good grasp of the names of simple basic shapes. They can identify the similarities and differences in sets of objects, and the position of things, such as 'in front' or 'behind' or 'up' and 'down'. The children participate well in number games involving counting. Many can count, and some can identify written number names and symbols. They are becoming familiar with numbers in the environment and are starting to record them accurately. They are confidently building a mathematical vocabulary and their numeracy skills are being effectively advanced. The teaching of mathematics is good. It pays attention to the effective development of the children's early numeracy skills, and the children respond well and make good progress.

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

59. The children's knowledge and understanding of the world is consistently advanced across a wide range of areas by the very good teaching. They learn to use simple tools, such as scissors, glue sticks and pipettes effectively. The teaching effectively encourages the children's use of everyday language in their explorations, and they are already gaining a technical vocabulary, as when carrying out scientific experiments. They learn, with their older classmates, such words as 'push' and 'pull' and 'forces'. In an exciting activity using pipettes and paint, seen during the inspection, the children advanced their scientific knowledge rapidly, and were confident in their understanding when introduced to the word 'gravity'. They learn about the past and are beginning to compare it with the present when they handle old and new objects, or discuss ages and birthdays. They have an introduction to the use of computers and tape recorders and learn how to handle technological equipment safely. The teaching is good and it promotes the children's learning very effectively.

**67. Physical development**

60. The children learn the names of the different parts of the body and are encouraged to develop a positive attitude towards health and physical activity. They also learn about safety and about awareness of others when they are moving about a space. They show a ready willingness to get involved. The children enjoy practising skills, such as throwing and catching a bean bag, and they are increasing their hand and eye co-ordination rapidly. No use of larger, mobile apparatus was seen during the inspection. The children use small tools, such as paint brushes appropriately and most can, with support, turn a cardboard box inside out and glue it back together, so that they can use it for modelling. The teaching of this aspect of learning is good.

**68. Creative development**

61. The children's creative development is effectively fostered by the supportive teaching. Through a variety of appropriate activities they develop an awareness of shape, colour, texture and pattern and increase their observational skills. They use modelling materials, such as play dough, paint and pencils well to make marks and images, for

example, favourite foods for the class toy kiwi. They respond to a range of music, singing with some enthusiasm, and they respond imaginatively to stories and rhymes. The teaching of this aspect is good.

## 69. ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

### English

62. Standards in English were sound at both Key Stages at the time of the last inspection. This position has not radically changed. Overall standards match national expectations. The inspection findings show that attainment is average overall, and is improving. There has been a substantial improvement in the development of the pupils' speaking and listening skills, in reading, and in their writing and spelling skills at Key Stage 1. The results of the Key Stage 1 tests in 1999, confirm an improvement over the 1998 standards and those for the previous two years when they were low compared to those of similar schools. The results of the end of Key Stage 2 tests in 1998, show that the standards achieved in English firmly match the national averages, and are rising. The problem of the underachievement of boys, compared to girls is still there, but the school has focused on improving the attainments of both groups. It is increasingly successful in achieving its objectives. The overall progress of the pupils is good. The school has large numbers of pupils on its register of special needs. They are being well supported in their development of their skills in the use of language. They make good progress. The pupils with the potential for higher attainment are being more effectively challenged.
63. There are three aspects where the school has yet to achieve higher standards. These are in the pupils' handwriting and presentation skills and in the use of information technology. Most of the pupils develop a cursive handwriting style by the time they are eleven, but good handwriting habits are not a consistent, or a progressively developed feature. Much of the writing is in pencil rather than pen at the later stages. It often shows a mixture of printing and joined writing. The quality of the presentation needs also to be improved. Standards are not high enough. Insufficient attention is given to the use of information technology to support the pupils work in English at all stages.
64. The overall teaching of English is good. It is stronger in Reception and at the early part of Key Stage 1, and in the latter part of Key Stage 2, and in the support of pupils with special educational needs, than elsewhere. At other stages it is satisfactory, and it has good elements. Great emphasis is placed on the development of the pupils' reading skills. This is beneficial. The good early start made at the Under Fives and Reception stage provides a sound basis for the pupils' later development. Speaking and listening skills are also firmly developed through good practice. During the inspection, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were observed rehearsing a scene from Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. The use by a pupil, of a 'rustic voice' for one of the characters, illustrated the pupils' understanding, enhanced the interest, and added to the comedy of the scene very effectively. Lessons in English are planned efficiently and the aims of the National Literacy Initiative have been interpreted well by the teachers. A good balance is maintained in the teaching and learning between the various aspects of English to aid the pupils' all-round development.
65. The pupils generally respond well to their work at all stages. Their attitudes are positive. They write ably in a variety of forms, for example, stories, accounts, letters, descriptions, poems and, later, in play form. They behave well and most respond confidently in question and answer sessions. Most can present their ideas verbally or in writing successfully. They show good levels of concentration and effort, especially the higher attaining pupils and those who have extra support. The work in English promotes the pupils' personal development successfully but more could be done to promote their pride in their work. English is used effectively across the range of the

curriculum, particularly in science, geography and in history.

66. The headteacher is the co-ordinator for English. This role is carried out purposefully and well and is leading to increasingly better standards and progress for the pupils throughout. The resources are generally satisfactory, and are readily accessible for both staff and the pupils. They include two libraries, one for fiction and one for non-fiction texts. The quality of the information technology resources, however, do not match the current needs of the English curriculum or the pupils.

74. **Mathematics**

67. Standards at the last inspection were satisfactory, but significant weaknesses were noted, and the progress of the pupils was uneven. The 1998 National Curriculum assessment results show that most pupils achieve the standards expected of seven-year-olds, and that few pupils achieve at a higher level. When compared to national standards, overall attainment at the required level, Level 2, is above average, while attainment at a higher level is below average. When compared with schools of similar type and size, the results overall are below average. The results of tests over the last three years have been similar. Significant variation is indicated between the attainment of boys and girls, with boys achieving standards below average and girls above it. The 1999 results indicate that some improvement has taken place.

68. National Curriculum assessment results at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1998 show that most pupils achieve the standards expected of eleven-years-olds, and that nearly a third achieve at a higher level. The results are well above the national average and are very high in comparison to similar schools. A similar pattern has been achieved over a period of three years. The 1999 results indicate that further improvement has been made. Since the last inspection, standards have remained satisfactory at Key Stage 1, and the weaknesses remedied, and they have improved slightly, at Key Stage 2. The impact of the literacy developments has been effective in developing the pupils' vocabulary, and the numeracy initiative is helping to enhance their mental mathematical skills.

69. Inspection evidence confirms that, at the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils' attainment is in line with the national average but that few pupils are on target to achieve higher levels. Most of the pupils have a secure understanding of place value to one hundred and recognise multiples of two, five and ten. They confidently add and subtract numbers to twenty and can identify odd and even numbers. They have a secure mathematical vocabulary. This is reflected in their knowledge of a variety of shapes and their properties. The inspection confirms that the standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are high. The pupils develop good strategies for solving problems and present their results in a clear and organised way. They have a secure knowledge of multiplication tables and can confidently multiply two-digit numbers. They recognise proportions of a whole and use fractions and percentages to describe them. They have a clear understanding of equivalent fractions. The pupils know how to calculate area and perimeter. They are able to collect data and can display their findings in graphical form, using a computer where appropriate. A good example of this was noted when the pupils studied the property pages of the local newspaper and used information technology to present their findings about the number of houses for sale and rent in different villages.

70. The pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1. The best progress is in number

work. Progress is satisfactory in their learning about shapes, but less secure in using standard measures. The pupils continue to make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2 and significantly good progress in Years 5 and 6. Throughout the key stage, the pupils successfully extend their knowledge, understanding and skills in mental mathematics. The pupils who have special educational needs make sound progress at both key stages. The school has introduced the National Numeracy Strategy, and this is having a positive effect in developing the pupils' mental computation skills and their speaking and listening skills, when they explain a task.

71. The pupils at both Key Stages show a positive attitude towards learning. They show interest and enjoyment, and are usually attentive and eager to answer their teacher's questions. They enjoy working co-operatively, as when testing each others knowledge of multiplication tables. A weakness in the pupils' mathematical work, is the lack of attention given to its presentation. It is often untidy. The teaching is good at both key stages. Teachers plan their lessons in detail and each contains clear learning targets. These targets are shared with the pupils. The teachers' class management skills are secure and effective use is made of time and resources. Homework is very effectively used to support the learning in classrooms.
72. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the future development of the subject, but limited opportunities to observe lessons in other classes. Most other members of staff are either newly appointed or temporary, but the school has recognised the need to provide more support, and to monitor the teaching and learning more systematically.

#### 80. **Science**

73. At the time of the last inspection, standards in science matched the national average. The National Curriculum Teacher Assessments in science in 1998 indicate that the pupils' overall attainments were broadly in line with the national average, but that the aspects of Experimental and Investigative Science ( SC1) and Physical Processes (SC4) were below average. The results at Key Stage 2, in 1998, show that the pupils generally attained standards well above the national average and well above the average for schools of similar type and size. The inspection findings confirm this good picture. It is significant that the match between the attainments of the eleven-year-old boys and girls is closer in science, and incidentally, in mathematics than it is in English. Both groups perform well in tests.
74. The lower attainment in some aspects of science noted at the end of Key Stage 1, is resolved by the time the pupils are eleven. The school pays good attention to the development of the pupils scientific skills at Key Stage 2 as well as to the content of the curriculum that needs to be learned. Consequently, the pupils achieve a broad and balanced science education, which includes features on health. They make good progress overall. The pupils' progress is very good at the Under Fives and early Key Stage 1 level, and good at the latter end of Key Stage 2. It is satisfactory at the other stages, and has good elements. Those with special educational needs also make good progress. Pupils at all stages carry out experiments effectively and efficiently, make predictions, carry out fair tests and record their observations. The firm effort made to ensure that the very youngest pupils think 'scientifically' from the beginning of their school career provides an example of the good quality of the science education currently being provided. The seven-year-olds engage in experiments to test the force of gravity and the effects of forces on objects. Older pupils study soil samples to ascertain the different and similar characteristics. The pupils of eleven study the



properties of materials, such as how much of a substance can be dissolved, carefully weighing and measuring the materials to ensure a fair test. The pupils' literacy skills are effectively advanced in the science work, but the emphasis on increasing numeracy skills has yet to take hold.

75. The quality of the scientific findings is usually good whatever the stage the pupils are at. However, the quality of the presentation of their findings leaves something to be desired. As in much of the English work, the standards of presentation are not high. This lessens the pride the pupils' take in their otherwise good work. Also, insufficient use is made of information technology to support learning and teaching in science at any stage. The teaching is good at early Key Stage 1, and at the later stage of Key Stage 2. Elsewhere, it is satisfactory overall. The lessons are well planned and efficiently organised to promote the pupils continuous progress. The teachers' expectations are generally high and they show good enthusiasm and knowledge of the subject. Emphasis is placed effectively on developing the pupils' observational and investigative skills and the resources are used efficiently.
76. The pupils are interested in science. They engage in experiments confidently and with interest. They work together well and readily share resources, ideas and findings. They behave very well. The youngest concentrate hard and remain on task, acting as 'scientists', despite the very real excitement of exploring a pipette full of paint, for example. The older pupils also work diligently, and show thoughtful responses to the questions and problems posed to them. The pupils' attitudes are good throughout. Their personal development and their literacy skills are enhanced well through their science work.
77. The co-ordinator for science has a good grasp of the subject needs and the needs of the pupils. There are plans to develop further the school's assessment strategies and procedures for science, in line with the other core subjects of English and mathematics. The resources are adequate. They include a pond and an environmental area, which the school recognises as in need of maintenance and further development. A new co-ordinator is to take over the role in the near future, and it is determined that these tasks will be part of her role and activities.

85. **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

85. **Information technology**

78. Attainment at the end of both key stages is below that expected for the respective age of the pupils. The pupils' progress is unsatisfactory and standards have declined since the last inspection. During the inspection, computers were rarely in use. Each class had a short, time-tabled lesson, but in other lessons the computers were used insufficiently to support teaching or learning.
79. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils are familiar with a mouse and keyboard but lack confidence in explaining how to communicate ideas in different forms, including text, tables and pictures. The pupils do not develop their keyboard skills sufficiently and do not meet the targets identified in the school's scheme of work. They know how to load a disk, but do not develop skills in redrafting their work, using editing tools. They are unable to explain how to enter data into a program. Only with prompting are they able to discuss the use of information technology in the outside world. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils develop satisfactory skills in handling and communicating and

information. They are able to use their word-processing skills to refine and present ideas and information in different forms. For example, pupils in Year 6 use their library skills to research information on the planets and present their findings in a variety of font and script size. They confidently describe how to add to, amend and interrogate stored information. However, the opportunities for them to do so are limited, and there is no widespread use of computers across the range of the curriculum. The pupils' opportunities to use CD ROMs are also limited.

80. The progress the pupils make is very uneven. It is unsatisfactory, and this is directly related to the lack of opportunity for the pupils to have 'hands-on' experiences. They are insufficiently challenged at all stages. Some pupils have sound skills and some good skills in the use of computers, but these are often gained at home rather than through work at school. The pupils with special educational needs make less progress than expected. Nevertheless, most pupils show enjoyment and commitment when using technology. They work very co-operatively and sustain their concentration, even when difficulties arise. They readily seek help and share any expertise, but express frustration at the lack of opportunity they have to use computers.
81. The teaching is uneven in its quality. There is some good teaching in the subject but, overall, it is unsatisfactory. Where the teachers have secure subject knowledge and enthusiasm, the teaching is good. The teachers' class management skills are effective and the pupils' attention is retained during explanations and discussions. Where the teaching is unsatisfactory, tasks are insufficiently matched to the pupils' abilities, and class management is insecure. The pupils' skills are insufficiently well promoted, and information technology is not used across a broad spectrum of the curriculum.
82. Overall, the available resources are not used sufficiently to promote the pupils knowledge, understanding and skills in the use of information technology, or in the development of the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The school has not kept pace with developments in the subject since the last inspection. The resources are showing their age and are prone to failure. This is frustrating to both teachers and pupils and impedes teaching and learning. The school has recognised the need for curriculum re-development. It is a priority in the school's development plan. Funds, including a National Grid for Learning grant, have been allocated to improve resources and for the development of staff expertise. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the future development of the subject, and for an improvement in standards.

90. **Religious education**

83. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at both Key Stages. The school follows the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, and its overall work is supported by a statement on the development of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions of the curriculum. The teaching is based firmly on Christian principles, and appropriate attention is given to providing the pupils with a knowledge and understanding of some other religions.
84. The pupils at Key Stage 1 learn about the range of special books associated with religious beliefs, such as the Bible and the Koran. They learn about the festivals and family life of those who hold particular beliefs, and about Jesus Christ as leader and teacher. They also make visits to the local church as part of their studies of special places. They gain good insights into a variety of beliefs and traditions and make satisfactory progress in their learning. The work is carefully and progressively

continued at Key Stage 2, where the pupils learn, for example, about the Creation story, people famed for their faith and commitment, and about sacred writings. The pupils at this stage also make satisfactory progress in their learning, including those pupils with special educational needs.

85. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory overall. The lessons are efficiently planned and the teachers encourage discussion and the sharing of ideas and thoughts. When teachers mark the pupils' work they take care to be reflective, and to encourage dialogue with their comments. The teaching is supplemented effectively by regular visits of the local clergy to lead assemblies and to work in classrooms, and by occasional visitors who have experiences of religious work to share. School assemblies often usefully initiate, extend and reflect the work done in the classrooms and the pupils at both key stages show interest in the themes and ideas that are presented to them. The generally careful quality of their work in their workbooks, often illustrates their interest. The resources for religious education are satisfactory and a programme for their extension and updating has been initiated. A sound policy and scheme of work support the work of the teachers

93. **Art**

86. The quality of the pupils' work in art is generally in line with that expected for the age group. The pupils make interesting observational drawings and they paint freely and imaginatively, especially at Key Stage 1. The pupils at later Key stage 2 have a sound understanding of size and perspective, and their observational skills are good. When studying the work of famous artists such as Van Gogh, they can create good quality images in the style of the artist. They use a range of media, including pastels and clay effectively. The felt-collages which are displayed in the school are striking, particularly the pupils' work on Cheveley Fields. All the pupils use individual sketchbooks to practice techniques and to record ideas and information for further development in their work. This is good practice.

87. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. Some of the teaching is good. The activities provided are interesting, and often effectively reflect work in other areas of the curriculum, such as geography and history. Emphasis is placed on the learning of techniques and in exploring a wide range of media and ideas. The pupils at each stage are interested in art. They work hard and conscientiously and show enjoyment in it. The resources for art are good and readily accessible. Effective use is made of the local authority support services for art to help the teachers increase their knowledge and understanding of the subject, and the pupils in their work.

95. **Design and technology**

88. One lesson involving some technology was observed at Key Stage 1 during the inspection. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements on the progress of the pupils at this stage. The judgements made about Key Stage 2 are based on a small number of lesson observations, scrutiny of previous work and discussions with staff and some of the pupils.

89. The youngest pupils can, with support, take a cardboard box to pieces and reassemble it for use in model-making. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils can produce step-by-step plans that identify the main stages of making a model. They can

list the tools, materials and processes needed. Some good examples of work with wax were noted. The pupils are aware of the safety issues involved in making things. They confidently follow their own designs and cut and join materials accurately. They can recognise the features which are successful in each others' designs and suggest improvements. The clay model house plaques, noted during the inspection, are of good design and quality. They show careful attention to detail. In food technology lessons, the pupils discuss the nutritional value of various fillings when producing a filled jacket potato dish. They enjoy their work, behave well, and take pride in their achievements. Most of the pupils make satisfactory, and often good progress, including those with special educational needs.

90. The quality of the teaching is good. The teachers ensure that their planning includes clear learning targets for the pupils. A good balance is maintained between instruction, discussion, activity and analysis of the results. Class management is firm and secure and the teachers are enthusiastic about the subject. There is a clear policy for the development of design and technology and the teachers' planning is good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The role of the co-ordinator in overseeing the school's work in the subject is insufficiently developed.

98. **Geography**

91. The pupils make satisfactory progress in geography at both Key Stages, and achieve satisfactory standards of work. This includes those pupils who have special educational needs. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when no judgements were made for Key Stage 1 and the attainment and progress at Key Stage 2 was variable.
92. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils have a sound knowledge of the local area. They can express their views on the attractive and unattractive features of their environment. They recognise a variety of building materials and how they are used and they understand how the environment can be damaged by litter and pollution. Most can identify the position of the school on a map of the local area. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils have developed their knowledge of the physical and human features of the village of Cheveley. They construct their own maps and use four-figure grid references. They recognise how villages change as a result of changes in lifestyles. The pupils have a knowledge of the climate, population and industry of some other countries, such as India and Egypt. They are able to locate continents and countries on a globe, and know how to use an atlas. The younger pupils understand some of the effects of weather, and the older pupils understand the processes of evaporation and condensation. They can give clear explanations of the weather cycle.
93. The pupils attitude to learning is positive. They respond well to questions and they listen attentively. The older pupils show good attention to detail and presentation in their project workbooks. Sometimes a small group of pupils in Years 4 and 5 do not sustain their concentration well, and this can distract other pupils. This happens when the tasks set are not sufficiently challenging to maintain their interest.
94. The teaching is satisfactory overall. Lessons are planned well and have clearly stated learning objectives. Information technology is not sufficiently used in geography lessons, to support the teaching and learning and the monitoring and evaluation of the provision for the subject has not been developed. This is a weakness.

## History

95. The subject is taught as part of a termly cycle, and no history lessons took place during the inspection. The available evidence is insufficient to make judgements on the quality of work at Key Stage 1, or upon the quality of the teaching. The judgements regarding Key Stage 2 are based on the scrutiny of previous work and discussions with pupils.
96. By the age of eleven, the pupils have experienced a balanced curriculum that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum orders. They develop a sense of history, and are able to describe in detail the lifestyles of people who lived in Ancient Egypt, and in the Tudor and Victorian periods. They can describe the characteristic features of these periods and they speak with enthusiasm about visits to local historical places, such as Kentwell Hall and Stibbington. They can discuss the differences in social class and the changes brought about by the development of roads and railways. The pupils' overall progress is satisfactory, as is the progress of the pupils with special educational needs.
97. The school has an informative and helpful curriculum policy, and scheme of work. It supports the teachers' planning well. The role of the curriculum co-ordinator has been developed in monitoring the planning and the resources, but not yet in monitoring teaching and learning throughout the school.

## 105. Music

98. Music-making is a strong feature of the school's work and the quality of the pupils' work is generally good. They make good progress in learning to play a variety of percussion instruments at Key Stage 1. This is extended at Key Stage 2, to include tuned instruments, such as the ocarina and the violin. The pupils' singing skills are average. They sing tunefully and with reasonable accuracy at all stages, although more reluctantly at the latter end of Key Stage 2. The pupils handle instruments competently to make the required sounds, for example, when illustrating the light sound of a feather falling or sounds to illustrate movement. They listen well and can tell their ideas about music and sounds and sound-making effectively. The pupils learning to play the ocarina show good confidence, and ability, and they make good progress. They follow simple diagrammatic notation accurately and confidently. Older pupils who are learning the violin, show good fingering skills and they follow simple notation well. They produce increasingly accurate, and musical, performances. They also show good awareness of other performers when playing in ensemble. Some are beginning to evaluate the quality of their own work. They make very good progress at Key Stage 2, and their general attainment is above expectations for the age group.
99. The pupils show enjoyment in their music-making and in music generally. They work with enthusiasm and interest and share and take turns in performances, to good effect. The teaching overall is good. It is often very good. The cycle of activities provided at Key Stage 2, when the pupils work in small groups with more than one teacher, is innovative and effective. It promotes good listening and performance skills and offers the pupils a wide range of musical activities in a short space of time. This is efficient and it has a positive effect on the pupils' opportunities and progress. The peripatetic teaching is very good and adds beneficially to the overall musical provision.

## 107. **Physical education**

100. The inspection lesson observations did not cover the entire range of the physical education curriculum. The observations made were of games activities only. The quality of the pupils' work in this aspect of physical education is satisfactory overall. The youngest pupils are able to throw and catch bean bags with increasing accuracy and control, and they show good awareness of space. They work well as members of a group in team activities. The good progress made early on is continued up to the later stages of Key Stage 2, where the pupils display appropriate games skills. They can handle a hockey stick appropriately and are developing sound skills in ball control and the tactics of attack and defence. They show good teamwork skills and are establishing the rules of fair play. The pupils practising soccer skills can dribble and pass, and head a ball efficiently. They are aware of the need to maintain a level of fitness in order to play games, and of the effect of exercise on the body.
101. The programme of study for the pupils at Key Stage 1 includes games, gymnastics and dance. This is extended at Key Stage 2 to include athletics, outdoor and adventurous activities and swimming. The programme is based on a focused cycle of activities over the year, and, at Key Stage 2 some activities are seasonal. An annual trip to the Grafham Outdoor Pursuits Centre is made, where the older pupils experience climbing, water sports and initiative training. Swimming for the Year 4 pupils takes place in takes place over a period of eight weeks in the Autumn term. Evidence suggests that the pupils achieve the minimum requirements in swimming before they leave the school. Care is taken to promote the pupils' awareness of safety issues throughout the work in physical education. The pupils respond well to the generally good teaching.
102. At the time of the inspection, a governor assisted the teaching staff in the teaching of games skills because of staff absence. This was beneficial, and is an example of the governors' general involvement in the school, and the good support they give. The school uses the village playing field for games activities. This area is also used by the local population for walking dogs, and the grass is sometimes too long for the efficient development of the pupils' control of a ball in games activities. The range and quality of the equipment and resources for physical education is good, and these are used well to promote the pupils' general progress. A range of extra-curricular activities in sport are provided, some in association with other local schools.

## 110. PART C: INSPECTION DATA

### 103. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 32 lessons or parts of lessons were observed.
- A sample of pupils from Reception, Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6 were heard reading.
- Samples of the pupils' work from all year groups were scrutinised.
- Discussions were held with groups of pupils about their life and work in school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and members of the Governing Body prior to the inspection.
- A meeting was held for parents prior to the inspection. 21 parents attended.
- A questionnaire was provided for parents in which parents could express their views about the school and its work. 26 returns were received.
- School financial, planning, and administrative documents were scrutinised, as were the minutes of meetings.
- Curriculum policies, schemes of work, other aspect policies and samples of reports were scrutinised.
- Registers were scrutinised.
- Registration periods, assemblies, playtimes, lunchtimes and after-school sessions were observed.
- Meetings were held with members of the teaching staff, non-teaching staff, governors and the parent/teachers' association to discuss the life and work of the school and their role in it.
- The Chair of Governors and the Chair of the Finance Committee were interviewed.

## 1. 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	134	0	55	15

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	5.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.1

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week	40

Average class size:	26.8
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### Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
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	£
Total Income	235719
Total Expenditure	232897
Expenditure per pupil	1606.19
Balance brought forward from previous year	24000
Balance carried forwards to next year	26822



## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	134
Number of questionnaires returned:	26

### 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	34.6	65.4	0	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	46.2	46.2	3.8	0	3.8
The school handles complaints from parents well	7.7	53.8	30.8	7.7	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	11.5	69.3	11.5	7.7	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	19.3	61.5	15.4	3.8	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	15.4	65.4	15.4	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	15.4	61.5	23.1	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	11.5	73.2	11.5	3.8	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	19.3	80.7	0	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	15.4	53.8	27.0	3.8	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	46.2	42.3	11.5	0	0

### Other issues raised by parents

Some parents raised the issue of pupils' progress in mixed age classes. No evidence was forthcoming during the inspection that the pupils' progress was insufficient in any curriculum area due to this necessary administrative arrangement.

Some parents were concerned about the instability of the staffing. The inspection found that this, while very unfortunate, is not a problem of the school's making but one with which, by force of circumstances, it is having to deal. The inspection noted that, given the circumstances, the school is dealing with it as effectively as it can.

### Summary of responses

Not applicable.