

INSPECTION REPORT

Barby Church of England Primary School Barby

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique Reference Number: 121958

Headteacher: Mrs Angela Tilston

Reporting inspector: Mr Fred Riches

Dates of inspection: 12 – 14 October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707666

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 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Daventry Road Barby Nr Rugby CV 23 8TR
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Windatt
Date of previous inspection:	April 1996

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Fred Riches, Rgl	Mathematics Information technology History	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management
Ian Blair, Lay Inspector	Physical education	Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Efficiency Curriculum and assessment Staffing
Norma Myers	English Art Geography Music Under fives Special educational needs Science	
Sandra Teacher	Design and technology Religious education Equal opportunities	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Accommodation and learning resources

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MAIN FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Achieves above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2.
Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good.
Staff show good care for pupils, establish good relationships and provide good moral and social education.
The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by governors and senior staff.
The school makes good use of visits and visitors, to bring history alive for example.
Extra-curricular provision and partnership with parents are strengths of the school and help promote positive pupil attitudes.

WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES

Teachers do not use assessment information sufficiently to raise their own and pupils' expectations, especially in mental and oral work in mathematics.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs has not been well organised until recently and still needs attention.
The school's policies to cover sex education and drugs education in the context of personal, social and health education are old and not in practice.

The school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses, but these will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. It has addressed all major weaknesses highlighted in the last inspection and overcome almost all of them. Planning and assessment systems are now in place and co-ordinators' roles are developing. The governing body and senior management have introduced systems for monitoring the curriculum and standards, but still have work to do in this area. Strategic planning still needs attention. The school has improved the quality of teaching and raised standards in English, mathematics and science. It has raised standards in information technology, art, and design and technology, where they were previously unsatisfactory. It is well placed to improve provision and standards still further and to meet its targets.

STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 (1998 in brackets) based on the National Curriculum tests:

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

The table shows that in 1998 standards were above the national average in English and science. They were average in mathematics. Compared with schools where a similar percentage of pupils is entitled to receive free school meals, the school's performance was average in science, but below that of these schools in English and mathematics. In 1999, results in all three subjects improved. Pupils' attainment in English and mathematics was above the national average and in line with that of similar schools. In science, it was well above the national average and above that of similar schools. Changes from year to year are partly due to the nature of different year groups causing large percentage swings when small numbers are involved. This improvement may also stem from a more stable staffing situation for this group of pupils through their time at the school and from the school's introduction of target setting at the end of Key Stage 2. The school is set to achieve performance targets it has set for the next three years in literacy and numeracy.

QUALITY OF TEACHING

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 92 per cent of lessons, including 18 per cent in which it is good. Teaching is unsatisfactory in eight per cent of lessons.

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

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good overall; the oldest pupils' behaviour is very good; a few younger Key Stage 2 pupils exhibit challenging behaviour.
Attendance	Good; above the national average; only holidays taken during term time prevent very good or excellent attendance figures.
Ethos*	Good. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good; pupils' attitudes are mainly positive and the headteacher's focus on target setting shows commitment to high standards.
Leadership and management	Good. The headteacher has led the school out of a difficult period and introduced improvements sensitively. She has the full and active support of governors and staff.
Curriculum	Sound. Broad and balanced; schemes of work introduced for all subjects; good assessment procedures, but staff make insufficient use of assessments in order to raise their own and pupils' expectations and provide challenging work.
Pupils with special educational needs	Much achieved this term by the new co-ordinator to improve administration and organisation of records and support; unsatisfactory provision is being overcome, but still requires urgent focus.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good overall; good moral and social provision, especially through additional activities; satisfactory spiritual and cultural provision, but a lack of attention to other cultures and faiths.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good. Teaching and support staff are well qualified; the building is well maintained and the grounds much improved; most subjects are well resourced.
Value for money	Satisfactory. Set against above average costs, with pupils of above average attainment on entry, the school offers sound teaching and a good curriculum, so that pupils' attainment is above average when they leave.

**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>95 per cent of parents who replied to the questionnaire find the school approachable.</p> <p>94 per cent feel the school enables their children to achieve good standards.</p> <p>98 per cent are pleased that the school encourages pupils to get involved in more than just their daily lessons.</p> <p>90 per cent feel the school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children.</p>	<p>Some parents are uncertain about the</p> <p>A few parents are unhappy with the school's systems for handling behavioural</p>

Inspection findings support the overwhelmingly positive views expressed. With reference to some parents' concerns, the inspection finds that the school has issued clear information about homework arrangements at the beginning of the current term and that these are bedding down. Behaviour is mainly good. The school has an agreed code of conduct and procedures for handling difficulties, including dealing with bullying. There was no evidence of bullying during the inspection. The newly introduced home-school agreement refers to general expectations, but the school has not shared with parents its procedures for dealing with inappropriate behaviour.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to build on current strengths, further improve the quality of education provided and raise standards still higher, the governing body, headteacher and staff with management responsibilities should:

make better use of assessment information in order to:

- raise teachers' and pupils' expectations;

- plan appropriately challenging tasks for all pupils, especially in mental and oral mathematics;

- deploy staff effectively to support pupils with special educational needs;

- involve pupils in self assessment and target-setting;

(paragraphs: 8, 10, 11, 13, 32, 33, 37, 45, 74, 94, 96-104, 113, 114, 124, 150)

improve administrative procedures pertaining to the education of pupils with special educational needs and ensure that individual education programme targets address precisely the identified needs of pupils on the special needs register;

(paragraphs: 17, 22, 37, 40, 66, 92, 94)

develop planned provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, including sex education and drugs education.

(paragraph: 38)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in the report paragraphs as referenced.

Develop agreed procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching;

(paragraph: 65)

Sharpen the subject co-ordinators' monitoring role;

(paragraph: 65)

Improve strategic school development planning to ensure that it includes all aspects of school provision and links budget planning to priorities;

(paragraphs: 65, 73)

Ensure all staff and parents are aware of the school's behaviour policy and procedures;

(paragraphs: 23, 54, 117)

Improve the use of the library for developing pupils' research skills;

(paragraphs: 70, 74)

Provide a secure outdoor area for children under five.

(paragraphs: 71, 72, 77, 83)

Improve music curriculum provision for older pupils;

(paragraphs: 145-147)

Record fire drills.

(paragraph: 57)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

Barby Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School, for pupils aged four to eleven, lies in the village of Barby, just off the A361, between Daventry and Rugby. The school building is just over thirty years old. At the time of the inspection, there were 86 full-time and 21 part-time pupils on roll, with slightly more boys than girls. The number on roll has risen a little since the last inspection of the school. Most pupils come from the village and surrounding area, together with a few from Daventry. Pupils come from families in mainly owner-occupied housing. There are no pupils from a minority ethnic background. Two per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well below the national average. Children join the reception class on a part-time basis in the September after their fourth birthday. At the time of the inspection, most of the 21 children in the reception class were still four. Children starting school bring a range of skills and experiences. In the current reception year children's knowledge and skills were above average overall when they started school. The school has 23 pupils on its register of special educational need. Two pupils have statements of special educational need. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is above the national average. The percentage with statements of special educational needs is also above the national average.

The aims of the school are to achieve the highest possible standards by ensuring that all pupils fulfil every aspect of their potential across a broad curriculum and to educate the pupils in social, cultural, moral and spiritual values within a Christian environment.

Particular targets for the coming year include the introduction of the numeracy hour, further development of the literacy strategy, a review of special needs provision and the introduction of the national grid for learning. The school has agreed, together with the local education authority, appropriate percentage targets for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 for the next three years. These take into account the current attainment and potential of pupils currently on the school roll.

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	10	4	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results

		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Total	12	13	13
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	86 (N/A)	93 (N/A)	93 (N/A)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teacher Assessments

		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Total	12	13	11
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	86 (N/A)	93 (N/A)	79 (N/A)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

The school's 1998 results are not included because legal requirements do not permit the reporting of statistics when the full year group consists of ten pupils or fewer. Separate boys' and girls' numbers are missing from this table and the Key Stage 2 table for the same reason.

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	9	9	18

National Curriculum Test Results

Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above

Percentage at NC Level 4 or above

	English	Mathematics	Science
Total	14	14	17
School	77 (71)	77 (57)	94 (93)
National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teacher Assessments

Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above

Percentage at NC Level 4 or above

	English	Mathematics	Science
Total	14	13	15
School	77 (79)	73 (79)	84 (64)
National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	3.7
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.0
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

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

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	0
	Satisfactory or better	92
	Less than satisfactory	8

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

The school has maintained the above average standards in English, mathematics and science reported in national tests at the time of the last inspection. It has raised attainment in information technology, art and design and technology, which were unsatisfactory. They are now satisfactory. It has maintained satisfactory standards in all other subjects observed.

Children's attainment on entry to the school is above average in the main. They start school part-time in the September of the school year in which they will be five, in accordance with the local education authority's policy. Almost all have attended the village playgroup. They bring with them a good range of knowledge and good social skills. Children make satisfactory progress during their reception year in all areas of learning. Almost all children attain the desirable outcomes for five-year-olds, many before the age of five, in language and literacy, mathematics, personal, creative and physical development, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The school has maintained good standards for children under five since the last inspection in 1996.

There are large variations in percentage statistics when comparing small numbers of pupils with national averages from year to year. It is important to note that the nature of the year group is often the most important factor in large percentage changes when looking at national test results in small schools. The size of individual year groups in 1998 and 1999 varies between five pupils and 21.

Results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998, in a very small year group, show that pupils' attainment was very high in reading and well above average in writing. In mathematics it was average. When compared with similar schools (those with fewer than eight per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals), pupils' attainment in reading was still in the top five per cent of schools. Standards in writing were above those of similar schools, but in mathematics they were below average when compared to these schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the standard level in science was very high, again among the top five per cent of schools. Because this was a very small year group, no firm conclusions can be drawn from the results. Trends show a little variation in reading and writing over the three years from 1996 to 1998, with the school maintaining good standards reported in the previous inspection. In mathematics, the downward trend is a result of an increase in the national percentage of pupils reaching higher levels over these three years, while fewer pupils at Barby achieved beyond the standard level. The trend in science is similar to mathematics.

Results of 1999 tests show improvements in reading and writing. Results in mathematics are similar to 1998, with only a very small proportion of pupils reaching a higher level. In science, a higher proportion of pupils achieved beyond the expected level for their age, but a significant proportion did not attain the standard level. Inspection findings confirm that pupils' attainment at age seven in the current year is above average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 1. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 in these subjects. Higher attainers are making

satisfactory progress in the main, but the level of challenge in mathematics is not as high as in English and science.

Results of Key Stage 2 national tests in 1998 show that pupils' attainment was above the national average in English and science. It was average in mathematics. Standards in English and mathematics were below those of similar schools. In both subjects, a smaller proportion attained the national standard than in similar schools. In mathematics, the proportion was well below. The proportion of pupils attaining above the national standard was in line with the proportion in similar schools, showing that higher attainers did well at this key stage. Science standards were in line with those of similar schools. A higher proportion of pupils reached the nationally expected level in this subject, but a lower proportion exceeded it.

In 1999, more pupils reached the standard level in all three subjects. The proportion of pupils attaining higher levels also increased. In science the improvement was considerable. In 1999, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 was above the national average and in science it was well above. Attainment was in line with that of similar schools in English and mathematics and above that of similar schools in science. Pupils make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 2 in all aspects of English and science. In the current Year 6, standards are average in mathematics. Pupils of all abilities in each year group at Key Stage 2 make satisfactory progress in most areas of mathematics. They make unsatisfactory progress in their use of mental recall and their ability to explain the mental strategies they use to tackle numerical problems.

Pupils build on their sound start in the reception year and most pupils continue to make satisfactory progress overall through Key Stage 1 in English, mathematics and science. They listen and speak confidently in all curriculum areas and develop reading skills well. They have a good knowledge of letter sounds. Almost all Year 2 pupils read accurately, though not expressively. Most pupils write in sentences, using capital letters and full stops by the age of seven. Most spell common and regular words accurately. Their handwriting is joined and letters are well formed. In mathematics, pupils have a good understanding of numbers up to 100. They are developing their knowledge of number patterns, including multiplication tables. Early in the year, only a few pupils in Year 2 know addition and subtraction facts to ten and during the inspection there was no evidence of pupils explaining their mental strategies in adding, subtracting or counting in groups. Pupils know the names of shapes and measure in both standard and non-standard units. In science, they understand what plants need to make them grow, and have a satisfactory early knowledge about the properties of materials and forces. They make careful observations and set up and record the results of simple experiments.

Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2 in most aspects of English, mathematics and science. By Year 6 they read fluently, though not all read with expression. They understand the meaning behind words and talk about the personalities of characters in stories. Their research skills are underdeveloped. They have not learnt how to use non-fiction books efficiently. Most pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress in literacy. They use writing skills well in science, geography and history lessons, but make less use of other subjects to develop their reading skills. Pupils' listening skills are well developed, but they receive fewer opportunities to develop their speaking skills, especially older pupils. Throughout the key stage, they write for a range of purposes and in the context of several other subjects. They use a wide vocabulary.

In mathematics, they have a thorough understanding of the number system and many work accurately with decimals and fractions and percentages. They make satisfactory progress in their understanding of the number system and in their ability to use paper and pencil to do calculations. Pupils' use of mental recall of number facts is underdeveloped. They are not used to explaining the mental strategies they use to solve number problems. In science, pupils show good knowledge, derived from full coverage of the science curriculum. They develop a satisfactory understanding of how to conduct a fair test. They use experimental and investigative skills well and record their findings.

Standards in information technology have improved. They were unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. Pupils at both key stages make satisfactory use of information technology to support their learning in literacy and numeracy. Attainment in information technology is now broadly average at the end of both key stages. Pupils are making satisfactory progress throughout the school in all aspects of the subject.

Pupils' attainment in religious education meets the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages. They make satisfactory progress in this subject overall. Pupils also make satisfactory progress in art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education throughout the school.

There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about pupils' progress in music, as no lessons were observed. A number of pupils benefit from lunchtime recorder tuition, but very little time is allocated to music in some classes.

Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress against the targets in their individual education plans, particularly in reading, writing and numeracy skills, when their targets are well matched to their needs. Too many pupils have targets which are not securely related to sound assessments. Pupils with special educational needs and lower attainers at Key Stage 2 make unsatisfactory progress in speaking and listening, mathematics and science. They make little oral contribution in class lessons in Years 5 and 6. Teaching does not ensure that pupils grasp new concepts by expressing their understanding.

There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls in any subjects. The school has agreed performance targets with the local education authority for the next three years, based on its assessment of current pupils' attainment. It is set to meet them.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

The last inspection concluded that pupils' behaviour, attitudes and personal development were good overall. These good standards have been maintained. In most lessons pupils display positive attitudes. Behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes is good. No pupils have been excluded. In a small number of lessons a minority of pupils display challenging and disruptive behaviour, which is not controlled sufficiently quickly.

Children under five establish good relationships with each other and with adults. They also develop confidence in their own capabilities and learn to work and play in groups as well as on their own. Most children are keen to succeed and they persevere with their activities. Children always take responsibility for clearing away their own equipment. They are courteous and generally sensitive to each other's feelings.

Standards of behaviour are good and children develop a clear understanding of why some things are right and others wrong.

Nearly all of the parents who returned the parents' questionnaire indicated that their child likes school. In the majority of the lessons observed, pupils displayed good attitudes to their work. Most pupils listen carefully, are interested in what they have been asked to do, contribute to discussions and sustain their concentration well. They want to do well and are eager to participate. For example, they use the apparatus carefully and imaginatively in physical education lessons. In science, they are proud of the plants they have grown and tend and water them.

Pupils with special educational needs respond well when set relevant and interesting work that matches identified needs. Some pupils with behavioural needs do not respond well. These pupils lack well-structured individual plans to provide effective support.

Pupils show respect for property and this is evident in the tidiness of the school site and the way in which pupils care for their environment. Almost all parents returning the inspection questionnaire feel that the school achieves good standards of behaviour. There have been no exclusions during the past academic year. One or two parents at the meeting expressed concerns about bullying and cloakroom behaviour. A small number of pupils in Years 3 and 4 exhibit disruptive behaviour. The inspection found no evidence of bullying, but behaviour in one cloakroom does not match up to the mainly good standards in lessons and in the grounds.

Relationships in the school are very good and this has a positive effect on pupils' progress. Pupils collaborate on projects and work well together; for example, when they share their work at the computer or look up information on the Romans from a history book. Year 5 pupils befriend the new reception class children and there is a relaxed social atmosphere in the hall at lunchtimes. At playtime, pupils of various ages and backgrounds mix happily together. Doubtless the sunny weather contributed, but the way in which the grounds and equipment were being used at playtimes was a delight to see.

Pupils' personal development is very good. Although there is no planned programme for social and personal education, staff provide guidance in assemblies, as illustrated by the current emphasis on caring for others. There are a range of extra-curricular activities, particularly in sport and music, where pupils can develop their own interests. Pupils act as monitors and team captains, help with the apparatus in physical education and the organisation in assemblies or lunchtimes. Educational visits enhance their personal skills further. Pupils contribute to the life of the community, by entertaining elderly people at a local day centre, for example. They perform at concerts and shows and share harvest gifts among senior citizens. Pupils make positive contributions to the wider community in their support of both local and national charities.

The library and information technology facilities allow some opportunities for independent study, but planned opportunities to develop independent research skills are limited. The school offers the oldest pupils simple routine organisational responsibilities, but offers few opportunities for them to use their initiative.

The school places a high priority on the development of good pupil attitudes. There is a consistent expectation of good behaviour and of pupils respecting each other. This

has created a safe and orderly community in which pupils can develop.

Attendance

The good attendance and punctuality of pupils reported at the last inspection are being maintained and continue to have a beneficial effect on their education. Both attendance and punctuality were found to be consistently good across the year groups. Most cases of authorised absence arise from family holidays being taken during term time and this is preventing attendance levels from becoming very good or even excellent. There has been an improvement in the incidence of unauthorised absence since the time of the last inspection. It was already low compared to the national average and has now been virtually eliminated.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

Standards of teaching are better overall than at the time of the last inspection. There is a smaller proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching for children under five and at both key stages is satisfactory overall. Teaching ranges from good to unsatisfactory. It is satisfactory or better in 92 per cent of lessons, including 18 per cent where it is good. The remaining eight per cent is unsatisfactory. Teaching of the under fives is consistently satisfactory or better. At both Key Stages 1 and 2 teaching is mainly satisfactory.

The teaching of children under five is characterised by good teamwork. Staff provide a well organised working environment for the pupils. The teacher deploys the classroom assistant effectively to support small groups or individuals. Relationships between staff and children are good. As a result of good organisation and planning, children settle quickly into reception class routines and remain focused on their activities. The teacher organises a careful balance of directed and chosen activities. Teaching promotes children's satisfactory progress by matching the activities appropriately to their assessed abilities. The teacher's sound knowledge and understanding of the way young children learn ensures clear questioning and a range of opportunities for children to talk about what they are doing.

At both key stages, teachers exercise good class control in almost all lessons. Where teaching is most effective, teachers engage pupils' interest and involve them in participation during the lesson. As a result, pupils show enthusiasm and clearly enjoy the learning. For example, in a session counting in groups of five, pupils had to focus well to stand or sit as they reached a multiple of five. Teachers' planning is satisfactory at both key stages and they prepare lessons well, ensuring all resources are readily available. In a good art lesson, the teacher motivated pupils well by matching a colour-mixing task to pupils' ability and making it demanding by challenging pupils to mix carefully to create eight tones. In an information technology lesson, the teacher's clear demonstration of functions to create a spreadsheet gave pupils confidence to try to work out functions individually, before checking their formulae as a class. This pattern ensured good progress. A high proportion of the good teaching was observed during the literacy hour. Tight planning and clear objectives, coupled with the well-organised pattern of class and group activities, ensured a more lively pace than in most lessons.

In the large majority of satisfactory lessons at both key stages, teachers use precise,

subject-related language while explaining concepts or giving instructions for tasks. In a number of lessons, they do not involve pupils sufficiently in expressing their understanding or ideas clearly, especially in Years 5 and 6. In some literacy and numeracy lessons, teachers talk too much and pupils only talk a little in discussions. In numeracy, teachers do not involve pupils often enough in explaining the strategies they use to add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers. In other respects, teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory at both key stages. Teachers develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well in the context of science, geography and history studies. They also use information technology regularly in a carefully planned way to support pupils' literacy and numeracy. Teaching extends higher attainers well on occasion in Years 5 and 6, but less challenge is evident elsewhere in the school.

At both key stages, teachers mark pupils' work regularly to check accuracy. There are few examples of stimulating marking comments to promote improvement. Teachers make mainly satisfactory use of day-to-day assessments during lessons, commenting helpfully to individuals on points noticed, in order to ensure clearer understanding. In most lessons observed, there was little involvement of pupils in assessing their progress. Teachers do not routinely share the aim of the lesson at its outset or review the success of the learning with pupils at the close of the lesson. Teachers know both the aims and the time limits, but do not often engage pupils in active effort by sharing this information. As a result, pupils work steadily, but without a sense of challenge.

Teachers are making satisfactory use of homework to promote pupils' progress, although new routines are not fully in place. The school has developed a clearer approach to homework, in response to a survey of parents sent out during the past year.

In one or two lessons at Key Stage 2, the teacher did not ensure a calm working atmosphere. As a result, a few disruptive pupils disturbed others and the whole class made unsatisfactory progress. In one information technology lesson in Key Stage 1, the teacher's instructions and organisation were confused, with the result that pairs of pupils wasted their time at the computer.

Teachers ensure equality of opportunity in games, physical education and access to computers. Boys and girls participate in all sporting activities and extra-curricular clubs. In lessons, teachers organise mixed gender groups.

The quality of teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs is sound overall. Special needs assistants give effective help to individuals and small groups of pupils, but not all teachers make effective use of support staff in literacy and numeracy lessons. Most teachers provide work which is well matched to needs identified on individual education plans, during the literacy hour. Provision to meet pupils' needs is less secure in other areas of the curriculum.

The curriculum and assessment

The school has developed a curriculum which is satisfactorily balanced, broadly based and relevant to pupils' needs. It effectively promotes their personal, physical and intellectual development and meets the requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum. Religious education meets the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus. The time allocated to music in some classes is low, but it was not possible

to make a secure judgement on the effect of this on standards. The school provides most pupils with good access to the curriculum and other activities, regardless of their gender, background or level of attainment. In Year 1, where pupils are in different classes, planning is not rigorous enough to ensure that pupils in the same academic year have equal opportunities. There is no up-to-date agreed policy in practice for sex education and drugs education. Planning for these aspects particularly, but also for the whole area of health education, is weak. The school plans to review its policies in these areas shortly.

The curriculum for children in the reception year is planned using both the defined six areas of learning for children under five and the National Curriculum programmes of study. Children enter the school with above average attainment and the majority are working within the programmes of study for Key Stage 1 by their fifth birthday.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is insecure after a number of staffing changes. The school has recently developed a policy, still in draft form, to enable the Code of Practice for special educational needs to be fully implemented. Pupils with special needs are integrated into classes and have the same curriculum entitlement as all other pupils. Not all individual education plans contain specific and relevant targets, securely based on a rigorous assessment of pupils' needs. There is limited evidence that teachers address these programmes in lesson plans. Most higher attaining pupils receive work that is commensurate with their capabilities in English and in written aspects of mathematics, but the curriculum does not challenge them in mental and oral work.

Teaching is organised through a range of topics and staff have established some very good links between subjects. For example, information technology skills soundly support geography in Key Stage 1. Not all of these good links are identified at the planning stage. The curriculum is soundly planned and there are policies and schemes of work for all subjects. These now ensure that there is effective curriculum continuity and progression within and between both key stages. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

The literacy hour has been fully implemented and literacy is also successfully taught in other areas of the curriculum, for example, through the high expectations of pupils' written work in history. Numeracy is taught daily but planning does not clearly identify opportunities to apply mathematical skills in other curriculum areas. Teachers set pupils into ability groups for literacy and numeracy and this has a positive effect on standards. The school has set appropriate targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy in agreement with the local education authority.

There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, which involve competitive games arranged with other schools. Pupils speak highly of the opportunities offered. Staff lead a residential visit to Wales every other year for older pupils, which contributes positively to their interest in learning and their personal development. Teachers organise many visits in support of curriculum areas. The wide range of linked activities successfully enhances pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, as well as improving subject specific knowledge.

The school has significantly improved assessment procedures since the last inspection, but has still to develop strategies to ensure that results inform curriculum planning for all

pupils. There is a sound assessment policy, which outlines procedures clearly and identifies targets for further development. Baseline assessments have been used satisfactorily to identify children's academic achievement and their social maturity when they start school. In addition to statutory tests in Year 2 and Year 6, the school carries out regular testing of all pupils. Standardised assessment tasks for Years 3, 4 and 5 in English, mathematics and science have been introduced.

Teachers use results of these annual assessments to form ability-related groups for mathematics and English at the start of the school year. The use of assessments to inform curriculum planning is otherwise underdeveloped. Teachers do not take sufficient note of previous assessments when planning the curriculum to ensure challenge in lessons. There is little evidence of teachers sharing assessment information with pupils in order to set targets. While the content, progression and pattern of lessons covers the curriculum in each subject appropriately, planning lacks the sharp edge of challenge, which good use of assessment provides.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The school's overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Staff have maintained the good quality of provision for pupils' moral and social development and satisfactory provision for spiritual and cultural development since the last inspection. The report indicated that the school should improve the curriculum in a way that more effectively prepares pupils for life in a multicultural society. This issue has still not been fully addressed.

Personal development is a priority and is supported through the caring approach of the headteacher and staff. The school seeks to promote a range of values, particularly those of care and respect and differentiation between right and wrong, which result in a well-ordered and supportive community. This is achieved through the décor, the use of flowers and plants, display, artifacts and fabrics, and through the very good relationships between adults and pupils and their peer groups. Discussions about thoughts and feelings also permeate through the use of 'Circle Time' and in lessons.

Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Religious education gives pupils opportunities to reflect on the beliefs and practices of the major world faiths. Pupils are inspired to write imaginative poetry in English. The school grounds and displays are used to encourage pupils to develop an awareness of beauty. They experience a sense of wonder when they see shoots appearing from the seeds they have planted, when they look after the plants and the fish in a sensitive and caring way, and when they see the butterflies landing on the buddleia. Classes gather together for daily assemblies and meetings. The theme for the week of the inspection was 'Making a Difference - How your actions can affect others'. Staff share stories which reinforce this idea and read a short prayer. Staff also use assemblies to build up pupils' confidence and self-esteem through a celebration of birthdays, achievements and good work.

Provision for moral development is good. Moral themes, for example, the importance of helping others, and participation in regular fund-raising for charitable causes, help pupils to recognise the needs of other people. Staff emphasise these in assemblies. They lead pupils to consider moral issues within subjects, for example, in geography and science lessons, as part of a study on pollution and other environmental issues. In particular, within religious education, they involve pupils in

discussing moral issues, such as looking after God's world and his creatures, or respect and friendship. Pupils discuss the qualities of a special person in their class, and study aspects of citizenship. There is a strong emphasis on sportsmanship. Pupils learn to respect and abide by the "rules of the game."

Provision for pupils' social development is good. The school is successful in fostering the social development of its pupils and has succeeded in creating a strong sense of community. The governors are very conscious of the school's local reputation for good behaviour. They strive hard to promote the conditions in which a caring environment can be fostered and maintained and work hard to develop trust between themselves and the staff. Staff encourage pupils to relate well to each other in different contexts around the school. As a result, they work well together in lessons and, in this context, demonstrate very good levels of co-operation. Staff also encourage pupils to play well together at breaks and take part in organised social activities, such as the music concerts and carol singing. After-school activities, particularly in sport and music, provide very good opportunities for pupils to develop their personal interests. The school arranges visits of educational interest within the local area, to museums and a residential visit to Wales. Pupils enjoy visits from theatre groups. These resources add an extra dimension to the pupils' learning. However, the school does not promote well enough the development of independent, research skills. Neither does it offer the oldest pupils sufficient opportunity to show responsibility by contributing to the life of the school. Support for two pupils with statements of educational needs is good and enables them to be fully integrated in all school activities.

The school's provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are made aware of their own culture, for example through their work in dance, local history and geography. Years 5 and 6 learn about Shakespeare, and pupils study Roman and Egyptian culture. The previous inspection found that insufficient attention was given to multicultural education. The school still does not give enough emphasis to this aspect. There are opportunities to learn French, and the school marks the celebrations of Chinese New Year and the Hindu festival of Diwali. Pupils learn about India in their geography lessons, but the contribution of other cultures to work in most subjects is underdeveloped throughout the school. There are few visits or visitors from other faiths or ethnic minority groups.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

The support and guidance given to pupils and provision for their welfare are good overall. This marks an improvement on the situation reported at the time of the last inspection, when provision was satisfactory.

A notable feature of the school is the extent to which class teachers know their pupils and show a caring attitude towards them. They quickly pick up and deal with pupils' problems and generally guide their academic progress and personal development very well. Since the last inspection, monitoring of pupils' work has improved and pupils are made more aware of any weaknesses and how to correct them. Staff monitoring of pupils' personal and academic progress is good, particularly pupils with special educational needs, who receive effective help in lessons from staff and external specialists from the learning support services. Teachers take their pastoral responsibilities very seriously. There are very good links with the local playgroup and these lead to the smooth induction of new pupils. Arrangements for the transfer of pupils to the next phase of their education are satisfactory, although there are few

curriculum links with the main receiving secondary school. The school has no policy on sex education; planning for coverage of this area is unsatisfactory.

The home-school agreement covers the school's general expectations of good behaviour. It has a clear and straightforward code of conduct. There is mainly good behaviour management by teachers in the classroom and on the playground, and by midday supervisors at lunchtime. The school has procedures in place for dealing with challenging behaviour, including bullying, but it has not made these clear to parents and new staff.

Registration takes place at the beginning of both morning and afternoon sessions as required and procedures are sound. Teachers mark all registers accurately. The school maintains good attendance by rigorously following up any pupil who is absent. In particular if a pupil does not appear without explanation, for reasons of safety the school secretary takes urgent steps to determine their whereabouts.

Sound procedures are in place for child protection. The headteacher, as named person, has received appropriate training and has had some relevant experience at her previous school. All staff are well informed on the steps to be taken should they have any concerns over a pupil.

The school provides a safe and secure environment for its pupils. All teaching areas have emergency exits, which are clearly and correctly marked. The evacuation procedure is posted on classroom walls. However, fire drills are not recorded. First aid procedures are in place and are satisfactory. An adequate record is kept of any accidents. The school nurse and other specialists make regular visits to keep a check on the general health of pupils.

Partnership with parents and the community

The school's partnership with parents and the community is good. Governors and headteacher have worked successfully to re-establish previously good links, after a difficult period during staffing instability.

The school keeps parents informed on their children's progress through annual written reports which have improved significantly since the last inspection. They now contain sufficient detail and parents find them helpful and informative. As well as containing praise for pupils' achievements, they also highlight weaknesses and identify areas for improvement. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are properly consulted and informed by the school. Both the governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus have recently been improved and are now of high quality, containing a lot of useful information for parents. The school offers open meetings for parents once a month, at the end of the school day. Appointments can be made at any time for them to discuss their children's progress informally. Almost all parents feel that the school responds well to suggestions or complaints. The school consulted them fully over the home-school agreement. The school conducts regular surveys of parental opinion and concerns, which it then addresses. It provided good opportunity for parents to receive information on the introduction of the literacy strategy and plans to offer similar opportunities for parents to learn about the numeracy strategy. The school has sent a leaflet to all parents, setting out its expectations with regard to homework.

Parents help their children with their work at home by hearing them read and with project work. Some also help in the classroom and make a significant contribution to pupils' education. Others help effectively with the redecoration and refurbishment of the school, by supplying equipment for use in lessons or with fund raising. The very active parent teacher association is currently being re-formed under a new title. The school benefits greatly from the committed support of parents.

Since the last inspection, the school has established strong links with businesses and other organisations in the local community, from which it derives many benefits. Some of these provide funds for the school, through advertising in the governors' report to parents, sponsorship of sports kits, or by grants towards the improvement of the school environment. Others contribute more directly to pupils' education, for example by organising an engineering competition or an activities day. The extent and effectiveness of these links is greater than one would normally expect to find at a primary school.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

Leadership has improved since the difficult time around the last inspection, when illnesses and absences lay behind most weakness highlighted. The headteacher, acting deputy head and governors provide good leadership. They work together well to give the school a clear educational direction. The school has emerged from a period of instability, during which much has been required of the governing body. In addressing key issues from the last inspection during a period when the headship was temporary or vacant, the governing body in effect took on some of the professional responsibilities of the headteacher. It has now adopted good procedures to ensure that it returns to fulfilling its monitoring role as critical friend.

Following the last inspection, the governing body began to tackle the weaknesses highlighted, but with little professional steer. Following a number of staffing changes, the newly appointed headteacher rightly decided to put the initial emphasis on improving the accommodation, grounds and resources. Success in these ventures has created a good team atmosphere. Parents, governors and staff have put considerable effort into fundraising and work on the ground. The impact of the changes on pupils and the whole school community has been very positive. The headteacher has worked sensitively with staff and governors to decide on current priorities. As a result, relationships are very good and there is a positive ethos, including a clear commitment to improving academic standards.

The headteacher rightly judged that key issues involving staff development needed to wait.

National initiatives, including the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies and the provision of schemes of work by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority have helped the school address key weaknesses in planning and assessment. Curriculum planning is now satisfactory and assessment procedures throughout the school are good in English, mathematics, science and information technology. The introduction of new National Curriculum requirements has also helped the school begin to address the use of teacher time and agreed routines for work in lessons. The school has set appropriate performance targets for pupils at the end of key stages for the next three years and is now ready to use the assessment information more fully in planning sequences of lessons. There is still work to be done in reviewing policies and ensuring that practice reflects up-to-date, agreed systems. Overall, however, staff implement the school's aims, values and policies well.

The school's development plan recognises the need to clarify monitoring roles. Over the past year, the headteacher has begun monitoring pupils' attainment more closely. The school has begun to track their progress, in order to set targets for attainment at the end of key stages. Subject co-ordinators are not yet sufficiently involved in this process. They do not have an overview of standards or of pupils' progress through the school, in order to address gaps or weaknesses perceived. The school has not agreed procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching, but the current school development plan does include the development of monitoring within classrooms. The school is in the process of improving procedures for development planning, in order to focus on fewer priorities and set a longer term agenda for areas requiring more time or of lesser immediate importance. The current plan is not comprehensive and does not link development priorities to budget planning.

The quality and management of special educational needs' administration is insecure. The co-ordinator is newly appointed. She has written all twenty-three individual education plans and put a policy in place since the start of term.

The governing body gives very good support to the school. It has effective procedures, involving working parties in order to use time effectively. Several governors make very good use of their personal expertise in supporting the school. The school fulfils all statutory requirements.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

The headteacher and three teachers have been appointed since the last inspection. The number, qualifications and experience of the teaching staff now provide a good balance and meet the demands of the National Curriculum and religious education. The school has one newly qualified teacher, who has good support from her mentor, but a formal programme for induction of new staff is not in place. Targets have been set for the restart of appraisal procedures, following considerable staff changes. Provision for staff training is sound. Staff and governors have undertaken literacy and numeracy training and this has resulted in the school's full and effective implementation of both strategies.

The school involves classroom assistants appropriately in training sessions. There are sufficient, well-qualified and experienced assistants to provide sound support for pupils' learning. Assistants working with pupils who have special educational needs receive appropriate training and bring a personal commitment to their work, which has a positive impact on the progress and attitudes of pupils.

The accommodation is satisfactory. Classrooms and additional areas provide enough space and versatility for staff to teach the National Curriculum. The craft room is well used as a resource area for technology, in particular cooking, and also for working with small groups. The position of the library makes accessibility difficult for the older pupils. The school also lacks private office space for the headteacher. The caretaker keeps the school well maintained, very clean and tidy. New apparatus and bright curtains in the hall give the centre of the school a vibrant atmosphere.

Governors, staff and parents have worked extremely hard and very successfully to improve the outside environment and facilities since the previous inspection. Pupils make very good use of these at play times and for study. They add to the quality of the education provided particularly in physical education and in science. There is no secure outdoor activity area for children under five, however. This restricts the opportunities the school can offer for these children to develop their skills in all areas of learning. The lack of personal office space for the headteacher makes managerial duties difficult.

The school is adequately equipped with resources for children under five, with the exception of outdoor apparatus. It has improved its resources since the last inspection and there is a wide range of easily accessible, good quality resources for almost all subjects. Pupils derive particular benefit in physical education from new resources. The school recently improved the number of books in classrooms with literacy strategy funding, but the selection of information books for all subjects remains fairly limited. There are also limited resources for mathematics, including some old and unattractive equipment. The school makes good use of the local area and a wide range of educational visits to enrich pupils' learning through first-hand experience. Staff borrow artifacts for different world religions from a local authority centre.

The efficiency of the school

Over recent years the school has progressively used up an accumulated surplus to improve the appearance of the premises and the grounds. This has been a great success and the school now has an attractive learning environment. This task is now complete and the school has effective strategies in place to keep the budget in balance now that the surplus has been spent. The budget setting process is widely based with the whole governing body making the final decision, on the recommendations of its finance working party. Spending on pupils with special educational needs is well managed and is appropriately targeted. However, the school development plan does not have sufficient detail on costs and priorities to link expenditure with future educational developments.

Teaching staff and midday supervisors are deployed efficiently, as are classroom assistants and special needs assistants in the main. Overall the school makes good use of the accommodation. The library, although well used for various teaching purposes, is not well used to develop research skills. The school now has an inventory of its learning resources and these are used efficiently. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

The local education authority completed an audit review of the school in June 1999. It reported that the financial and administrative systems were generally well controlled in most areas. The minor weaknesses identified have now been satisfactorily addressed. The day-to-day management of expenditure is handled efficiently by the school secretary under the direction of the headteacher. The school runs as an orderly community and the quality of

administration is good.

Balancing the attainment of pupils on entry and the quality of education provided against expenditure, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

Children enter the reception class at the start of the year in which they are five. All children start as part-time pupils. The school has 21 pupils under five; eleven attend the morning session and ten come in the afternoon. After the first half term, all children attend full time. The attainment of children on entry is above average overall. Children follow a broad and balanced curriculum, with topic themes well linked to the programmes of study for Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum. Opportunities for children to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding through outdoor activities are restricted, however, as the school has no designated outdoor area for under fives.

By the age of five, the majority of children exceed the nationally recommended targets (known as desirable learning outcomes) in language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, and in their personal and social development.

Personal and social development

Children enter the reception class with good personal and social skills. Staff build successfully on these. They ensure children's all round good progress so that by five they attain well above what is expected of children of this age. Under fives respond positively to school rules and their behaviour is good. They are confident in their approach to learning tasks and when talking to other children or adults. Relationships are very supportive and children learn to share equipment, co-operate in their play and show concern and respect for each other. Their curiosity and sense of wonder is fostered by the secure and stimulating environment the school provides. They demonstrate a well-developed sense of fairness and take turns without fuss. Most children understand the difference between right and wrong. They show respect for materials and property and care for living things. Children with special educational needs are identified early and are included in all activities. Their needs are understood and met and activities are well matched to their prior attainment. Children take responsibility for a range of duties, including tidying up at the end of sessions and for particular tasks, for example, organising the weather chart. Targets set focus very appropriately on the development of social skills.

Language and literacy

Children enter the reception class with standards in reading and writing, which are above the expected levels for children of this age. They make satisfactory progress so that, by five, their attainment is above expectation in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Staff place strong emphasis on the early acquisition of literacy skills. Children recite rhymes clearly and the majority speak confidently to the whole class. They talk and role-play confidently in small group activities, using their 'Health Centre'. They listen carefully to their teachers and begin to express their own views. For example, after listening to a story they question the teacher closely about the way dragons in suitcases are able to breathe. Children make good progress in reading. By five, they know how books work and that print conveys meaning. Most recognise common words and read simple text. Teachers' use of Letterland characters successfully promotes progress in developing early phonic skills. Children match letter names and letter sounds. Higher attainers use their early phonic

knowledge when trying to read unfamiliar words. Children's progress is enhanced by the regular opportunities to read and develop phonic skills in the literacy hour programme. Under-fives are provided with a range of good quality, well organised books and thoroughly enjoy their many opportunities to read to adults and to each other. All children are encouraged to look at books on their own, in small groups and as a class. They take books home to share with their families. Most children can write their names when they start school. Some recognise the difference between capital and lower case letters and they remember some of the reasons for using them. Higher attainers already write well, copying quite lengthy sentences scribed for them by adults. They enjoy the challenge of finding a range of objects starting with 't'. Vocabulary and verbal reasoning skills are strongly supported by the constant access children have to adults when using role-play areas.

Mathematics

Children enter the reception class with levels in numeracy that are in line with expectations for children of this age. By five, children attain the desirable learning outcomes, with a significant number reaching the early levels of the National Curriculum. Children make sound progress. By five, they count to ten and many go beyond to very high numbers. They recognise number names and most write them accurately. Many are beginning to understand simple number operations such as adding and subtracting. Children undertake investigative work and solve problems practically, applying skills of measurement and knowledge of shape. They measure height in footsteps and handspans. They sort shapes according to shape, size and colour. For example, children recognise circles, squares and triangles and know some of their properties, when creating an effective pattern sequence. Progress in numeracy is sound, with a strong daily focus on the acquisition of number skills. Early morning work and the taking of registers reinforce mental agility in counting forwards and backwards accurately. Activities encourage children to use correct mathematical language such as circle, in front of, bigger than and more, in order to describe shape, position, size and quantity. In the reception class specific times are set aside for numeracy sessions, and all children benefit from this structured pattern of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

By the age of five, children's progress in knowledge and understanding of the world is good and they attain the desirable learning outcomes. They talk about where they live and the people in their families. They begin to understand the pattern of the days of the week, months of the year and seasons. Early morning work on weather patterns is successful in widening their understanding of how weather affects their lives; they wonder if they will be going out to play. From their stories and from talking about events that have taken place, under-fives understand aspects of the past in relation to themselves and their families and are beginning to distinguish between fact and fiction. They create effective personal time lines, using photographs to show changes in themselves. They apply their developing literacy skills to write proudly about skills they have now, as compared to babyhood.

Physical development

Children make satisfactory progress in their physical development and by five they attain the desirable learning outcomes for this aspect of learning. They change for physical education lessons independently and the majority take great care to fold clothes properly. They are confident in their use of space in the hall and display agility and confidence. The reception class has no access to a secure outdoor play space during teaching sessions. Staff make effective use of the hall and playground, but the need for constant supervision limits children's ability to use the range of wheeled toys available and to have outdoor play with sand and water. A good range of activities is provided to help children develop skills in handling simple tools, malleable materials and construction kits. Such activities support the children's well-developed eye and hand co-ordination. In lessons, under-fives follow simple safety rules and use equipment sensibly.

Creative development

By five, children have made satisfactory progress and they attain the desirable outcomes in their creative development. Children use paint confidently and have an independent approach, well supported by established routines for the care of resources. They write and draw effectively to communicate their feelings about sadness and happiness. They join in confidently with singing in assemblies and perform number and nursery rhymes in their classrooms. They cut and paste carefully when making their time line. Children have good opportunities to use a well planned role-play area. They move confidently, play agreeably and respond very positively to the interest and attention of adults.

The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory and occasionally good. Teaching and support staff work well together, providing a good start for children. This good teamwork enables staff to build successfully on children's already high levels of confidence. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been fully implemented and this is already having a significant impact on the development of under fives' literacy and numeracy skills. All areas of learning are successfully taught. Staff have established very supportive relationships with all their children and know them well as individuals. They provide a well organised and secure learning environment and demonstrate a clear understanding of the intellectual and pastoral needs of young children.

Planning is soundly based on the Key Stage 1 programmes of study of the National Curriculum. Baseline assessments are carried out, and regular assessments, in line with school policies, have been introduced. Resources for learning are of good quality, easily accessible and well used.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

The results of the 1998 national tests for seven-year-olds show standards in reading and in speaking and listening to be high when compared to the national average. Standards in writing are close to national standards, with no pupils attaining higher levels. Provisional results for 1999 show that the high standards in reading and speaking and listening have been maintained. There has been an improvement in writing standards. Inspection findings confirm these results. Attainment is above average at the end of Key Stage 1. Over the past three years the school has consistently maintained above average standards in both reading and writing. Boys and girls attain similar standards. In comparison with schools with similar intake, the 1998 results were very high in reading and above average in writing.

National tests for eleven-year-olds in 1998 show standards in tests to be above the national average. Provisional results for 1999 show that these standards have been maintained. Inspection findings confirm these results. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is above average. Over the past three years, the performance of both boys and girls has been consistently above the national average. The 1998 results are below the national average for schools with a similar entry profile. The school has maintained good standards in English in relation to the national picture since the last inspection, but comparisons with similar schools show that standards are not high enough.

Attainment in speaking and listening is above average at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils' listening skills are well developed by the end of Key Stage 2, but there was little opportunity to make a judgement on pupils' speaking skills in lessons at the end of Key Stage 2. By the time they are seven, pupils speak confidently in class discussions. For example, they describe life on the island of Struay, using a good range of adjectives. Eleven-year-olds speak with authority when asked about subjects which interest them. For instance, they give detailed explanations of their musical progress with recorders and violins. Progress in speaking and listening is satisfactory overall in both key stages. In Years 1 and 2, pupils evaluate their dragon poem confidently and enjoy varying their tone and expression as they read it to their teacher. Year 4 know that vocabulary varies when instructions are given, and realise that imperative verbs are being used.

Attainment in reading is well above average at the end of Key Stage 1. The systematic approach to the development of reading skills in Key Stage 1, is a strength of the school. By the age of seven, pupils are confident readers. They have a positive attitude to books. They know how books work; they use contents and index pages to find information. Pupils have a sound knowledge of phonics and apply this effectively to decode unfamiliar words. Whole class work during the literacy hour helps pupils to extend their depth of vocabulary. The strength of parental support has a very positive impact on reading progress, which is good across the key stage and for some pupils is very good. Reading for all pupils is constantly monitored. Staff give effective and timely support. Attainment is above average by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils have access to a good range of fiction and non-fiction books. They use local libraries and are familiar with a suitable range of books. Research skills are developed through project work in Years 5 and 6, but pupils' ability to use the library and locate reference information is not as well developed. Progress is satisfactory across the key stage. Within the literacy hour, pupils regularly compare

and contrast a range of texts. During the inspection there were few opportunities for Years 5 and 6 to take an active part when sharing texts, and this did limit progress. Progress is enhanced by teachers' thoughtful provision of resources, appropriately linked to pupils' ability and interest.

Attainment in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average. Pupils' knowledge of punctuation and grammatical conventions is above average. They write for a wide range of purposes, both within the literacy hour and to support other curriculum aims. Some are very confident writers. For example, Year 2 pupils write clear accounts of their church visit and also describe factually what life is like for Struay islanders. Progress across the key stage is good, as a result of the strong support for literacy in other curriculum areas. Pupils make a good start with handwriting in reception and progress is made systematically throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in writing is mainly average, with some examples of above average skills. In a project about Monet, pupils use imaginative vocabulary and adopt a clear and formal style to convey their research information. Pupils write for many purposes in other curriculum areas. For example, Year 5 pupils create a newspaper of 1851, writing interviews and giving information in bullet point style. Progress across the key stage is sound as a result of the positive implementation of the literacy hour and the opportunities created across the curriculum for the development of writing skills.

Progress in spelling is systematically developed in both key stages, through homework and tests. There is limited evidence of systematic progress, across Key Stage 2, in proof-reading, redrafting and editing written work, to improve both presentation and basic grammar. Pupils with special educational needs are generally well supported during the literacy hour. Some pupils have targets which do not focus clearly on their specific needs. Progress and attainment is sound for those with well-matched targets.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are good in both key stages. Classroom routines are understood and followed. All pupils are keen to answer questions. During group activities they co-operate and work well together. Most pupils work independently and concentrate effectively on completing tasks.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Out of eight lessons observed, five were satisfactory and three were good. Relationships in the classroom are good. The school has implemented the literacy hour appropriately and all teachers' planning follows the framework. Curriculum planning for Year 1 does not ensure that pupils have equal opportunities. Assessment procedures are in place for all aspects of English. Not all work planned is securely linked to assessments made, especially for some higher attaining pupils. In the best lessons, teachers plan pupils' activities meticulously, including extension work, and keep up a brisk pace so that no learning time is wasted. Teachers do not always make clear to pupils what the lesson focus is, and plenary sessions do not always reinforce clear learning objectives. In some lessons, support staff are insufficiently involved during direct teaching time. Planning to develop speaking and listening skills does not systematically address all the required areas of the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. Homework is regularly given, but the amount and range of tasks given does not develop systematically.

The leadership and management of English is satisfactory. Good resources have had a positive impact on standards. The school has focused appropriately on the

introduction of the literacy hour. There has been no opportunity for the headteacher or co-ordinator to monitor teaching. Sound assessment systems have been introduced for reading and spelling. Portfolios of work, annotated with National Curriculum levels, are being developed. The school has used its analysis of national test results successfully to target areas of identified weakness, for example, extended writing. The library, though well stocked, is under-used for research purposes. The school uses the local library and book-lending facilities to supplement its resources appropriately.

Mathematics

The school has maintained above average standards reported and achieved in national tests at the time of the last inspection. Results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998 show that pupils' attainment was average. Results of 1999 tests are similar to 1998, with only a very small proportion of pupils reaching a higher level. Inspection findings confirm that pupils' attainment at age seven in the current year is average at the end of Key Stage 1. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress. Evidence from results of tests flags a concern about higher attainers. Early in the current year, there is some evidence of pupils undertaking work at a higher level than pupils of average ability in their measuring and recording, but little in oral and mental work.

Results of Key Stage 2 national tests in 1998 show that pupils' attainment was average. The percentage of pupils attaining the national standard was below that in similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining above the national standard was in line with the proportion in similar schools, showing that higher attainers did well at this key stage. In 1999, more pupils reached the standard level and the proportion of pupils attaining higher levels also increased. Pupils' attainment was above average in 1999. The improvement may reflect a more stable staffing situation for the latter year group. In the current Year 6, standards are average. Pupils of all abilities throughout Key Stage 2 make satisfactory progress in most areas of mathematics. Progress in their use of mental recall and their development of mental strategies to tackle numerical problems is less secure.

Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of numbers up to 100. They are developing their knowledge of number patterns, including multiplication tables, but their skills in mental recall are underdeveloped. They know the names of shapes and measure in both standard and non-standard units.

Pupils in Year 6 have a thorough understanding of the number system and many work accurately with decimals and fractions and percentages. Their use of mental recall of number facts is also underdeveloped. They are not used to explaining the mental strategies they use to solve number problems. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding of the number system and in their ability to use paper and pencil to do calculations.

The quality of teaching is consistently satisfactory throughout the school. Teachers' planning and preparation is thorough and they base the organisation of lessons on the format promoted by the national numeracy strategy. They have a sound knowledge of the subject, and as a result, use precise mathematical language during instruction and questioning. Teachers exercise good class control and relationships are good or very good in all classes. Teachers use resources well to promote pupils' understanding, but they do not share a sense of lesson timing with the class. They assess and support pupils well, circulating and assisting individually while pupils tackle tasks. The pace of lessons is steady and pupils concentrate well, but there is little evidence of the sense of alert effort which accompanies a brisk and challenging pace. Teachers do not make their expectations, aims and timescales sufficiently clear to pupils.

In two of the numeracy lessons observed, teachers used the initial time effectively to develop pupils' mental arithmetic skills. Lively and imaginative presentation, coupled with a sense of humour, resulted in all pupils participating fully in the ten-minute session. In other lessons, this introductory element of the lesson lacked edge. Teachers involve pupils well in developing their understanding of concepts and in recording and practising skills on paper. They do not extend pupils sufficiently through challenging mathematical discussions.

For group work, teachers organise pupils into different ability sets and explain clearly what they are to do. They do not emphasise the main aim of the activity, however. Pupils completing tasks set are unaware of the aim, which remains in the teachers' minds and on their planning sheets. Pupils work at a steady pace, because teachers' class management is good overall and they have established very good working relationships with their pupils. Teachers do not routinely let pupils know the time limit for completion of tasks, however. Pupils do not therefore apply themselves with focused urgency. Most of the closing plenary sessions observed afforded pupils little opportunity to express what they had learned. At present, with teachers still undertaking training, the content and pace of numeracy lessons are not sufficiently challenging. Teachers assess pupils satisfactorily during the lesson, prompting, encouraging and correcting as necessary. They mark all books regularly and plan work to follow a logical sequence of lessons.

Pupils enjoy mathematics and show positive attitudes in lessons. They listen very well and most volunteer readily to answer questions. They are well behaved, and organise themselves well to use equipment and books. They present their work neatly in the main. While their exercise books show mainly confident completion of recorded tasks, pupils do not show the same confidence when asked to explain their mathematical thinking.

Staff and a governor with particular responsibility for mathematics are currently involved in training for the implementation of the numeracy strategy. Teachers are satisfactorily putting into practice elements of the strategy, but not all staff are yet making effective use of the daily forms on oral and mental work.

Science

The school has maintained the above average standards achieved at the time of the last inspection. Inspection findings show that attainment in science is above average at the end of both key stages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Attainment in pupils' work samples and in lessons reflects results of the National Curriculum tests. There is no significant variation in the attainment between boys and girls.

At the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998 attainment was above average. In 1999 79 per cent of pupils attained the standard level 2, including a significant proportion who achieved beyond, but a significant minority did not attain the standard level. With small numbers of pupils in each year group, there are often considerable variations.

The results of the 1998 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 6 were above the national average and close to the average for similar schools. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum assessments were well above the national average and above those of similar schools. There was a significant improvement in the number of pupils who reached the higher level 5.

In Key Stage 1, pupils observe with attention to detail and describe what they see using simple but appropriate language. They know about the life cycles of tadpoles and caterpillars and experience awe and wonder when observing these minibeasts. They work with enthusiasm in the conservation area, when carrying out investigations on different habitats. Some pupils work towards the higher level 3 in experimental and investigative work as they talk about why a test needs to be fair and how this could be achieved. Year 2 pupils are developing recording skills and some pupils produce clear written accounts. Pupils know a great deal about the properties of materials. They know that forces can change the shape of materials and they understand the concept of dissolving. They raise their own questions and make predictions. A few pupils make good use of books for reference to find out the answers to their questions.

At Key Stage 2, in the study of life processes and living things, pupils recognise relationships in the food chain, explain the importance of health and diet in animals and use observable features to classify plants and animals. Older pupils name parts of plants and flowers and identify the major organs and functions of the body. They identify the properties of common materials and describe similarities and differences. Pupils recognise the need for a battery and a complete circuit for electrical devices to work, that light travels in a straight line and what causes shadows. Pupils record work accurately and respond in lessons with appropriate ideas, showing they have a grasp of the topic being taught. They display sound knowledge and understanding in current work and have good recall of previous work.

In experimental and investigative science, pupils work with the equipment provided to explore different conditions for plant growth. They predict with a degree of accuracy what might happen and suggest how they might test and record their ideas with appropriate controls. In general, practical science skills are insufficiently advanced to support independent planning and organisation of experiments. Pupils make observations related to the task set and use tables and charts to record and present their results. They begin to recognise conditions for a fair test, although some pupils' ideas are confused in experiments with more than one variable. Pupils draw on the observations made to decide if the results support their original prediction. They are learning to compare their conclusions to scientific knowledge and a few are beginning to generalise a rule.

In both key stages, pupils make satisfactory progress in science. They develop a good vocabulary, which they use in their writing. For example, in Years 3 and 4, they describe rocks and soils with good use of adjectives. In Years 5 and 6, their detailed recording on a circuit diagram makes a contribution to their literacy skills. They

discover about the classification of plants and animals, and their place in the food chain. They use their mathematical skills to draw relevant graphs, charts and tables. Those with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress when supported by a special needs assistant. Pupils of higher ability also make satisfactory progress. Some older pupils make good use of desktop publishing skills and use the computer to broaden science and data handling skills.

All pupils have positive attitudes towards the subject. They enjoy science, follow instructions carefully, work well in small groups or paired work and discuss their work constructively. In most classes, teachers have established good routines for science work. Pupils respond well and work at a satisfactory pace. They compare their ideas and results with those of others in the class, checking the outcomes of their experiments.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Planning and preparation are secure. Teachers explain tasks clearly. They intervene well to challenge and extend individual pupils' thinking and to encourage greater accuracy of observation during practical work. Class control is good. Teachers dominate some investigations, allowing insufficient pupil participation. Marking is regular, but does not take pupils' understanding forward.

The displays of science in the school are lively and add to the quality of learning. The school follows a scheme of work which ensures a systematic approach to teaching and learning, but planning for pupils in different classes in Year 1 does not ensure equality of opportunity for this year group.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Information technology

The school has successfully addressed the low attainment reported in this subject at the time of the last inspection and has raised standards in all classes. Pupils' attainment is now broadly in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall through the school in all aspects of the information technology curriculum. The school has improved teaching, the curriculum, assessment and resourcing considerably since the last inspection. Teaching is now satisfactory overall, but there are still a few weaknesses.

Pupils in Key Stage 1 click and drag objects to complete pictures, showing good understanding and use of the mouse. They use mathematics support programs in pairs, estimating how many tiles will fill an area, for instance. This supports their acquisition of numeracy skills. Pupils know how to load programs and use the keyboard to develop early word-processing skills. In Years 3 and 4, pupils further develop good word-processing and editing skills. They use the shift key to create capital letters and speech marks. They highlight text in order to cut and paste or copy it. As a result of a very well planned sequence of lessons, they make good progress in both word-processing and literacy skills. Pupils are already developing desktop publishing skills in Years 3 and 4. They click on 'insert' and 'frame' in order to paste items from clipart alongside their text. They change the font size, style and colour to create the desired effect. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 understand how to create spreadsheets. They reinforce their numeracy skills while creating a

spreadsheet to show a 'tables chart'. They create functions, understanding the use of formulae and recognising patterns. They use editing skills already learned to highlight a column of three functions, in order to speed the process of copying and pasting. Year 6 pupils are keeping a rainfall chart for each month by entering the information daily and printing off the graphical representation in chosen form at the end of the month.

Although two unsatisfactory lessons were observed, one at each key stage, these do not reflect the quality of teaching in the school, which is at least satisfactory at both key stages, and includes some good teaching. In one of the unsatisfactory lessons, a computer fault interrupted pupils' work and the teacher was unable to redeem the situation. Pupils' progress in this lesson was unsatisfactory as a result of the computer problems and a lack of application to the task, stemming from insecure class management. In the other unsatisfactory lesson, pupils working in pairs, taking turns, received insufficient instruction from the teacher and did not use their allotted fifteen minutes effectively.

For the most part, teaching is well organised, both in specific information technology lessons and during lessons when the computer is used to support work in other subjects. Teachers' planning shows clear objectives, resulting from good understanding of the subject and very good assessment systems. These are a major strength in the school's provision. All teachers know what is to be covered in each aspect of information technology each year and they record carefully how well pupils achieve each objective. Their written and oral instructions are usually clear and they deploy education assistants particularly well to work with individual pupils, ensuring that they use appropriate vocabulary when explaining what they are doing. Teachers' and education assistants' expectations are appropriately high. Samples of work and teachers' well-kept assessment records show that pupils are making satisfactory, and occasionally good progress as a result of a well-organised sequence of lessons on each strand of the subject.

The improvements in standards and provision stem from the good leadership of the co-ordinator, increased staff confidence and improved resources. The school had just completed the introduction of a new scheme of work, based on the local education authority's guidelines, when the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority document was published. It is adapting its provision where the staff see advantages in changing. The school is negotiating training in use of the National Grid for Learning.

Religious education

The previous report found that standards of attainment met the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus at the end both key stages. This position has been maintained. Pupils make satisfactory progress at both key stages.

There is good knowledge and understanding of Christianity and integration between religious education and moral education. The two areas relate well to enhance pupils' learning. However, pupils' work samples show less evidence of the study of other religions. There are also few visits to places of religious interest, other than the local church, and few visitors from the other faith communities.

Pupils at both key stages explore and respond to human experiences. They draw and write

about things that are special to them, for example their first day in school and their birthday. They know that other people have special times. Pupils talk and write about how they feel. Older pupils imagine how other people feel; for example, how people felt in the time of the flood in the story of Noah, or how Joseph's brothers were jealous of him. Pupils reflect and express their opinions about different people in the class in a positive way to help build up confidence and self-esteem. They recognise religious symbols, for example the lit candle, the Cross and the Star of David. When they investigate religious traditions, pupils know that Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and understand the importance of Christmas and Easter to them. They know that Jesus told a number of stories. They understand the meaning of the word parable and act out stories like The Good Samaritan. They know the moral messages these parables contain. Their knowledge and understanding of other world religions is more limited, although the festivals of Diwali and the Chinese New Year have been celebrated at the school. Pupils understand that there are celebrations on the journey of life, including birth and marriage.

Religious education makes a positive contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills. They read and write about the stories they are told. For example, they write about the parables of Jesus, including 'The Good Samaritan', 'The Lost Sheep' and 'The Sower'. They develop their speaking and listening skills in class discussions. There are opportunities for spiritual and moral development when they learn about special books, places and people. They discuss moral issues such as caring for the environment and pollution. Teachers present opportunities for pupils to work together, so that they learn to listen and respect the views of others.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although one unsatisfactory lesson was observed. Good features of teaching include secure subject knowledge, effective planning and teachers' ability to relate moral issues to a religious base. For example, in a lesson on Christening, the teacher used photographs of pupils, so they could relate the concept to their own experiences. Teachers assess pupils against the attainment targets of the Agreed Syllabus. At times, teachers spend too much time in introductory explanations and discussions, with oral work dominated by the teacher.

Art

The school has successfully addressed weaknesses in art, which were highlighted in the last inspection report. It has improved the quality of provision and raised standards. Pupils now make satisfactory progress at both key stages.

The youngest Year 1 pupils work together to create brightly coloured patterns, effectively increasing their awareness of mathematical shapes. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use paint confidently to communicate their ideas about the island of Struay. They experience a range of media as they pursue this topic study. Pupils draw their families most successfully, using pastels with considerable flair. They reach standards which are broadly in line with those expected of pupils of their age. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make good progress in exploring and experimenting with tonal patterns. They investigate the effect of mixing black and white paint, creating interesting contrasts by adding their own leaf patterns. Pupils confidently evaluate their own efforts, making thoughtful suggestions about improvements. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils are achieving satisfactory standards in observational plant drawings. They create lively and effective patterns, based on the work of William

Morris.

Pupils' attitudes in both key stages are good. They enjoy their work and show good levels of concentration as they seek to refine and improve their first efforts. They handle materials and tools with care. They listen carefully to instructions and really try to comply. Both in lessons and when discussing work, pupils are pleasantly confident. When given the opportunity to display imagination and creativity they respond very positively.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Relationships with pupils are good and teachers exercise good class control. They give instructions clearly. They encourage pupils to use knowledge gained in other subjects, as for example, when Year 2 pupils' knowledge about islands effectively supports their creative painting. Teachers match tasks well to the age and interest of pupils. Teachers' planning identifies activities, but does not always make clear which skills or what knowledge pupils are to learn, in terms related to the National Curriculum programmes of study.

Design and technology

There has been considerable improvement in provision and standards since the last inspection when the report highlighted unsatisfactory attainment. Discussions with teachers and pupils, together with samples of work seen, indicate satisfactory progress in the making element of the subject. Their ability to design, modify and evaluate is still underdeveloped. No lessons were timetabled during the current inspection, as the school sensibly organises the curriculum so that blocks of art lessons in one half term alternate with blocks of design and technology in the next.

When designing and making, the pupils can explain what they are doing and describe the properties of the materials they are using. During the inspection this was evident in the way the pupils described their involvement in their history projects. They use card to make a variety of Roman shields, torques and mosaics. They design and sew patterns and weave in a variety of ways. They work competently with clay. They develop good cooking skills. They demonstrate initiative and show an awareness of how things around them are designed and used for specific purposes. Teachers do not place sufficient emphasis on pupils' use of technical vocabulary, however.

Pupils manipulate tools confidently and safely. They assemble and join materials in different ways. They make judgements about their own efforts and those of others and use models and pictures to communicate their designs. Links are evident between design and technology and religious and cultural education, with pupils designing and making their own cards for Christmas and Easter. Teachers also link the subject with science, when pupils design a healthy sandwich or model food.

All pupils work with an appropriate range of materials and tools on focused practical tasks in which they are able to use their knowledge and develop and practise particular skills. Only in Years 3 and 4 was there evidence of pupils drawing, evaluating and modifying their products. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when working with support from education assistants.

Pupils display positive attitudes to their work. They tackle tasks confidently and

competently. They work well together and are prepared to watch, listen and learn from others. They are keen to discuss their ideas and contribute to group discussions.

From the limited evidence available, it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. Planning incorporates good links with other subjects. Older pupils make appropriate artifacts related to their work in history, and teachers provide opportunities for challenge, to produce puppets and movable vehicles using electrical circuits, for example. Pupils are involved in cooking, puppet making and clay modelling, using a selection of materials and tools. Staff give due attention to health and safety issues. However, teachers do not introduce a very broad range of fixing techniques and mechanical components. There are few problem-solving opportunities provided for older pupils. This particularly restricts progress for higher attainers.

Geography

The last inspection reported good standards overall. Since the last inspection, the National Curriculum statutory requirements have changed. Pupils are currently making satisfactory progress overall in the areas of geography studied at both key stages.

The youngest pupils talk appropriately about their families and where they live. Each day they discuss the weather and make real progress in understanding how it will affect their outside play opportunities. Pupils in Year 1 make uneven progress. Those in the mixed reception and Year 1 class make satisfactory progress, while those in the mixed Year 1 and Year 2 class make good progress. Teacher expectations are high in this class. Pupils use correct geographical terms when comparing Barby with the island of Struay. They use information technology skills effectively to produce maps, interpreting geographical terms and positions. For example, pupils place mountains in the middle of their island, and make their river run into a bay. They identify the position of their school correctly in relation to the church, when studying their own locality. They reach standards which are above the expectations for pupils of their age.

Pupils in Years 3 and 4 develop familiarity with the geography of the area around their village. They study aerial views and begin to link village name endings with features noted in map studies. In Years 5 and 6, geographical vocabulary is suitably extended. They use worksheets extensively to demonstrate their understanding of terms such as 'erosion' and 'meander'. They make effective progress in understanding land use in Pakistan.

In the one lesson observed in Key Stage 1, pupils' attitudes to learning were good. Pupils are eager to contribute their opinions and are motivated by the good links made with literacy and art.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in both key stages. With the termly rotation of subjects it was only possible to observe one lesson. Samples of completed work show that pupils are almost always set interesting tasks, which teachers link in an interesting way to other curriculum areas. There is good emphasis on developing the appropriate subject vocabulary. Curriculum planning systems do not ensure similar coverage or equality of opportunity for Year 1 pupils in different classes. The co-ordinator has led constructive adaptation of published schemes of work to topic themes already in place.

History

Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. This maintains the standards reported at the time of the last inspection. No lessons were observed at Key Stage 1. The school's timetable allocates alternate blocks of time to history and geography in order to help pupils focus better on each subject.

The school has improved planning and assessment systems since 1996. Teachers now use the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work. They ensure that pupils develop skills of historical enquiry and cover a range of historical periods during their time at the school. Pupils use simple self-assessment sheets at the end of each history topic. The subject co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and keeps samples of each history topic from each year group, to build up a portfolio of pupils' work. Teachers add comments about the historical enquiry skills developed. These systems are in the early stages of development, but they represent considerable improvement in the quality of the school's provision.

A major strength of historical studies is the way staff use visits and visitors to stimulate pupils' interest and develop their appreciation of events and periods. A group of 'Vikings' visited the school and involved pupils in creating a Viking House as well as staging a mock battle on the playground, for pupils to watch. A 'Tudor Musician' brought costume and instruments; pupils dressed as Tudor characters and recorder players performed Tudor pieces by the end of the Tudor Day. These occasions leave a lasting impression on pupils and give them a lively interest in history. They raise the enthusiasm of the whole school community. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

During the current term, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are learning about invaders and settlers. They have visited Lunt Roman Fort as an initial stimulus for their work. They use their own designs to make replica miniature Roman shields using card. They paint symbols of Celtic and Roman times, including Roman numerals and a picture of Boudicca, on a large drape. They make Celtic torques, using paper and card. Through each of these pursuits, the teachers have skilfully planned links with art and design and technology. They also develop their information technology skills while researching information on CD-ROMs. The younger pupils in Key Stage 2 also complete worksheet activities. These help develop reading skills, but do not promote careful or thoughtful writing. The best example of teachers using history studies to promote literacy was in a piece of work by pupils in Years 5 and 6. Pupils had written a letter to the Board of Governors at a Workhouse, either congratulating them or complaining about food and conditions. The teacher had encouraged pupils to express their points of view in their own manner. The results included some writing of high quality, with clear and forceful powers of expression.

The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory. Teachers prepare resources well, using video and audio cassettes to extend pupils' knowledge. Teachers plan activities which will sustain pupils' interest and manage classes well to ensure good concentration during the pursuits. In the lower Key Stage 2 lesson, the teacher's careful preparation and organisation ensured that pupils were well involved in each of the four different tasks prepared. Older pupils responded well to the teacher's well considered use of recorded information, by listening carefully and jotting brief notes on prepared worksheets. The tasks did not challenge pupils

sufficiently, however, especially higher attainers. Time lines in both Key Stage 2 classes develop pupils' awareness of chronology and offer opportunity for a little focus on numeracy from time to time.

Music

Standards in music were satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. During the inspection, it was not possible to observe any direct teaching. Staff and pupils were interviewed, teachers' planning was scrutinised, singing was heard in assemblies and a lunchtime recorder club was observed. The inspection found a strength in pupils' extra-curricular instrumental skills, but a weakness in pupils' singing. There is insufficient evidence to substantiate a judgement about teaching or standards.

All classes follow an organised, pre-recorded programme of lessons, which effectively provide pupils with a repertoire of familiar songs. These are usually well linked to other curriculum areas. For example, Years 3 and 4 learn songs about 'Invaders', which supports their learning in history. Teachers' planning shows that they draw teaching points from the programme. Pupils use information technology to assist with composing.

Pupils' singing in assemblies during the inspection was poor. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have had limited opportunities to listen to music from their own and other cultures, in order to evaluate it and develop ideas for their own compositions. Very good opportunities are provided to make progress in recorder playing in extra-curricular clubs. Pupils take full advantage of this provision: about 35 pupils belong to the five groups. The school also provides free violin lessons to pupils with interest and aptitude. In discussion, pupils' attitudes to their instrumental music are positive. They are rightly proud of their progress in recorder and violin playing.

Physical education

Pupils make satisfactory progress in dance, gymnastics and games at both key stages. Pupils' attainment in swimming by the end of Key Stage 2 is above average. Almost all receive certificates to confirm that they swim 25 metres confidently with a fluent stroke. Many obtain survival awards. A National Lifesaving Society Certificate shows 100 per cent swimming attainment in 1999. The school has maintained satisfactory standards in the subject since the last inspection, including high standards in swimming.

The youngest pupils make good progress in their confident use of apparatus during gymnastics lessons. They understand safety rules. They jump and balance. They climb on ropes and a climbing frame. They begin to link a short sequence of actions. As a result of a well planned lesson, with a variety of apparatus provided, pupils sustained effort, took turns and challenged themselves appropriately. The teacher's good organisation, class control and use of praise while assessing pupils during their activities led to their making good progress. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 show good use of imagination during dance and drama lessons, when imitating the 'swaggering Mr Toad' or tiptoeing guiltily, for instance. They interpret the musical mood as they adopt the roles of the different characters from *Wind in the Willows*.

Teaching is satisfactory overall at both key stages. Teaching strengths at Key Stage 1 include careful preparation, good use of resources and good observational commentary. Teachers set their high expectations and improve pupils' skills well through this ongoing, immediate assessment. In one Key Stage 2 lesson, when pupils were not focusing on the well planned objective of the lesson, the teacher gained pupils' close attention by asking one boy to demonstrate the accuracy of his skill at bouncing a ball with a bat. This set a challenge to the rest of the class. At both key stages, there was otherwise little evidence of teachers involving pupils in demonstrating their skills in this way, in order to build their own confidence and challenge others. Teachers also give little opportunity for pupils to evaluate their own or each other's performance. Teachers occasionally take too much time giving instructions. At both key stages, teachers' management is occasionally a little insecure, which leads to short lapses in pupils' behaviour.

Trophies in the entrance hall, cuttings from local newspapers and certificates displayed all bear testimony to the school's commitment to developing pupils' skills in games and competitive sports. A team won the local small schools football league in 1999 and the school has held the district sports winners shield for the past two years. Older pupils participate in tag rugby and athletics events. They experience orienteering during outdoor adventure pursuits at a field centre and develop these skills a little in the school grounds. Dedicated staff organise a range of after-school activities and participation in area sporting events. These offer very good opportunities for interested pupils to develop their skills. They also contribute very positively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The team consisted of four inspectors, spending a total of ten days in school over a three-day period. During the inspection, 39 lessons, a few registration sessions, all assemblies and a range of other activities were seen. The team spent 30 hours observing lessons, attending assemblies, hearing pupils read and talking to them about their work. A further 9 hours were spent looking at pupils' work, which included all the available written work from a representative sample of pupils from each class. Inspectors spoke to several governors, including the chair, about their roles. The headteacher was interviewed and inspectors spoke to other members of the school staff about their work. Considerable documentation provided by the school was analysed, both before and during the inspection. Before the inspection, 16 parents attended an evening meeting held by the registered inspector to seek their views. There were 41 responses to a questionnaire sent to parents, seeking their views on specific issues.

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	97	2	23	2

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	4.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	22

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff:	4
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	75
Average class size:	24

Financial data

Financial year:	1999
	£
Total Income	172886
Total Expenditure	180474
Expenditure per pupil	1752
Balance brought forward from previous year	21980
Balance carried forward to next year	14392

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 86
 Number of questionnaires returned: 41

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	56	7	2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	54	41	2	2	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	3	67	28	3	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	28	59	10	3	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	17	67	10	5	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	32	62	5	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	31	67	3	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	12	66	7	12	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	35	55	10	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	21	56	15	8	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	29	61	10	0	0