

INSPECTION REPORT

**BUCKHURST HILL COMMUNITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Buckhurst Hill

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115052

Headteacher: Miss L Howes

Reporting inspector: Carole Skinner
23160

Dates of inspection: 31st January to 4th February 2000

Inspection number: 187767

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Infant and junior |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Lower Queens Road Buckhurst Hill Essex |
| Postcode: | IG9 6DS |
| Telephone number: | 020 8505 7300 |
| Fax number: | 020 8505 7300 |
| Appropriate authority: | The governing body, Buckhurst Hill Primary School |
| Name of Chair of Governors: | Mr E Jackson |
| Date of previous inspection: | April 1996 |

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|-----------------|----------------------|---|---|
| Carole Skinner | Registered inspector | Information technology, art, geography, equality of opportunity. | What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? |
| Ron Elam | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| Alan Britton | Team inspector | Mathematics, history, physical education | |
| Hilary Ring | Team inspector | Science, religious education, music, special educational needs | How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
| Audrey Quinnell | Team inspector | English, design and technology, children aged under five, English as an additional language | |

The inspection contractor was:

Phoenix Educational Consultants
 "Thule"
 60 Joy Lane
 Whitstable
 Kent
 CT5 4LT 01227 273449

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
 Inspection Quality Division
 The Office for Standards in Education
 Alexandra House
 33 Kingsway
 London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|-----------|
| PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT | 5 |
| Information about the school | |
| How good the school is | |
| What the school does well | |
| What could be improved | |
| How the school has improved since its last inspection | |
| Standards | |
| Pupils' attitudes and values | |
| Teaching and learning | |
| Other aspects of the school | |
| How well the school is led and managed | |
| Parents' and carers' views of the school | |
| | |
| PART B: COMMENTARY | |
| | |
| HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS? | 10 |
| The school's results and achievements | |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development | |
| | |
| HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT? | 14 |
| | |
| HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS? | 16 |
| | |
| HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS? | 20 |
| | |
| HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS | 21 |
| | |
| HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED? | 22 |
| | |
| WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER? | 26 |
| | |
| PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS | 27 |
| | |
| PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES | 31 |

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Buckhurst Hill Community Primary School is a larger than average primary school for boys and girls aged from four to eleven. There are 13 children aged under five who attend full-time in the Reception class, and a further 14 children aged under six in a mixed class for Reception and Year 1 pupils. In total, there are 292 full-time pupils on roll, which is approximately 20 pupils fewer than at the time of the last inspection. However, a third intake of pupils in April will increase the roll to its 1996 level. The school has ten more boys than girls on roll. Pupils come from diverse social backgrounds. About nine per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average. There are 64 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, which is broadly in line with the national average. Three pupils have statements of special educational need, which is also broadly the national average. During the last school year, 23 pupils joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission, and 27 pupils left the school other than at the usual time of leaving or transfer. Very few pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds and only one speaks English as an additional language. When pupils enter the school, their attainment is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school, which enables pupils to achieve above average standards in English, mathematics, art, design and technology, history and music by the time they leave. The pupils' attitudes towards school are very good, as are their personal development and relationships. Standards of behaviour are good throughout the school, and attendance is very good. The quality of teaching and learning is good at Key Stage 2, and satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and for children aged under five. The headteacher, governors and staff work together well to improve the school and are constantly striving to raise standards. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics, art, design and technology, history and music by the time they leave the school.
- At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is good and, in about a quarter of lessons, it is very good.
- The pupils' attitudes and personal development are very good, as are relationships throughout the school.
- The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum, which is enriched by a good range of extracurricular activities.
- The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Provision for the pupils' social development is very good, and for their moral and cultural development, it is good.
- The headteacher, governors and senior staff provide strong leadership and clear direction for the school, and the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning are very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in science at Key Stage 1 are below average.
- The quality of teaching and learning for children aged under five and at Key Stage 1, although satisfactory, is not as good as at Key Stage 2.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in April 1996 and, since then, its improvement overall has been good. Above average standards have been maintained in English, whilst in mathematics they have improved. The effective implementation of the school's strategies for literacy and numeracy, and the introduction of ability groups in these subjects, are having a positive impact on the standards achieved by the pupils. Standards in art and design and technology have improved throughout the school. However, standards are now judged to be lower in geography and religious education at Key Stage 2, and in science, geography and music at Key Stage 1. Good standards have been maintained in history at both key stages. The quality of teaching has improved, especially at Key Stage 2. The school has developed very effective procedures for target setting and tracking the progress of individual pupils throughout the school. There has been very good improvement in the school's strategies for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and the quality of teaching. A carefully planned and structured programme of classroom observations by senior staff ensures that areas for development are quickly identified and addressed. One of the key issues from the previous inspection was to maintain a consistently high level of attainment for pupils within the average and above average ability range. This has been addressed successfully at Key Stage 2, but at Key Stage 1, there is still a relatively high proportion of pupils who attain at the lower end of the average band in writing and mathematics. The school has identified this as a priority, and very high targets have been set for the current Year 2. The school has continued to develop its procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress, but, in subjects other than English and mathematics, these are now being reviewed following the introduction of new schemes of work. The school has a good capacity to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

| Performance in: | Compared with | | | | <i>Key</i> |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|--|
| | all schools | | | Similar schools | |
| | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 1999 | |
| English | D | A | C | C | well above average A above average B Average C below average D well below average E |
| Mathematics | A | A | A | A | |
| Science | C | A | C | D | |

The information shows that pupils do best in mathematics, where standards have been well above average compared with all schools for the past three years, and are well above the average for similar schools in 1999. In English and science, there has been significant fluctuation in the results from year to year but the data show that the overall trend in the school's results is broadly in line with the national trend. The findings of the inspection are that standards in English and mathematics are above average by the age of 11, whilst in science, they are average. This indicates rising standards in English, as a result of better teaching and the successful implementation of the literacy hour, and broadly similar standards in mathematics and science compared with the 1999 national test results. Attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus in religious education and in line with national expectations in information and communications technology. Standards are above average in art, design and technology, history and music, and average in all other subjects. Pupils' achievement is good and they are on course to exceed the targets in English and mathematics that were set for the year 2000.

At Key Stage 1, standards are average in reading, writing and mathematics, and below average in science. They are above average in design and technology and history, and average in all other subjects. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning at Key Stage 1, but progress accelerates throughout Key Stage 2 where the quality of teaching is generally higher. Children aged under five make satisfactory progress and reach expected standards in most areas of learning. They do not fully achieve expected standards in creative development. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of carefully planned and targeted support.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | The pupils are very well motivated and keen to learn. They respond very well to the teaching they receive and apply themselves conscientiously to their work. Their attitudes have a very positive impact on learning. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | The pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are courteous and respectful of property. They show consideration for others and move sensibly around the school. |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good. Pupils willingly take responsibility and show initiative. Older pupils operate a 'buddy' system, in which they look after new and younger pupils when they first start school. There are mutually respectful relationships between pupils and adults. |
| Attendance | Very good. Attendance is well above the national average and unauthorised absences are few. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils: | aged up to 5 years | aged 5-7 years | aged 7-11 years |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Lessons seen overall | Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Good |

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. In English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, it is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in 97 per cent of the 67 lessons seen. It was good or better in 61 per cent of the lessons, and very good in 18 per cent. Teaching was unsatisfactory in three per cent of the lessons observed. Throughout the school, a particular strength of the teaching is the way teachers manage the pupils, as this promotes good behaviour and very good attitudes towards learning. Pupils show high levels of interest and are able to concentrate well for lengthy periods. The most successful teaching was seen at Key Stage 2, where 80 per cent of the lessons were at least good, and 27 per cent were very good. Here, teachers' high expectations and the brisk pace of lessons lead to good progress in learning. Teaching assistants are deployed well and make a significant contribution to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs. The quality of teaching for children aged under five and for those at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall. At Key Stage 1, teachers' expectations are not always high enough, especially for average and higher attaining pupils. Shortcomings in two lessons for the youngest pupils relate mainly to the teacher's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and inappropriate expectations.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Good overall. The curriculum offers a good range of opportunities, which meet the needs of all pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2. Curricular planning for children aged under five does not take account of all aspects of the nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes for children of this age. The school's strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills are being implemented well. There is a good range of extracurricular activities. The school's links with the community and with other local schools make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. Teachers and assistants work closely together to support pupils in the classroom and to provide additional help in small withdrawal groups. The targets in pupils' individual education plans are sometimes too broad. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | The school provides good support for the very small proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good. Provision for social development is very good. Pupils are given many opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility. Provision for both moral and cultural development are good. Pupils are taught to act according to a moral code, and are introduced to a wide range of cultural experiences. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Statutory requirements for collective worship are not met in all assemblies. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Satisfactory. The staff know the pupils well and take great care of them in a safe and supportive environment. A number of staff have not had up-to-date training in child protection procedures. Good assessment procedures are in place in English and mathematics. In other subjects, assessment procedures are in the early stages of development, following the introduction of new schemes of work. The tracking of individual pupils' progress in English and mathematics is a very good feature. |

The school's partnership with parents is good and assists the progress which the pupils make.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher and staff with management responsibilities provide strong leadership and clear direction for the school. There is a shared commitment to improvement and a good capacity to succeed. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | The governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and fulfil their statutory duties well. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | There is rigorous monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching and learning which involves the headteacher, senior staff and governors. Appropriate performance targets are set and used to raise standards. |
| The strategic use of resources | Financial planning and administration are very good and pupils derive great benefit from wisely targeted spending. Appropriate educational priorities are clearly identified in the school development plan and these inform the budget planning process very well. Spending is monitored very carefully and the principles of best value are applied very effectively. |

The school's staffing, accommodation and learning resources satisfactorily support teaching and learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is well managed and led. • Their children like school. • Behaviour in the school is good. • The school expects pupils to work hard and do their best. • The teaching is good. • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible. • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities which is offered to pupils outside of lessons. |

The findings of the inspection support the positive views of the parents. In addition, the findings of the inspection are that the school provides a good range of extracurricular activities to enrich pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Analysis of the school's national end of Key Stage 2 test results in 1999 shows that, when compared with all schools, standards were average in English and science, and well above average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, the pupils' results were average in English, well above average in mathematics and below average in science.

2. The percentage of pupils who attained Level 4 or higher in the 1999 tests was above average in English, well above average in mathematics and close to the national average in science. The proportion of pupils who reached Level 5 was below average in English and science, and well above average in mathematics.

3. When the averages of the school's end of Key Stage 2 test results for 1999 are compared with those achieved in the previous two years, they show an improving trend in mathematics, and little change overall in English and science, although results have fluctuated from year to year. Overall, the trend is broadly in line with that seen nationally. The combined data for 1996 to 1999 show that the attainment of both boys and girls was above the national average overall. The school has set formal targets for 73 per cent of its pupils to reach or exceed the expected level in the national end of Key Stage 2 tests and assessments in English and mathematics in the year 2000. These targets were exceeded in both subjects in 1998 and 1999 and represent only a moderate degree of challenge for the pupils in the current Year 6 which includes a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The pupils are on course to exceed the targets this year.

4. The findings of the inspection are that the oldest pupils at Key Stage 2 attain above average standards in English, including literacy. This improvement on the previous year's test results reflects the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the school's focus on developing pupils' writing skills. Standards in mathematics, including numeracy, are above average, but the 1999 test results were well above average. As the quality of teaching is good and the daily mathematics lesson is being taught well, this minor variation is not overly significant. Standards are at the level of the national average in science, information technology, geography and physical education. In religious education, pupils attain standards that are in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. In art, design and technology, history and music, pupils attain standards that are above average for their age. The standards found during the inspection are higher than those in the end of key stage national tests in 1999 in English, but slightly lower in mathematics. Standards in science are similar to the test results. Compared with the findings of the previous inspection in 1996, standards are higher in mathematics, art, music and design and technology. They are lower in geography, and similar in English and all other subjects.

5. In English, by the age of 11, pupils speak clearly and confidently, both in small groups and to a wider audience. They listen attentively to the teacher and to each other and make articulate contributions to discussions. Pupils are able to share their ideas thoughtfully and can read suitable books with expression and understanding. The higher attaining pupils are able to read challenging material, and use the higher order reading skills of prediction, deduction and inference. Pupils use their literacy skills well to support their learning across the curriculum. Pupils write effectively in a variety of styles for a range of purposes. They have a good understanding of the basic rules of spelling, punctuation and grammar. In mathematics, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have developed a good range of strategies to solve problems. They convert percentages to fractions, calculate the number of

degrees in the angles of regular and irregular polygons and find the mode, mean, median and range of a set of statistical data. The pupils make good progress in developing numeracy skills. By the age of 11, in science, pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a fair test and identify the variables when devising their own experiments. Pupils have a sound understanding of food chains and habitats. They recognise the properties of solids, liquids and gases, and investigate how far sound can travel. In information technology, the pupils have sound word processing skills and use a variety of programs competently to create pictures and graphs, to model situations and to control events by storing sequences of instructions. In religious education, pupils know the significance of some of the main festivals and traditions of Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism.

6. In geography, pupils use their research skills appropriately to find about the geographical features of places around the world, and, in history, they have a good understanding of life in Ancient Greece. In physical education, pupils perform basic gymnastic activities competently and most are able to swim unaided for at least 25 metres. In art, pupils make detailed pencil drawings of Greek pots, with a good eye for detail and effective use of shading techniques. In design and technology, they design and make 'story boxes' to illustrate a story they have written, and these are attractive and well finished. In music, pupils clap syncopated rhythms and compose rhythmical patterns using tuned and untuned instruments.

7. When the averages of the school's end of Key Stage 1 test data for 1999 are compared with those of all schools and with similar schools, they show that standards are average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. Analysis of the end of Key Stage 1 test results shows that, in reading and mathematics, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 or higher was close to the national average. In writing, it was above the national average. The proportion of pupils who reached Level 3 was above average in reading, close to the average in writing and below average in mathematics. In writing and mathematics, a higher than average proportion of pupils attained scores towards the lower end of the average band (Level 2).

8. When the end of Key Stage 1 test results for the school in reading, writing and mathematics for 1999 are compared with those of the previous two years, they show a marked decline in standards in mathematics, which were well above average in 1997, average in 1998 and below average in 1999. Standards in reading, which were below average in 1997, reached average in 1998 and remained there in 1999. In writing, standards rose from average in 1997 to above average in 1998 and returned to average in 1999. Taking the three years together, the performance of girls was higher than that of boys in reading, writing and mathematics. In the 1999 end of key stage assessments by teachers in science, standards were well below average at Level 2 and above, and average at Level 3.

9. The findings of the inspection are that, by the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading and writing, including literacy, and mathematics, including numeracy, are average. In science, standards are below average. Standards in all other subjects are average, except in design and technology and history, where they are above average. When compared with the results of the 1999 national tests, the findings of the inspection are similar in reading and writing, but show an improvement in mathematics. This is related to the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Compared with the school's last inspection, standards are similar in most subjects. However, in science and geography they are lower, whilst in art and design and technology, they have improved.

10. In English, by the age of seven, most pupils speak confidently and are able to describe, converse and narrate at levels appropriate for their age. Most pupils read accurately and many can work out new simple words by splitting them into sounds. Nearly all pupils have a store of memorised words to call upon. Although pupils can write simple sentences and put them together to form a story or poem, making a satisfactory attempt at simple punctuation and spelling, they are not given enough opportunities to write freely and at length. There is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils. In mathematics, by the end of the key stage, pupils have a good understanding of odd and even numbers

and simple fractions, but their knowledge of multiplication tables and the concept of division is uncertain. They identify two-dimensional shapes correctly and have a sound understanding of time. Most pupils are able to explain their mental strategies. Pupils have a sound grasp of numeracy skills and most understand the value of numbers up to and beyond 100. By the age of seven, in science, pupils are able to describe simple features of living things and observe changes that occur when objects are pushed or pulled. They name the parts of a plant and predict what will happen to ice cubes when they are heated. However, attainment is below average because few pupils have sufficient breadth of knowledge to understand cause and effect or to make comparisons using accurate scientific reasons. In information technology, pupils have sound word processing skills and control the mouse carefully when drawing a picture. In religious education, pupils know about some important religious figures and begin to explore people, places and events that are special in their lives.

11. In geography, pupils show an awareness of places beyond their own locality when discussing where 'Barnaby Bear' has visited. In history, they demonstrate factual knowledge and understanding of the events surrounding the Great Fire of London. In physical education, pupils perform basic gymnastic movements competently on the floor and on apparatus. In art, they develop a range of skills in drawing, painting, printing and collage work but limited evidence of three-dimensional work was seen during the inspection. In design and technology, pupils draw simple plans and pictures of a decorated box to show groups of similar materials, linking this with their science work on the properties of materials. In music, pupils sing a range of songs with a sound awareness of pitch and rhythm.

12. Children aged under five enter the school at average standards of attainment. The children make satisfactory progress and most are on course to reach the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children aged five in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. They are on course to attain most aspects of personal and social, and physical development, but are not on course to attain satisfactorily in their creative development. In the school's last inspection report, attainment for children aged under five was judged to be satisfactory with many achieving highly for their age and ability. In language and literacy, by the age of five, the children are able to use pictures to tell a story and some are able to read some words. In mathematics, they are able to count to ten, and higher attaining children are able to describe which numbers are missing from a sequence of single numbers. They are starting to gain an understanding of the properties of simple shapes. Children recognise aspects of different parts of the day, such as break and lunch times. They use their imagination in role-play, as when pretending to be waiters taking orders in a restaurant, but there are limited opportunities for this. Children enjoy painting, but are making limited progress, due to a lack of informative teaching to improve their efforts. The children are developing control when using small tools and equipment. The lack of a designated area for outside play limits the children's progress in balancing and agility, and some aspects of their personal and social development.

13. Overall, the pupils' achievement is good, although there are significant variations between subjects and amongst different groups of pupils. Children under five achieve satisfactorily. They enter the school with average standards of attainment, receive mainly satisfactory teaching and make satisfactory progress, so that, by the age of five, they attain average standards in most areas of the Desirable Learning Outcomes, except for their creative development, which is unsatisfactory. At Key Stage 1, pupils' achievement is, again, satisfactory overall. In design and technology and history, where teaching is of a high standard, achievement is good. In science, expectations are too low and teachers do not have sufficient expertise in the subject. As a consequence, the pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory.

14. At Key Stage 2, pupils' achievements are good in English, mathematics, art, design and technology, history and music. In English and mathematics, the introduction of teaching by ability groups and of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy is having a marked impact on pupils' achievements. Teachers' expertise in the other four subjects is good, and recent improvements to the curriculum in art

and design and technology have also contributed to the good achievement of pupils. Achievement is satisfactory in science, information technology, geography, physical education and religious education. In these subjects, some teachers' knowledge and understanding are less secure than others and new curricular planning is still being implemented. Teachers are also still adapting to a new style of teaching information technology in the recently opened computer suite.

15. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning and attain standards that are good in relation to their previous attainment. They receive good levels of additional support, both in the classroom and when withdrawn to work in small groups. Teachers and the coordinator for special educational needs plan effectively to meet the needs of each pupil. Higher attaining pupils achieve well at Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics, but are not always sufficiently challenged at Key Stage 1. There was no evidence of significant variations in the attainment of boys or girls, ethnic minority groups or pupils from differing backgrounds during the inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships with each other and adults are strengths of the school and make a very good contribution towards promoting their attainment and progress. This conclusion is in line with the findings of the previous inspection and reflects the widespread views of parents. The attendance of pupils is also very good and punctuality has improved since the last inspection.

17. Throughout the school, the pupils' attitudes towards learning are very good. This includes those of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils concentrate well and show interest in what they are doing, as was seen in a Year 6 literacy lesson, where pupils were working independently to produce concise written arguments. They have the confidence to try and work out answers in front of their classmates, as seen during mental mathematics in numeracy lessons. Pupils in all year groups settle down to work quickly, and, in lessons, are eager to answer the teachers' questions. They are keen to become involved in different activities within the school, in clubs and with community events. Pupils in the Reception year show maturity. They work together well and are learning independence, though they generally have to wait for the teacher to tell them what to do next when they have finished a task.

18. Pupils behave well in the classroom, at play and lunch times. They are well mannered, polite to adults and to each other, and courteous and welcoming to visitors. They generally move around the school in an orderly way, even when not supervised, although they do sometimes run in the corridors. Pupils show respect for property, for example, when using the computers, and take care collecting and putting away instruments during music lessons. Nevertheless, in some classes, the teachers do not stop pupils calling out, thus preventing others, with their hands up, from contributing. No bullying occurred during the inspection, and the school has appropriate procedures to deal with any aggressive behaviour that may take place. Three pupils were excluded from the school during past year as a result of their very poor behaviour.

19. Relationships between pupils and with adults are also very good and contribute strongly to the quality of work in lessons. Pupils get on well with each other when playing games at break and lunch times. In the classroom, the youngest respect each other's space when sitting close together on the carpet and follow the rules of 'circle' time. Good co-operation was seen when Year 5 pupils worked in pairs on the computers and pupils in the early Reception class play co-operatively and share toys. Pupils in Year 3/4 willingly and sensitively contributed positive comments about their classmates in 'circle' time. The pupils' personal development is also very good. During lessons, the pupils show initiative such as when Year 3/4 pupils were seeking information from travel brochures in a geography lesson. Since the last inspection, the school has increased the opportunities for pupils to undertake

responsibility. Pupils take on many tasks, both within the classroom and outside. For example, the older pupils look after the younger ones and participate in meetings of the school council. The pupils also benefit from collecting for charities during the year and meeting people in the community, as when the Year 6 pupils serve tea and biscuits when grandparents are invited into the school.

20. Attendance, at over 96 per cent, is very good and makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved by the pupils. Absences are usually due to the inevitable childhood illnesses, although a number of parents insist on taking their children on holiday in term time. The school has decided that holiday absences will not normally be approved and this has, understandably, resulted in the level of unauthorised absence being higher than the national average. Pupils are generally keen to come to school and punctuality has improved since the last inspection. Nevertheless, there are usually a few pupils arriving late each morning, although normally only by a few minutes. Registration takes place commendably promptly at the start of the day.

21. Children aged under five behave well and are on course to attain most aspects in their personal and social development. They settle into school life very well, are learning to take turns, feel safe and secure and are growing in confidence. They lack sufficient independence, as when changing for physical activities, and have limited opportunities to make choices of activities and resources. They are developing an awareness of others and realise that, although some may behave differently, they have similar feelings to themselves and may be easily hurt by others' thoughtless actions.

22. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes and behave well with their own class teacher and the teaching assistants. The staff know pupils well and are sensitive and responsive to individual needs. Some particularly caring support was noticed for those who had statements of special educational need and pupils responded by trying to do their best. Pupils are encouraged to be involved in shaping their progress by deciding on appropriate targets for themselves in areas where they feel they could improve.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. Overall, the quality of teaching and the quality of learning are good. There is some variation, as teaching and learning are satisfactory for children aged under five and at Key Stage 1, and good at Key Stage 2. In the previous inspection, teaching was judged to be good for children under five, and satisfactory at Key Stages 1 and 2. During the inspection, 67 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. The quality of teaching was very good in 12 of these, good in 29, satisfactory in 24 and unsatisfactory in two. The strongest aspect of the teaching throughout the school is the management of the pupils, which results in good behaviour and very positive attitudes to work by the pupils. Throughout the school, particular strengths in the quality of the pupils' learning are the way they sustain concentration and interest in the lessons, and the effort they put into their work. There has been good improvement in the quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. The introduction of ability groups for teaching in English and mathematics has enabled teachers to ensure that average and higher attaining pupils are given sufficiently challenging work. Teachers' expectations for achievement are consistently high and promote good progress in pupils' learning. Teachers' questioning is skilful and leads pupils to develop lines of thought and enquiry.

24. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning for children aged under five are satisfactory in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and personal and social development. They are unsatisfactory in creative development. Relationships are good, and the staff praise and encourage every child. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and mathematics is satisfactory and is clearly linked to the planning for Reception children in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Pupils are given a range of interesting activities to develop their

language and mathematical skills, such as sharing stories, speaking aloud in 'circle' time and using practical equipment when counting or learning about shapes. The teacher's knowledge and understanding of the needs of children aged under five and the Early Years curriculum are limited in some aspects. The absence of a clear framework for curricular planning places a new teacher at a disadvantage. Teachers' expectations are sometimes insufficiently high for lessons to be challenging for children of all abilities. This was particularly noticeable in the creative area of learning.

25. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching and the quality of learning in English and mathematics are satisfactory. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are being implemented appropriately and this is enabling pupils to make satisfactory progress in acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding. However, in some lessons, there is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils and teachers' written comments on pupils' work do not always help them to improve. The quality of teaching and learning in science is unsatisfactory because the teachers' expectations of the pupils are too low, and work is not well planned to meet the needs of all pupils. In design and technology and history, the quality of teaching is good and enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. Teachers provide a good level of challenge for pupils and are confident in their approach to these subjects. Lessons are well planned and reflect the good curricular planning which underpins teaching in these subjects. In all other subjects, the quality of teaching and the quality of the pupils' learning are satisfactory. Overall, teachers use a range of effective strategies to manage and motivate pupils, which help to sustain their interest and concentration. Teachers and assistants provide good levels of support for pupils with special educational needs and work is carefully planned to meet their needs. However, teachers' expectations are not high enough to promote good progress and a productive pace of learning, especially for the oldest pupils.

26. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, information technology, history, art, physical education and music. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in geography and religious education. At Key Stage 2, there are a number of strengths of the teaching. The pace of lessons is brisk and purposeful, and this leads to an accelerated rate of learning by most pupils. There is particularly effective use of teaching assistants to support pupils' learning, which enables all pupils, but especially those with special educational needs, to make good progress in their learning. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils and a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach, which is communicated clearly and effectively to the pupils. This enables pupils to make good gains in knowledge, skills and understanding. The successful implementation of the literacy hour and the daily mathematics lesson is having a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning. There is good teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy, and teachers provide a range of opportunities for pupils to use these skills across the curriculum. In English and mathematics, the grouping of pupils by ability enables teachers to pitch their lessons at an appropriate level for the pupils and still provide different work to challenge the highest attainers or support those who are experiencing difficulties. The quality of teachers' planning is variable, and is satisfactory overall. Where it is good, teachers show clearly what pupils are expected to learn from the activity and how this is to be achieved. Less effective planning contains merely a list of activities, with no clearly defined objectives for different groups of pupils.

27. A Year 5 lesson about narrative poetry embodied the features of successful teaching at both key stages. The week's work was very well planned to incorporate a variety of poems. By the time this lesson took place, the pupils had already developed a good understanding of the different features of narrative poetry. The teacher focused on Tennyson's poem, *The Lady of Shalott* and had engaged the pupils' interest in earlier lessons through close scrutiny of the content and language of the poem. Her expectations of the pupils' ability to understand and comment on the poem were very high, and her skilful use of questioning challenged them to think, to deduce from the text and to use their imagination. She also reinforced previous teaching by asking pupils to find examples of figurative language and onomatopoeia. There was very good teaching of basic skills as pupils learned to use possessive

pronouns correctly, and the activities for different groups both reflected their needs and challenged their thinking. For example, one group wrote a newspaper article based on *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* and another wrote a description of one of the characters in *The Highwayman*. The quality of the pupils' learning was very good as they increased their knowledge and understanding of narrative poetry and the effects of using figurative language.

28. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school and as a result, pupils make good progress. Pupils' needs are recognised early in their school life and appropriate support is given. The majority of pupils with special educational needs have difficulties with English and literacy. Teachers' planning for the literacy hour takes into account the needs of pupils with learning difficulties by ensuring that independent work matches their ability. Effective use is made of whole class sessions to reinforce and consolidate basic skills. Very good use is made of support staff to teach pupils with specific literacy difficulties by the use of the Additional Literacy Strategy. The coordinator for special educational needs and the support staff have very good expertise and a clear understanding of pupils' difficulties. Careful assessment of need enables them to provide effective support. Where pupils are withdrawn to work with classroom support staff or to receive specialist teaching, they make good gains in skills, knowledge and understanding. At times, however, they miss other areas of the curriculum. Pupils' attitudes contribute to their success; they are interested, concentrate and apply themselves well. During lessons, most teachers have a good understanding of the special educational needs of pupils and adapt their teaching methods to meet individual need. Class teachers usually plan in accordance with the targets identified in pupils' individual education plans. Some of these are imprecise in that they do not focus on short term targets to be achieved with practical examples. The strategies in the individual education plans do not give consistently sufficient guidance to class teachers as to how they can reinforce the withdrawal work in the class when the support staff are not present. All staff have very good relationships with pupils and encourage them to develop the confidence to tackle work which they find difficult. Pupils with statements receive very good one-to-one support and the work is well tailored to their particular requirements as specified in their statement of educational provision.

29. The quality of teaching and learning for gifted and higher attaining pupils is good at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils receive good levels of challenge in mathematics and English and many are able to achieve above average standards in literacy and numeracy. At Key Stage 1, there is not always enough challenge in the activities provided for higher attaining pupils. This was evident in the quality and range of the pupils' writing, none of which indicated above average attainment in Year 2.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

30. At the time of the previous inspection, curricular provision was broad and balanced. All statutory requirements were met with the exception of some elements of music and art. In music, there was a lack of composition, listening and appraising. In art, there was limited access to a range of media and little direct teaching of skills. Some imbalances occurred in the organisation of the curriculum and the time allocated for religious education was too low in some classes. Although there were schemes of work for all subjects, the content to be taught was not always outlined sufficiently. Curricular provision was enhanced by a range of extracurricular activities.

31. The findings of this inspection are that the school provides a good range of learning opportunities, and good improvements have been made in the provision for art and music. The breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum are good. Appropriate statutory requirements are in place. Religious education is taught in accordance with the locally Agreed Syllabus and time allocations have been carefully audited. The school day has been lengthened for Key Stage 2 pupils since the last inspection.

32. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and the time allocation made for it is appropriate. Emphasis has also been given to the provision of time for mathematics in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy. Both strategies are having a positive impact on the quality of learning for the pupils, although this is most noticeable at Key Stage 2. The curriculum co-ordinators and senior management team are monitoring the plans carefully for coverage. The curriculum generally builds on existing knowledge, understanding and skills systematically but some of the interpretations of the schemes of work are not sufficiently challenging at the end of Key Stage 1. There are policies for all subject areas and the school has recently introduced Qualifications and Curriculum Authority schemes of work in science, history, geography, information technology and design and technology. These provide clear guidance on the content of subjects and expected learning goals for pupils of different attainment levels. Schemes of work are amended each year to take account of the needs of pupils in mixed age classes to ensure that pupils do not revisit any area unproductively. The art scheme has recently been completed and there is a commercial scheme for physical education.

33. The school has carefully considered equal opportunities in the provision for English and mathematics in Key Stage 2. Setting arrangements in Years 5 and 6 and particular arrangements in Years 3 and 4, which enable lower attaining pupils in both years to receive extra support, are beneficial for higher and lower attaining pupils across the year groups. There is also some very good specialist teaching of science in Year 6 where the work is thoughtfully planned to cater for pupils with varying needs.

34. The breadth, balance and relevance of the whole curriculum for children aged under five are satisfactory overall, although some areas receive less emphasis than others. The school does not have a policy or a well structured curriculum, which is planned to cover all aspects of the Desirable Learning Outcomes, a nationally approved framework, or to link into the National Curriculum, to ensure that it meets the needs of all children, who are under five. The absence of a well-planned curriculum means that new and inexperienced teachers receive insufficient guidance. Although many children enter the Reception class with average or above average attainment and have received a good induction to many of the elements of the Desirable Learning Outcomes, at a nursery school or playgroup, not all of them are ready to enter the more formal aspects of the National Curriculum. Some children enter with below average attainment and the lack of an appropriate curriculum does not ensure that these children are provided with appropriate activities for them to make sufficient gains in their learning.

35. The provision for pupils with special educational needs continues to be good. Curricular planning with regard to the development of skills in literacy successfully meets the specific requirements of pupils with special educational needs. There is a good policy for special educational needs and this is reflected in the school provision. Paperwork has been radically improved over the last term. The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs have been conscientiously compiled but some of the targets are too generalised and are not focused on how pupils can progress in the short term. The targets tend to focus on literacy and there are few comments with regard to how pupils can be helped to improve their skills in mathematics. The strategies in the plans do not always help class teachers to plan work to the targets, so that pupils can practise the skills in a range of curricular areas. New plans are written after a full review meeting. In addition to long-term intervention plans, the school has introduced short-term provision such as the Additional Literacy Strategy to help those who could raise their level of attainment with some extra support. Good account has been taken of assessment procedures to target these groups of pupils. These approaches are beginning to have a positive impact on these pupils' skills. However, they sometimes receive this additional support at times other than the literacy hour and, consequently, miss other areas of the curriculum.

36. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. 'Circle' time is planned and there is a school council in operation. A good health education policy, which was reviewed last term, includes the provision for sex education and has been fully agreed by the governing body. It is mainly planned to be included within the science programme. Misuse of pills, medicines, and health hazards, such as alcohol and smoking, are clearly included in the section for Key Stage 2 pupils. In addition, the school has provided a particular input for Year 6 pupils, which has included a talk by the police and the involvement of parents. There is no separate personal and social development policy or planned structure. 'Circle' times allow pupils to learn to relate to others and to share their experiences and concerns. Pupils and teachers are not yet fully accustomed to these occasions, however, and although teachers act with sensitivity, some pupils are inhibited by the experience of giving personal viewpoints to the rest of the class.

37. The findings of the inspection are that a broad range of extra-curricular activities and clubs enriches pupils' learning, although these were not considered to be extensive by parents. Across the year, there are chances for pupils to engage in football, cricket, rugby, jogging, recorder and chime bell playing, a computer club and an instrumental music club. The contribution of voluntary helpers is very much valued by the staff.

38. The school runs a project, which is called 'Community Links'. This involves regular contact with the local community and provides pupils with chances to develop their awareness of citizenship. These very good links make valuable contributions to the pupils' learning. Pupils participate in competitive sports with other schools and are supported by professionals in the areas of rugby and cricket. The school had a focus on caring for neighbours and welcomes the residents from the local community in to share their experiences, participate in the life of the school and enjoy concerts and dinners. During history lessons, pupils hear about the experiences of life during World War II. Grandparents are welcomed in on a regular basis to read with the children. Local artists and musicians also enrich the pupils' lives when they share their skills and expertise, and representatives from local churches explain their beliefs. The school has good links with the pupils' families. The home/school agreement has been carefully debated and parents and representatives on the school council have been very involved in its development. The headteacher is well supported by the local consortium of schools, and courses that are provided for teachers and teaching assistants have a positive impact on the curricular experiences which pupils subsequently encounter. Strong links exist with the local secondary school and playgroups and pupils take part in musical festivals with schools in the area. Students who are training for Nursery or a teaching qualification are welcomed into the school.

39. Overall, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory, for moral and cultural development, it is good and for the promotion of social skills, it is very good. No direct judgements were given about this aspect at the last inspection.

40. There is a strong, positive school ethos, and the commitment shown by the school reflects pupils' good responses and the constructive influence on their personal development. There is a range of documentation which specifically mentions the opportunities for pupils' spiritual development, including the Essex Agreed Syllabus, 'Open Worlds' which, apart from the religious elements, includes an appreciation of the 'Natural World'. There are lively, well presented assemblies, and some of these are taken by the local vicar. Through these, pupils learn to value others, acknowledge talents, respect and tolerate different opinions, consider others' feelings and have their efforts rewarded. Classes share their successes, for example, a Year 5 class demonstrated their work in music by presenting a polished performance of their musical composition work based on the theme 'Baa Black Sheep'. The assemblies reinforce the sense of community, which is very strong within the school, and planned themes indicate that there is a good spiritual focus. During the week of the inspection, however, the assemblies did not always meet statutory requirements and it was evident that some groups of pupils miss the acts of

worship on a regular basis when they receive lessons in information technology or attend a music club. During 'circle' times, pupils reflect on their appreciation of others, talk about special moments in their lives and consider their own feelings. A sensitive and thoughtful gesture on the part of the school has been to establish a quiet garden area in memory of the children who died at Dunblane.

41. The provision for moral development is good. The school's mission statement is concerned with 'Learning, whilst caring and sharing' and this is well known to pupils. It is reinforced in every aspect of the daily life of the school. The behaviour and discipline policy gives a good framework for a whole school approach with clear guidelines. Incidents of bullying or racial abuse must be reported and disciplinary steps are clearly laid out if there is any misbehaviour. Positive reinforcement is the basis of the policy which is underpinned by a variety of privileges, rewards and incentives. Pupils are very clear about what is right and wrong. During assemblies, their efforts are acknowledged when they receive stickers, awards made by the headteacher and, in some cases, a cup. The staff in the school act as good role models for the pupils. The positive management of the pupils gives a good basis for moral understanding. Pupils are carefully guided in considering their own rights and their responsibility to those less fortunate than themselves, for example, through fund-raising for a number of charities on a regular basis. Staff are introducing 'circle' time sessions, when moral issues are discussed and pupils reflect on how their actions have an impact on others. On one occasion, they considered what was the nicest thing they had ever done for someone else.

42. The provision for pupils' social development is very good and a significant percentage of parents agree that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible. It is evident that the strength of relationships within the school assists the pupils in forming positive attitudes towards good social behaviour and self-discipline. Pupils are encouraged to accept responsibilities and work together in harmony. There are opportunities for pupils to become members of the school council and to represent the views of others. Pupils work well in pairs, in small groups and as a class throughout the school. The school's links with the local community are particularly good, and pupils are involved in a wide variety of experiences. The links with the community in the 'Year of the Neighbour' project, which has now evolved into the "Community Links Project", have highlighted this aspect. Pupils invite elderly residents into the school and the oldest pupils are responsible for planning, cooking and serving meals for them. During the inspection, there was an afternoon tea when grandparents came in and joined in with reading stories to the children. These occasions happen on a regular basis and are very well attended. Pupils also go out into the community to entertain residents in local care homes. The oldest pupils act as 'buddies' to new entrants and help them to settle in. There are also good opportunities for pupils to become monitors and carry out specific jobs which aid the smooth running of the school. Pupils are encouraged to develop a social conscience and have been active in fundraising for the Blue Peter Appeal, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Christmas shoeboxes, Red Nose Day and the Dunblane Appeal. The school has links with two other schools and welcomes their pupils on visits. One of the schools is a school for the deaf in Brighton.

43. The provision for cultural development is good. The school works hard to provide local cultural opportunities for pupils. During assemblies, pupils are alerted to the music which is played on entry and exit. In their work on the last millennium, pupils have had the chance to learn about major events and the music and art of various periods. A good range of visitors are encouraged into the school to provide cultural diversity and interest for the pupils. These include a theatre company and several musicians. The pupils make visits which link with their curricular work. For example, they have been to art galleries, local churches and places of historical interest, and older pupils go on a residential visit to York. Pupils experience a 'Victorian Day' and also learn about the culture of Ancient Greece. Multicultural opportunities have included visitors who have explained about the Chinese New Year and the traditions associated with Judaism. The school has links with a school in Newham and pupils from there come from a wide variety of backgrounds. They enjoy acting as hosts when pupils come for a visit. Pupils from Buckhurst Hill make a return visit to the school annually and have the experience of

visiting an Asian street market. There are few displays that acknowledge the culture of the small number of pupils in the school whose first language is not English. However, guided reading books and big books with a multicultural theme are used during literacy lessons to raise awareness. In art, pupils learn about Japanese prints and see examples of work done by Aborigines. In music, they learn Caribbean songs and rhythms and use instruments from around the world. Barnaby Bear's 'travels' also make pupils aware of the characteristics of different countries from where the postcards are sent.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. As at the time of the previous inspection, the teachers look after the needs of the pupils well. Parents are pleased with the level of support in the school, and see it as a caring community where their children are safe.

45. Overall, the school has satisfactory procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of the pupils. The headteacher is the designated officer for child protection and the school follows local procedures. The staff generally have a satisfactory understanding of the procedures and know to whom they should report in the school if necessary. The provision for first aid is good: several staff have been trained, records are kept of any treatment and letters are sent home to parents as appropriate. A suitable health and safety policy is in place, and the coordinator ensures that staff are familiar with, and follow, proper procedures. The governors are actively involved in touring the school to identify any potential hazards. The teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues during lessons such as science, physical education and design and technology. The arrangements for sex education and drug awareness are appropriate. The school regularly reminds parents to exercise care when bringing and collecting their children. Most parents were seen to drive their cars sensibly, but a few insist on waiting on the marked 'no parking' areas.

46. The procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour are good. The pupils have a good understanding of how they should behave, both from displays in the classroom and from discussions with the teacher. They understand the meaning of "*Learning whilst caring and sharing*". This approach is reinforced during assemblies, when pupils receive achievement awards for good work and behaviour. Nevertheless, there is some inconsistency amongst the teachers in the way they ensure good behaviour. In some classes, the teachers did not, for example, insist on pupils putting their hands up and they were allowed to call out. The midday supervisors have a good understanding of how to support the pupils in the playground. The school takes appropriate action if any bullying occurs. Pupils who show any sustained difficulty with behaviour are monitored well through the school's special educational needs system.

47. The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance and punctuality are very good. The keenness of the pupils to come to school and the good relationships with parents result in little absence. The school reminds parents of the need for regular attendance and the importance of arriving on time. Any unexplained absence results in the secretary telephoning home during the morning of the first day. She also produces regular statistics to see whether any problems are starting to build up. Although the school does not authorise holiday absences, some parents still do not fully appreciate the need to avoid taking their children out of school in term time.

48. Assessment procedures for children aged under five are satisfactory. On entry to the Reception class, the teacher assesses the children according to the Local Education Authority's baseline scheme. This indicates individual strengths and weaknesses, which are broadly based on the national Desirable Learning Outcomes for young children. This assessment is also used well to identify children who are likely to need special educational help. The school has very effective short, medium and long term systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. These include national standardised assessment tests at the end of each key stage, continuous teacher assessment, standardised tests and comprehensive

tracking documents for individual pupils in numeracy and literacy. All assessment is related well to the requirements of the National Curriculum in all subjects. Pupils are assessed as they move through the year groups, and records of their progress and attainment are passed on to the next teacher. However, assessment procedures in subjects other than English and mathematics are in the early stages of development following the introduction of new national schemes of work. The key issue from the last OFSTED inspection, concerning the development of assessment opportunities within daily planning in order to provide well matched tasks for pupils of all ages and abilities, has largely been resolved. The collection and retention of pupils' work, so that teachers can compare National Curriculum levels, are being developed, and are carried out in collaboration with other local primary and secondary schools. Pupils' behaviour and personal development are also assessed for inclusion in the end-of-year reports to parents. There are very effective procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs and for deciding what extra help is needed. Thorough analysis of national assessment results by senior staff and governors is also used appropriately to monitor the performance of girls and boys and to inform future planning and target setting.

49. Assessment is used satisfactorily to inform curricular planning, both in subjects and for individual pupils. Observations were made during the inspection of teachers making notes on their weekly lesson plans for mathematics and English, which evaluated both the success of the lesson and the progress of individual pupils. Teaching programmes are modified appropriately for pupils with special educational needs in the light of assessment information. Individual pupils' targets in English and mathematics are recorded in small booklets at Key Stage 1 and are pasted into work books at Key Stage 2. However, some targets are not specific enough for pupils to really benefit from them. Pupils are also encouraged to write their own targets in their books. The senior management team uses the results of internal and national tests to prioritise the development of pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. For example, they have identified the need to raise standards in Key Stage 1 and to raise standards in science throughout the school.

50. There are good arrangements for the identification of pupils with special educational needs and for the review of their progress. The school's procedures for assessment and record keeping for pupils with special educational needs are good. Those with statements of special educational need receive good provision according to their statutory requirements. Teaching assistants make careful observations of pupils' progress from day to day, and these are fully discussed with class teachers and the special educational needs coordinator. Pupils are encouraged to be involved in setting their own targets and commenting on the progress that they are making.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. In their responses to the questionnaire, and at the meeting with the inspectors, parents showed that they are generally very pleased with all that the school does. They are satisfied with the level of support their children receive and consider that the school promotes positive attitudes. These views are similar to the comments made at the time of the previous inspection. Some parents are concerned about the range of activities outside lessons, but the inspection team considered that the provision of clubs and activities at lunchtime and at other times was good. Some doubts were expressed by a few parents about the amount of homework that their children are given, but the inspectors concluded that the homework set is appropriate. A few parents also felt they were not well informed about the progress of their children, although the great majority of them were satisfied with the amount of information provided. The inspectors generally supported this latter view although the reports at the end of the year do not provide enough detail about the pupils' achievements in some subjects.

52. The school has established good links with the parents and these contacts are effective. Letters are sent home regularly, outlining the various activities that the pupils are involved in, as well as providing

general administrative information. The parents were actively involved in devising the home/school agreement. Almost all parents come to the formal meetings with teachers in the autumn and spring terms to find out what their children will be doing and to discuss their progress. In the summer term, the open day is available to all the family. The end-of-year reports on pupils' progress are sent home in the summer term. This report provides a reasonable summary for English and mathematics, together with targets to help the pupils to improve. In other subjects, it contains insufficient detail and concentrates on the work covered rather than the skills and understanding acquired. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the review process and are encouraged to follow up any specialised work that has been set in school to help their children to develop specific skills. There is good communication between the coordinator for special educational needs and the parents concerned. There are some minor omissions from the governors' Annual Report to parents.

53. Parents' involvement with the school makes a good contribution to its work and to the attainment of the pupils. The meetings for parents on numeracy and literacy explain how they can help at home. Written material includes government publications and letters on helping with homework. Reading books are taken home every day and some of the reading records were seen to include useful comments by parents. The parent staff association is very supportive, and arranges both fund raising and social events, including ones for the benefit of the pupils. Few parents come to help in the classroom on a regular basis although many more are willing to help on trips out. There is, however, good support from the extended family, and grandparents and other relatives are invited to tea each term to hear children read.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The leadership and management of the school are good, overall, and promote effective teaching and learning for the pupils. The school's last inspection report described leadership as "clear" and management as "open, friendly and co-operative". Since its last inspection in 1996, the school has made good improvement overall. In some areas, improvements have been more marked than others. There has been good improvement in the quality of leadership and management, particularly in the development of effective strategies and systems for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and the quality of teaching. The impact of these improvements is evident at Key Stage 2, where there has been a clear focus on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching. The senior management team and governors have now identified the need to focus on raising standards at Key Stage 1. Schemes of work are now in place for all subjects. Most of the recently introduced Qualifications and Curriculum Authority schemes are still being tailored to meet the school's needs. The last inspection identified the need to "maintain a consistently high level of attainment for pupils of average and above average ability". This is now being achieved consistently at Key Stage 2, but, at Key Stage 1, the achievements of average and higher attaining pupils are not always high enough. The introduction of teaching in ability groups in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 has enabled teachers to meet pupils' needs more effectively, particularly those who are taught in mixed age group classes. There has been a good improvement in assessment procedures in English and mathematics since the previous inspection. Very good, comprehensive tracking systems are in place that enable teachers to set appropriate targets for individual pupils and year groups. The headteacher, senior management team and governors monitor pupils' progress thoroughly on a regular basis. Predictions are made and targets are reviewed appropriately in the light of assessment information.

55. The headteacher provides strong leadership and clear direction for the work and development of the school. She is ably supported by her deputy and the senior management team, who have clearly delegated responsibilities that they carry out with energy and efficiency. Good delegation ensures that all staff with management responsibilities are able to contribute effectively to school development. Subject co-ordinators have a clear idea of what improvements need to be made in their subjects and

how these are to be achieved. There is a shared commitment and determination to raise standards of achievement and a good capacity to succeed. The only perceived weakness in the delegation of responsibilities is that there is no teacher who has overall responsibility for children aged under five. This partly explains why there is insufficient emphasis in curricular planning on this phase of education.

56. The school's explicit aims and values are clearly reflected in all its work. The simple but effective mission statement, *'Learning whilst caring and sharing'*, underpins all aspects of school life. There is a commitment to very good relationships, in which staff and pupils are valued equally. These mutually respectful relationships generate a warmth between adults and pupils, which makes a positive contribution to the school's open, friendly and welcoming ethos. All staff are committed to providing equality of opportunity for all pupils, and this is reflected in the rigorous monitoring and analysis of the different factors that affect pupils' learning. However, the timetabling of some activities occasionally means that some pupils miss collective worship or parts of other lessons.

57. Governors are successful in fulfilling their specific statutory responsibilities. They work closely with the headteacher, senior management team and co-ordinators to provide a sense of direction for the school's future development, and they offer good support through visiting classes and meeting with staff to discuss curricular issues. Governors monitor and evaluate the standards achieved by the pupils and the quality of education provided by the school through committee meetings, observations in classes and discussions with staff. They set appropriate performance targets for the headteacher and her deputy, which are clearly linked to identified priorities for school development, such as raising standards at Key Stage 1.

58. The headteacher, governors and senior management team monitor and evaluate the school's performance very effectively. They diagnose its strengths and weaknesses and take effective action to bring about improvement. There is well planned, rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching throughout the school and prompt action to provide support where it is needed. Regular sampling of pupils' work enables senior staff to identify potential weaknesses and put strategies in place to address them. Thorough analysis of the results of national testing has led to a focus on raising standards in science and at Key Stage 1.

59. The deputy headteacher has assumed the responsibility of the coordinator for special educational needs in addition to her present management role which involves oversight of the curriculum. She has made very good progress in bringing the paperwork for special educational needs up-to-date and in producing an improved format for the individual education plans. She organises the provision well and ensures that the pupils with statements receive the required support.

60. The school's strategic use of resources is very good. There is systematic budgeting for all expenditure, which is clearly linked to the educational priorities identified in the school development plan. Spending is carefully monitored by the finance officer, who is also a member of the senior management team. She liaises closely with the headteacher and governors to keep them well informed of all developments. The school also employs a finance manager, along with other schools in the local consortium, who negotiates competitive contracts on the school's behalf and ensures that the principles of best value are applied very well in the school's use of resources. Financial control and administration are very efficient and ensure that the school's finances are kept in very good order. Curriculum co-ordinators hold responsibility for a delegated budget and monitor their own expenditure. In this way, all staff are involved in helping to achieve best value for money in the use of the school's resources. The school's most recent financial audit made a few minor recommendations and these have been implemented accordingly. The school makes increasingly efficient use of new technologies, including a recently installed computer suite. Senior staff are leading developments in this field and the school is awaiting installation of Internet connections and networking facilities.

61. The number, qualifications and expertise of the teaching staff are generally well matched to the demands of the primary phase curriculum, with a blend of experienced and less experienced staff. All teachers are trained in the infant or primary phase, but there is no-one with specific training or experience in teaching children aged under five. There is a satisfactory range of subject qualifications amongst the teaching staff including English, mathematics and science. All teachers have subject responsibilities, except for the newly qualified teachers. The level of staffing for 11 classes is at an appropriate level to enable the curriculum to be taught effectively. All the support staff are well qualified, appropriately skilled and experienced. They work well alongside teachers, in planning, teaching and recording pupils' progress. All classes have an allotted teaching assistant for a proportion of the week and this provision helps to achieve good standards of attainment and progress by the majority of pupils. Teaching assistants who are assigned to pupils who have special educational needs are particularly experienced and well qualified. Some have attended courses to learn more about the specific difficulties that these pupils have. There are sufficient staff to support pupils with special educational needs. The school also makes good use of the specialist support agencies and teachers who are provided by the Local Education Authority on a regular basis. Good use is made of parent helpers in outside visits, classroom talks and field work. There were no staffing issues during the last inspection and this positive situation has been maintained.

62. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are good. There are good arrangements for the induction and support of new staff and newly qualified teachers. All teaching and support staff have received training in the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy, and this has had a positive effect on pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. Procedures for the appraisal of teachers are in line with requirements, and all teachers have been appraised and monitored in the classroom by a member of the senior management team, helping to evaluate and develop their classroom teaching practice. Appraisal is also carried out informally by the headteacher for teaching assistants and other non-teaching staff, and they are encouraged to attend professional development courses. The staff development and in-service training programme is very effective in motivating all staff and identifying and meeting individual and corporate needs. All members of staff have an appropriate job description, which also contains details of their subject responsibilities. The school has maintained the high standards of staff development and induction found in the previous OFSTED inspection.

63. The school's accommodation is good and is more than adequate for the age range of the pupils and the numbers on roll. Classrooms are relatively large with adjoining activity areas. There are also two craft areas, a library area, a music room and resource area and a recently completed two base extension. The internal accommodation of the school serves to enhance the efficient teaching of the curriculum. However, the siting of the library does not make it easily accessible for all classes. The judgement from the previous inspection concerning the inadequate size of the hall has been partly rectified by the provision of extra storage spaces to accommodate equipment that was previously stored in the hall. The present accommodation for children aged under five is in a de-mountable building outside of the main school building, and does not have a designated outside play area. This limits the school's provision for the pupils' physical development in their first term at school. The classroom for children under five is basic and has a lack-lustre appearance. The role-play area is situated in the cloakroom, which lacks sufficient light to be inviting. Other outdoor facilities are very good. There are two large hard surfaced playgrounds and a small playhouse for infant pupils. An adventure playground with balancing and climbing equipment is available to give pupils an opportunity for developing their physical capabilities. This area has a bark surface to enable it to be used through the year, although it was not used during the inspection week. A definite strength of the outdoor facilities is the availability of small quiet areas of seating around the perimeter of the playground. These include a paved Dunblane Memorial Garden with seats and flowers, creating a small oasis for reflection in the otherwise noisy playground. The playgrounds are bordered by a large playing field with mounds and

ample space for football pitches. The indoor and outdoor accommodation allows the curriculum to be taught effectively, with some limitations for children aged under five. It provides a stimulating and well maintained learning environment, due in part to the good work of the site manager and his staff. Bright, colourful classroom displays also help to provide a stimulating learning environment.

64. The school's resources are satisfactory, overall, and those for science, religious education and music are good. Resources for design and technology are very good. The number, condition and use of resources enhance the quality of learning in all areas of the curriculum. This judgement indicates an improvement on the last inspection when resources for geography and religious education were considered inadequate and there was a need for further development in music and art. The number of computers, although below the national average for primary schools, is satisfactory. They are situated in a new computer suite, which all classes use on a regular timetabled basis to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Computers are used well to support other areas of learning and there is a good range of computer software. Resources for teaching pupils with special educational needs are good. The range of resources is appropriate to the primary age range and to pupils of different abilities. However, resources for children aged under five are limited and this restricts their ability to satisfy fully the requirements of the nationally recommended Desirable Learning Outcomes. There are no large, wheeled outside toys to enhance the pupils' personal and social development or extend their physical development. The library has a good range of resources but does not always play a central role in the support of learning. The school makes good use of visitors from the community, who come into school to talk to the pupils about topics related to history and religious education. Visiting artists and musicians are used well to support pupils' learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. In order to raise standards still further, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) **raise standards of attainment in science at Key Stage 1 by:**
 - (a) improving teachers' knowledge and expertise and their confidence in teaching the subject;
 - (b) raising teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to achieve and providing suitably challenging work for all pupils.

(Paragraphs 7-10, 13, 99)

- (2) **improve the quality of teaching and learning for children aged under five and at Key Stage 1 by:**
 - (a) continuing to provide the already good levels of support and training for all staff;
 - (b) ensuring that curricular provision for children aged under five takes full account of the Early Learning Goals and the Foundation Curriculum for Reception pupils;
 - (c) raising teachers' expectations for all pupils, but especially those of average and above average ability in English and mathematics, and providing suitably challenging work for all pupils.

(Paragraphs 10, 12, 13, 15, 23-29, 34, 55, 61, 63, 64, 67-77, 84, 86, 87)

66. OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- (1) Ensure that the statutory requirements for collective worship are fully met.

(Paragraphs 40, 56)

- (2) Devise manageable assessment and recording procedures in those subjects where they are not yet in place.

(Paragraphs 48, 103, 107, 114, 117, 121, 126, 133)

- (3) Ensure that all staff fully understand current procedures for child protection.

(Paragraph 45)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 67 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 53 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 18 | 43 | 36 | 3 | 0 | 0 |

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | | 292 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | | 25 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | | 3 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | | 64 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 1 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 23 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 27 |

Attendance

| Authorised absence | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 2.8 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 1.1 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | 1999 | 25 | 21 | 46 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 20 | 22 | 21 |
| | Girls | 19 | 21 | 20 |
| | Total | 39 | 43 | 41 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 85 (86) | 93(81) | 89 (90) |
| | National | 82 [80] | 83 [81] | 87 [84] |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 19 | 20 | 19 |
| | Girls | 20 | 20 | 17 |
| | Total | 39 | 40 | 36 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 85 (83) | 87 (92) | 78 (89) |
| | National | 82 [81] | 86 [85] | 87[86] |

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | 1999 | 25 | 17 | 42 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 18 | 20 | 22 |
| | Girls | 15 | 16 | 14 |
| | Total | 33 | 36 | 36 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 79 (85) | 86 (83) | 86 (78) |
| | National | 70 [65] | 69 [59] | 78 [69] |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 20 | 18 | 22 |
| | Girls | 14 | 15 | 14 |
| | Total | 34 | 33 | 36 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 81 (88) | 79 (76) | 86 (86) |
| | National | 68 [65] | 69 [65] | 75 [72] |

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 1 |
| Black – other | 0 |
| Indian | 3 |
| Pakistani | 2 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 1 |
| White | 285 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 0 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

| | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 | 0 |
| Indian | 0 | 0 |
| Pakistani | 0 | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 | 0 |
| White | 3 | 0 |
| Other minority ethnic groups | 0 | 0 |

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 12.2 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 23.4 |
| Average class size | 26.5 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 9 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 178 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

| | |
|--|-----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | N/a |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | N/a |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | N/a |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | N/a |

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | N/a |
|--------------------------------|-----|

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|---------|
| Financial year | 1998/99 |
|----------------|---------|

| | £ |
|--|--------|
| Total income | 543408 |
| Total expenditure | 544638 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1713 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 13727 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 12497 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 292 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 78 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 73 | 23 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 49 | 43 | 0 | 3 | 5 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 51 | 44 | 0 | 3 | 2 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 35 | 47 | 5 | 9 | 4 |
| The teaching is good. | 50 | 43 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 37 | 50 | 0 | 9 | 4 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 70 | 22 | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 58 | 36 | 0 | 4 | 2 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 49 | 39 | 1 | 7 | 4 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 71 | 25 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 57 | 35 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 28 | 45 | 5 | 14 | 8 |

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

67. There were no key issues for action related to the provision for children aged under five in the school's last inspection report. The quality of education for children aged under five was said to be satisfactory, except for the provision for physical development, which was deemed to be limited. The findings of this inspection are that the school makes satisfactory provision for children aged under five for language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. However, there are limitations in the provision for the other nationally recommended areas of learning for children aged under five. The quality of teaching for children aged under five was judged to be above average in the last inspection report. The judgement of this inspection is that teaching is satisfactory overall, but with limitations in certain areas of the curriculum. This is because curricular planning does not take full account of the nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes for children of this age and does not provide adequate guidance for less experienced teachers.

68. Children aged under five enter the school with average standards of attainment, at the beginning of the term in which they are five years old. At the present time, there are 13 children aged under five, who are taught as a class in a demountable classroom, situated a short distance away from the main school building. There are no children who have English as an additional language in this class. Children make satisfactory progress and most are on course to reach the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children aged five in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. Although attainment is satisfactory overall, children aged under five are not on course to fulfil all of the criteria in their personal and social, creative and physical development, due to the limitations within the curriculum.

Personal and social development

69. The children's personal and social development is satisfactory, overall, with some limitations in their personal independence and in their ability to make independent choices of activities. There is a calm atmosphere in the classroom, which enables the children to feel safe and secure. They have settled well, and can work and play independently, and most are willing to ask for help when they need it. Although most are willing to take turns, some find this difficult. When a group of children were using headphones to listen to a story tape, one child tried to take a set of headphones away from another child, as she did not want to wait for her turn. The teacher quietly explained why the child needed to wait for her turn, which promoted the child's social development well. The children have a caring attitude towards each other, and children who have special educational needs are well integrated. All children under the age of five respond positively to new challenges and enjoy their work. They are attentive and many of them are able to sustain interest in their activities, when it is personal to them. Although they are willing to sit still, their interest quickly wanes when they are not purposefully involved in the activity. When four children were working with the teacher to find the properties of the materials used to make a selection of toys that had been brought in by the children, they only sustained interest while holding and speaking about their own toy. Although they continued to sit still, while others spoke about their toy, those in the group did not attempt to join in the conversation to express their ideas, but looked at other activities taking place around the room. The children are polite, very friendly and well behaved. They are starting to build effective relationships with adults and, sometimes, other children. They are able to express their feelings and behave in appropriate ways and are developing an understanding of what is right and wrong. Although the teaching of relationships and interactions is of good quality, the provision for free play, which supports the development of personal and social development at this age, is insufficient. Free play is too limited in terms of both scope and frequency. This reduces the children's co-operation and interaction with others and their ability to work and play collaboratively. They also have limited opportunities to develop their independence in selecting and pursuing an activity, as most of the equipment is already set out by the teacher before each lesson.

70. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in this area of learning. During a 'circle' time lesson, children were encouraged to hold 'Talking Ted', a teddy bear, while they spoke about 'something I like about myself'. The teacher had an encouraging manner and valued each pupil's contribution. She ensured that each child had an opportunity to speak, and helped to build the children's confidence. Children are encouraged to be independent, when changing for physical education lessons, but many require assistance with this task.

Language and Literacy.

71. On entry to the school, the attainment of most of the children is in line with the national average in this area of learning. They make satisfactory progress in language and literacy, and attain the nationally agreed standards expected of children by the age of five, although some have weak writing skills. The teaching and learning of language and literacy receive a high priority. Most of the children have good listening skills on entry to the school, but have a less well-developed vocabulary. Their listening skills are reinforced well and they enjoy listening to stories as a class, in groups and individually. However, they have few opportunities to increase their vocabularies or to explore the meanings of words. Few respond readily to questioning about stories or reply using whole sentences. Although the children enjoy being in the 'home area', the role-play area is situated in the cloakroom in the corridor, outside the classroom, and lacks a warm and welcoming atmosphere. There are also too few opportunities for the children to extend their language skills through imaginative play. Role-play situations often lack the participation of an adult to extend the children's vocabulary and their understanding of the conventions of conversations. All children are learning to use sign language, so that they can communicate with a child in the class who has special educational needs. This is helping the child to be integrated well. The children enjoy sharing books and are encouraged to handle books with care and to understand how they are organised. At present, a few do not understand the correct conventions of reading a book and turn the pages from the back page to the front, or start somewhere in the middle. They know that words and pictures carry meaning and some are beginning to acquire early reading skills. A few are starting to recognise a small range of words on sight. Some are beginning to associate sounds with letters, and recognise and write their own names, albeit often using inaccurately formed letters. In writing, children know that marks and shapes on paper carry meaning and make attempts at writing. However, they are not encouraged to attempt to write words for themselves, even when a child drew a cat and was able to spell 'c-a-t' phonetically during an earlier reading session. Their pencil control is limited and many have difficulty forming letter shapes.

72. The quality of the teaching and learning of language and literacy is satisfactory. However, the lack of sufficient imaginative, active tasks, coupled with short activities, which are more suited to the limited concentration span of this age group, limits the children's ability to make good progress. Higher attaining children make insufficient progress in relation to their previous attainment. There is good teaching of phonics, such as 'p' for 'pony', which the higher attaining children are then able to recognise in other words or in their own names. The teaching of early writing skills is more limited, and the children are not learning how to shape letters accurately. Encouraging children to copy the teacher's writing, or to copy from a flash card, did not instil the understanding of correct letter formation or the meaning of the text to children, as they were not able to watch how each letter was formed and the words were not meaningful to them. After one child had copied 'pony' from a flash card to describe his 'horse', he then read the word as 'horse' and was not shown how to improve his inaccurate letter formation, including the upside-down 'y'. However, analysis of the work of pupils who have just become five shows that they have been given an appropriate range of activities to develop their literacy skills in their first term at school.

Mathematics

73. On entry to the school, the attainment of these children in their mathematical development is mainly average. Most achieve average attainment in mathematics and make satisfactory progress to meet the nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes by the age of five. They gain experience of basic activities underlying the development of mathematical concepts, such as capacity and volume, through play with sand and water. However, often the children do not have the advantage of an adult with them to ask appropriate, open-ended questions about the water or sand to extend their understanding sufficiently to ensure that they make good progress. Children match and sort objects, according to colour or shape, such as sorting all the 'farm animals'. They count single numbers and some have an idea what they represent, but many are unable to form written numbers correctly. The higher attaining children count to 20 and identify missing numbers within an oral sequence. The children use number apparatus and games and are gaining a sense of number, quantity and shape. Some can name basic geometric shapes, but do not fully understand the concept of each shape. During the lesson on circles and spheres, when asked 'What is a circle?', the child's reply of 'It's round and red', shows that, although this was a good attempt, that child is only part way to fully understanding this concept. They enjoy learning number rhymes, especially when they are able to participate in re-enacting them. Children with special educational needs make good progress from their previous attainment.

74. The quality of the teaching and learning of mathematics is satisfactory, overall. The use of a 'feely bag' containing a selection of similar shapes to those set out before a group of children was good, as this enabled them to feel the objects in the bag and to use mathematical language to describe them. The use of a puppet, 'who sometimes makes mistakes' is also good, as this encourages the children to take risks, when answering questions. However, the teacher's use of open-ended questioning is limited. Too often, closed questioning is used, such as 'Is it curved?', which does not encourage the children to give more than a 'yes' or 'no' answer. This also limits the teacher's ability to assess how much the children know or have learned within a lesson. The National Numeracy Strategy is being used appropriately to provide progression in the children's learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. In the main, the children have a satisfactory general knowledge when they enter the school and they make satisfactory progress to be on course to meet the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the age of five. They are interested in events in the world around them and in features of living things. They know the routines of the day and understand that there are different times for daily events. A few children are beginning to show an awareness of past and present events in their lives, and compare toys played with when they were younger to those that they play with at present. The children enjoy making models and have produced some interesting 'homes' from empty cardboard cartons for the class 'farm animals'. They know and enjoy communicating with each other using sign language for cows and pigs. In information technology, children enjoy using the computer and respond well to simple programs, which reinforce the development of their language. Information technology activities are used appropriately to encourage good hand control. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The topic of 'toys' is enabling the children to explore a sound range of activities for future work in history and science.

Physical development

76. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in their physical development and attain average standards by the age of five. There is limited scope for the children to develop their physical skills, as the school does not have a designated outside play area for children under five. Children do not have regular access to an outside area, where they can run, jump, climb or learn to share wheeled vehicles, such as tricycles, in order for them to develop good skills in co-ordination and control of their bodies.

They have access to the playground at break and lunchtimes. They have regular sessions in the hall, where they use the apparatus and start to acquire early gymnastic skills, and listen and respond to music. Although many of the children lack good hand control, they are given many opportunities to develop this skill through a range of activities, such as using small construction toys, cutting and sticking, picking up pieces of puzzles and using the computer mouse. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, but with some weaker aspects, due to the limitations of the accommodation and lack of resources.

Creative Development.

77. The children enter the school with satisfactory attainment in their creative development, and make limited progress in acquiring and developing new skills, so that, by the age of five, their attainment is below expectations. They make observational drawings and paintings of toys, but many of their efforts are immature for their age. A few are able to make a good attempt to create a recognisable picture, such as a 'helicopter' and a 'necklace'. They enjoy painting, but the teacher's planning does not indicate whether basic painting techniques are to be taught, in order to increase the children's skills. Children are unable to make their own choice of paints and are given small amounts of a limited range of colours. They are not encouraged to experiment with or to mix the paints and do not have an adult sitting with them to extend their knowledge. Children are able to model malleable materials and explain that they are making snakes. They know many nursery rhymes and are starting to memorise the words of new songs. They enjoy listening to music, but were required to sit still for far too long during their observed music lesson. Although they were asked to use 'body parts', such as clapping or tapping their feet, to accompany their singing, they lacked precision when clapping, remaining seated on the carpet for most of the time. The quality of the teaching and learning is unsatisfactory in this area of learning and does not adequately promote children's creative development. The children are insufficiently encouraged or enabled to improve the quality of their activities and some lessons are undemanding. Children enjoy taking part in role play activities, but are given few opportunities to carry this out.

ENGLISH

78. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 2 tests for 1999 shows that attainment in English at Level 4 and above was above the national average, but that attainment was below the national average at Level 5 and above. When the average of the school's test data is compared with all schools and with similar schools, it shows that standards in English were broadly in line with the national average. When the end of Key Stage 2 test results at Level 4 and above for 1999 are compared with those reached in 1997 and 1998, they show that, although standards rose from below the national average in 1997 to well above in 1998, they fell to being broadly in line with the national average in 1999. Realistic targets for improvement have been set in English and the school is making consistent progress towards achieving them. The combined data for the past three years show that boys and girls are achieving similar standards in English and this is the finding of the current inspection.

79. This inspection found that standards at the end of Key Stage 2, including those for literacy, are above average, which is similar to the judgements made in the school's previous inspection. These findings are different from those of the national tests in 1999 when standards were in line with the national average. This is due to a combination of factors, which are that a different group of pupils is involved, the literacy hour is having a positive impact and the school has changed the arrangements for the teaching of English at Key Stage 2.

80. The quality of teaching and learning is good for speaking and listening for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and gifted pupils, by the end of Key Stage 2. This enables pupils to achieve good standards. Pupils speak clearly and confidently, both in small groups and to a wider audience. They listen attentively to their teachers and to other pupils. Teachers plan for and encourage group and paired discussions well, both in English lessons and across the curriculum, throughout the

key stage. Teachers use open-ended questioning well, which stimulates pupils' own thoughts of enquiry and promotes good listening skills. The effective questioning by the teacher within a group of Year 6 pupils who were discussing a 'frightening experience' enabled pupils to express their views logically and enhanced their learning. In the design and technology lessons for pupils in Years 3 and 4, the teacher's planning for pupils to work in pairs to discuss their preferences for the ingredients of a 'healthy sandwich' was good and this worked well. Teachers use plenary sessions in the literacy hour effectively for pupils to report back to the class about their work, which helps them to gain self confidence, speak clearly and listen attentively. Progress in speaking and listening is good throughout the key stage. Pupils use a wide and varied vocabulary, which they use to good effect to interest the listener. The present standards in speaking and listening are similar to the findings of the last inspection.

81. The quality of teaching and learning is good in reading for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and for gifted pupils, by the end of Key Stage 2. This enables pupils to achieve above average standards. Pupils are able to share their ideas thoughtfully and read suitable books with expression and understanding. The higher attaining pupils are able to read challenging material, and use the higher order reading skills of prediction, deduction and inference. Teachers use high quality literature during literacy lessons, which extends pupils' knowledge of both classic and modern literature. Pupils are able to name their favourite authors, such as R.L Stine, Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Higher attaining pupils can identify features of style and compare characters from different books, using relevant information to explain their views. In order to improve standards further, work on higher order reading skills, such as inference, and techniques used by authors, such as Charles Dickens, to create a certain mood, are being taught during the literacy hour. Teachers promote reading skills well and are good models for the pupils, as observed when a teacher read a passage very expressively from 'Great Expectations'. The enjoyment of reading is encouraged, when pupils are able to read for pleasure during the 'quiet reading' times. Teachers' planning shows that they encourage Year 6 pupils to enrich their social development and to develop their confidence in reading by reading to the young children in the Reception class. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy well and this is being effective in helping to raise attainment. Attainment in reading is similar to that reported in the last inspection.

82. The quality of teaching and learning is good in writing for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and gifted pupils, by the end of Key Stage 2. This enables pupils to achieve above average standards. Most pupils spell commonly used words accurately, and show good skills when writing for a variety of purposes, such as poems about *Inside the bear's fur* and *Fire engines*, and their depth of understanding, as shown in the writing of their *Millennium Wishes*. Teachers encourage pupils to present their work well, and written in a neat, legible, fluent joined style. Last year, the school started a competition to find the pupil with the neatest handwriting, to which pupils responded well. One pupil won the cup and others received runners-up awards. This is also encouraging all pupils to strive to attain very neat joined handwriting, as they all wish to win the special cup this year. Teachers ensure that pupils are given many opportunities to develop their writing competence across the curriculum and encourage them to improve the neatness of their work steadily throughout the school. Project work, such as that on the Ancient Greeks, the residential visit to York and the writing up of scientific experiments on gravity, are some of the areas of the curriculum which are used well by teachers to enable pupils to develop different styles of writing. The teaching of design and technology and English were linked well, when Year 6 pupils were set the task of writing an imaginative story, which they read to younger pupils in the school and then created a 'story box' to illustrate it. All pupils used a computer to print out their stories and some made a tape recording of the story. The class teaching of focused word and sentence work within the literacy hour is enabling pupils to develop good skills in spelling, sentence construction and punctuation within appropriate writing contexts. Year 6 teachers plan for pupils to have one lesson each week for a period of extended writing. This enables the teachers to teach various aspects of writing in depth, such as writing a letter expressing a point of

view. After intensive discussion on different styles of writing, such as opinions, persuasive, factual, and biased, pupils wrote lively, well-argued, interesting letters, ably expressing their points of view.

83. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 1 tests and assessments by teachers for 1999 shows that standards in reading at Level 2 and above were broadly in line with the national average. Teacher assessments at Level 3 and above for reading were close to the national average, but in the tests and tasks pupils attained above the national average. In writing, standards at Level 2 and above were higher than the national average in both the tests and teacher assessments. Standards in writing at Level 3 were close to the national average in the tests and in the teacher assessments. When the end of Key Stage 1 test results for 1999 are compared with those of 1997 and 1998, they show that attainment in reading has risen from being below the national average in 1997, but has remained static in 1998 and 1999. When the end of Key Stage 1 test results for 1999 in writing are compared with those of 1997 and 1998, they show that, although attainment rose to being above the national average in 1998 from being in line in 1997, it reverted to being in line in 1999. When the average of the school's test data is compared with that of all schools and similar schools, it shows that the pupils' results are broadly average.

84. The findings of this inspection are that standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, in reading and writing, are in line with national expectations. This is similar to the standards found in the last national key stage assessments in 1999. However, there is little evidence of writing at Level 3 or above. Standards in literacy are satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and attain well relative to their previous attainment. Higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged, especially in writing. In the previous inspection report, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was reported as being satisfactory and the findings of this inspection show that standards have remained static.

85. The quality of teaching and learning for speaking and listening is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. This leads to average standards. By the end of the key stage, pupils are able to describe, converse and narrate at levels appropriate for their age and most speak confidently. They confidently talk about stories they are reading, but few are able to describe the roles of authors and illustrators. Most can talk about a favourite book and some know the names of a favourite author or poet, such as Tony Ross and Christina Rossetti. Progress in speaking and listening is satisfactory overall, but it is good for pupils with special educational needs, due to the good support provided for them. Teachers encourage pupils to listen attentively and they use the plenary sessions of lessons well for pupils to report back about what they have learned during the lesson.

86. The quality of teaching and learning in reading is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. This enables pupils to achieve average standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and attain well, but there is a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. By the end of the key stage, pupils are able to read a range of interesting books. Teachers impart a love of books well to pupils and the emphasis on the enjoyment of reading in the first few years at school is successful in developing positive attitudes towards books. Most pupils can read accurately; many can work out new simple words by splitting them into sounds, and nearly all have a store of memorised words to call upon. Little evidence was seen during the inspection of pupils being asked to read for information from non-fiction books. Most enjoy reading and regularly take their books home to practise their skills. Progress in reading is satisfactory in Key Stage 1.

87. The quality of teaching and learning in writing is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the key stage, attaining average standards by the age of seven. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and attain well in relation to their previous attainment. Higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged throughout the key stage. Although pupils write simple sentences, put them together to form a story or poem, and make a satisfactory

attempt at simple punctuation and spelling, they are given insufficient opportunities to write freely and at length. There is little evidence of the use and acceptance of developmental writing, which enable pupils to express their thoughts in writing freely, creatively and at length. Younger pupils are encouraged to dictate a sentence about their drawings to an adult and then copy below the adults' writing. Older pupils create their own sentences using printed words on small cards and then copy them. Both methods are time-consuming and do not encourage pupils to write creatively or to use correct letter formation. Higher attaining pupils are able to add correct punctuation to a short passage of printed text devoid of punctuation, but their own writing shows little evidence of the high standard seen in set tasks. Marking and teachers' oral comments are congratulatory, but seldom contain helpful comments on how pupils can improve their work. Most pupils learn to spell simple words increasingly well, but their range of vocabulary lacks sufficient variety to attain higher than average standards. Joined handwriting is taught and pupils produce neat, joined handwriting within handwriting lessons, but few continue to use this within their written work in other lessons.

88. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good overall at Key Stage 2. All English lessons seen during the inspection were at least satisfactory, with some very good teaching in Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, pupils are taught as a class, with work specifically set for different ability groups during group teaching time for literacy lessons. Key Stage 2 pupils are taught in ability groups for the whole of literacy lessons. Year 6 pupils are taught within their own class for one extended writing lesson each week. The features of the very good teaching in this school are exemplified by the very good lessons observed in Key Stage 2. These teachers are knowledgeable about the requirements of the English curriculum and provide stimulating lessons. They set challenging tasks, which extend pupils' learning. They have a very good rapport with pupils, which enables pupils to feel confident, and there is a positive learning atmosphere within the classrooms. Teachers use good, effective questioning, coupled with clear explanations, which enable pupils to acquire and consolidate new learning. They respond well to pupils' comments and questions. Pupils try hard to meet the challenges set, concentrate throughout the lessons, and produce work of a high quality. Good use is made of assessment information in order to plan appropriate work for pupils to attain high standards in line with their ability.

89. The provision of opportunities for teachers to undertake in-service training is good and is linked to the focus in the school development plan. The coordinator is enthusiastic about her role, has good knowledge of the subject and manages it efficiently. She has a clear direction for the subject and monitors the teaching and standards across the school through observation of class teaching, informal discussions with staff, and sampling of pupils' work. Targets are set for every pupil and the coordinator monitors their progress.

90. The school library is situated on the first floor of the school, but is not easily accessible for all pupils to use for research purposes, as some classrooms are outside of the main building. Although pupils can use the library for research purposes, this was not seen during the inspection. The library provides a sound resource area for the school and is stocked with a satisfactory range of interesting books. However, it is not conveniently sited for pupils to browse and enjoy books, and is often used for teaching small groups of pupils, such as pupils who have special educational needs. The teaching of the subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

91. In the end of key stage national tests for eleven year olds in 1999, the pupils' results in mathematics were well above the national average. When compared with those of similar schools, the results are also well above average. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. The assessments made by teachers at both Level 4 and 5 are slightly lower than the test results but still

indicate standards at above the national average. Trends in performance over the last four years indicate a steady improvement in standards in line with the national trend.

92. The findings of this inspection indicate that, by the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above the national average, with a significant minority of pupils achieving above average standards, especially in numeracy. This judgement shows a good improvement on the findings of the last OFSTED inspection when it was recorded that, at Key Stage 2, standards varied widely between lessons with some very good and a little unsatisfactory attainment. Pupils' attainment was judged to be average overall. By the time they are 11, most pupils have a good understanding and knowledge of the multiplication tables up to ten, can convert percentages to fractions and use and explain their mental strategies well. Some pupils have difficulty in using approximation strategies in multiplication and division. They can divide numbers by 10s, 100s and 1000s and have a good understanding of the use of the decimal point. Pupils use non-calculator methods for long multiplication and long division, including the multiplication and division of decimals. They use their knowledge of percentages well in relation to everyday life in, for example, their work on the amount of value added tax to be paid out of the proceeds from a disco. When working with two dimensional shapes and angles, pupils label the various shapes and work out the total number of degrees in regular and irregular polygons. Nearly all pupils recognise the differences between finding the mode, mean, median and range of a set of collected data and relate it well to statistics. Using graphs related to speed and distance, they work out the time that a police car would take to catch up with a car load of bank robbers. Pupils make good use of information technology in data handling work, and transfer these mathematical skills to data work in geography and science

93. In the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 was close to the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 3 was below the national average. Teachers' assessments were approximately in line with the test results. Overall, the pupils' results were below average compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. Trends over time indicate above average performance in 1996, 1997 and 1998 dropping to just below the national average in 1999. In the last four years girls, outperformed boys. Evidence from lesson observations, examination of pupils' work and discussions with pupils during the present inspection shows that pupils attain average standards in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1. The implementation of the daily mathematics lesson is having a positive impact on pupils' progress. Standards in numeracy are generally above the national average. This judgement is in line with the findings of the last OFSTED inspection where pupils were considered to be in line with national expectations.

94. By the age of seven, pupils add and subtract numbers to 20 mentally and understand the place value of numbers up to 100. Their understanding of division is not sufficiently developed and their knowledge of multiplication tables is uncertain. Pupils recognise halves of two dimensional shapes and numbers, but have difficulty with identifying quarters of numbers. They show a good understanding of odd and even numbers, either individually or as part of a sequence. In their work on shape and space, they identify most two dimensional shapes and explain which ones tessellate. They indicate a sound awareness of time, using both digital and analogue clocks, and are able to identify half and quarter hour times. Most pupils use estimation well in measuring activities and can measure well using standard units like centimetres. Pupils understand the terms, 'heavier than' and 'lighter than', and simple estimation. Most pupils are developing the ability to explain their methods of working in mental work.

95. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is good overall, ranging from very good to satisfactory, with some of the better teaching observed in Key Stage 2. No unsatisfactory lessons in mathematics were observed during the inspection. This judgement shows an improvement from the findings of the previous OFSTED inspection. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in their learning at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1. All age groups make good progress towards achieving their individual targets in mathematics lessons. Where pupils are given the

opportunity to explain their work, it is evident that they are acquiring new knowledge, for example, in the Year 4 lesson on grids and eight point compass bearings. Where teachers make pupils aware of the lesson objectives, this is directly related to good learning by pupils, as in the case of Year 6 pupils using their four rule computational skills to solve everyday money problems. Pupils also make good progress in learning when sessions are timed, as in mental numeracy sessions, resulting in a fast pace and, consequently, good production of work. The quality of lesson introductions and challenging questioning indicates a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject by most teachers. They plan lessons well and achieve a good balance between numeracy and the other aspects of mathematics. Tasks and activities are matched appropriately to the needs of pupils of all abilities and age groups. Classes are always managed and controlled well for whole-class sessions, group work or a combination of both. Expectations are particularly high, especially at the top of Key Stage 2 and a great deal of emphasis is placed on encouraging pupils to explain their mental strategies in line with the National Numeracy Strategy recommendations. The quality of day-to-day assessment is satisfactory and homework is usually linked well to the pupils' work in class. Higher attaining pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in their learning as work is planned well to meet their needs, especially at Key Stage 2.

96. The mathematics curriculum is broad and balanced and fully covers the requirements of the National Curriculum for pupils of all ages and abilities. It gives equality of access to all pupils throughout the school. A comprehensive subject policy is in place and all classes have introduced the National Numeracy Strategy into their lessons with an hour of numeracy teaching every day. A scheme of work has been formulated in conjunction with the strategy to bring together the variety of resources available in the school. It is well linked to the requirements of the National Curriculum, to ensure mostly good progress in learning for pupils of all abilities throughout the school. The subject coordinator is enthusiastic and experienced and is a member of the senior management team. Good educational guidance is given to other members of staff, both formally and informally, and the coordinator has monitored the teaching of mathematics and worked in the classrooms of the younger year groups. The senior management team, and a member of the governing body, have all attended training before the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, and all staff including teaching assistants have been trained before the introduction of the strategy into classrooms. Resources for the subject are good, a range of books and practical equipment is available in all classrooms to provide easy access for teachers, support staff and pupils. Information technology is used widely and well, especially in data handling topics, to broaden pupils' understanding of the subject.

SCIENCE

97. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 2 tests for Buckhurst Hill School in 1999 shows that, compared with all schools, the pupils' results were close to the national average. Compared with similar schools, pupils' results were below average. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above was broadly in line with the average for schools where there are pupils from similar backgrounds. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 5 and above was well below the average for similar schools. The assessments made by the teachers were different from the test results. At Level 4 and above, pupils' performance was judged to be above the national average and at Level 5, it was judged to be well below. When the averages of the school's end of Key Stage 2 test results for 1999 are compared with those reached by the school in 1997, 1998 and 1999, they show that results were above national averages in 1996, and marginally above in 1998, but were close to the average attained in 1997 and 1999. There were no significant differences in the performances of girls and boys.

98. The findings of the inspection are that the standards attained by the oldest pupils in Key Stage 2 are in line with national expectations. This is in agreement with the conclusion of the previous inspection. Indications are that a greater proportion of pupils than last year are on course to achieve the higher

levels as a result of setting the classes and providing focused teaching on previous areas of difficulty. By the age of eleven, pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a fair test and know that, in order to reach accurate conclusions, only one variable must be changed. They identify what the variables are when they devise their own test to find out how to make different kinds of sugar dissolve quickly. Attainment is high when pupils demonstrate knowledge and understanding in their work on the germination of beans, photosynthesis, food chains and how an estuary provides various environmental conditions which give rise to different forms of life. They recognise the properties of solids, liquids and gases, and investigate whether the surface makes a difference to movement and how far sound can travel.

99. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 assessments by teachers, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 and above was well below the national average and close to it at Level 3 and above. When the attainment targets are analysed, they show that at Level 2, there was well below average attainment in life and living processes, and materials and their properties, and below average attainment in experimental and investigative science. Pupils' results in the physical processes component were below average at both Level 2 and 3. Pupils' results at Level 3 showed that, with regard to the remaining attainment targets, they were broadly in line with the national average.

100. The inspection findings are that, by the end of Key Stage 1, standards are below average. This finding is different from that of the previous inspection when standards were judged to be in line with expectations. By the age of seven, pupils describe simple features of living things and observe events, such as the changes that occur when objects are pushed or pulled. They name parts of a plant, recognise a range of common animals and predict what will happen to ice cubes when they are heated. They sort materials, identify a range of sources of sound, describe a basic circuit and begin to compare the speed of moving objects according to the surfaces that they are on. However, few pupils have sufficient breadth of knowledge to begin to discuss cause and effect or make comparisons by using accurate scientific reasons. This is because the teaching does not present enough challenge, especially for average and higher attaining pupils.

101. Most teaching was found to vary between being very good and satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. The findings of this inspection are that the quality of teaching and the quality of learning are unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Although the quality of teaching, which was seen during the inspection, was satisfactory at Key Stage 1, evidence from the analysis of the pupils' work indicates that teachers' expectations are too low at this key stage. Planning does not meet the needs of all pupils and the progress which pupils make over time is unsatisfactory. Some teachers have an insecure knowledge of the subject. The work which Reception and Year 1 pupils undertake, concerned with the recognition of simple pushes and pulls, sorting materials and observing changes which occur, is revisited in Year 2 and is not sufficiently developed at a more challenging level. The actual output of work related to scientific activities is small. The science in Key Stage 1 is recorded in topic books and is mixed with other curricular areas, such as history and religious education. As a result of this, it is not easy for teachers to assess the progress which pupils make, especially when there is frequent use of worksheets and pupils do not write their own accounts of what has happened in the practical work. Teachers provide good introductions to lessons and give good support to specific groups while they carry out practical experiments, but some of the activities, which other groups pursue without the support of an adult, are not always challenging and helpful to pupils in gaining new scientific skills and knowledge.

102. Throughout Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is never less than good and, in Year 6, it is of a particularly high quality. Teachers have high expectations and provide a breadth of experiences, which build on the knowledge that pupils are gaining. In Years 3 and 4, pupils consolidate their understanding of the human body and the importance of healthy diets after hearing a talk from a visiting dentist. This is followed up well by thorough questioning and by the provision of activities

which address any misconceptions. In Year 5, the earlier knowledge is extended when pupils learn about the function of the heart, veins and arteries and have a chance to discuss points. In Year 6, the teaching is imaginative and engages pupils in problem solving. Effective questioning techniques and sharp assessments of how to extend pupils' learning are key features of this very successful teaching. In lessons throughout the school, some of the learning is not sufficiently rapid when higher attaining pupils are expected to tackle the work set for the majority before they are allowed to move on to more complex tasks in line with their own capabilities. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when they receive one-to-one support from a teaching assistant and have help from adults when engaged on group tasks. Teachers' planning does not often take account of their specific literacy needs, nor does it include examples of work which enable them to practise their developing skills in this area according to their targets. Pupils have good attitudes towards their work and they behave well throughout the school. Where the teaching is of a particularly high quality, pupils' attitudes are very positive. Most pupils take a pride in the presentation of their work and the older ones work hard to ensure that it is accurate. Pupils of all ages show interest in the subject, concentrate well and respond sensibly when given the responsibility to use equipment and carry out fair tests. They are particularly good listeners and are eager to comment and ask questions. When co-operating on tasks such as these, they are very supportive of each other.

103. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and there is a good focus on investigative and experimental science. A new scheme of work from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority has been introduced this year, which should ensure that scientific areas are covered systematically and build on the work that has been encountered previously. The scheme is being adapted and reviewed each year to ensure that it meets the needs of pupils in mixed aged classes. The scheme includes assessments linked to the units of study, but these procedures are not in use consistently across the school, nor are they informing teachers of the capabilities of groups of pupils, especially the higher attaining ones, in order that challenging work can be planned for them. The school is very aware of the present difficulties and science is due to be in focus in the autumn term according to the school development plan. There has been no in-service training to develop the expertise of staff or to assist teachers in the introduction of the new science curriculum. Training needs are apparent especially in the area of physical processes. The subject is enthusiastically co-ordinated and a conscientious effort has been made to improve the resources and to support staff informally. Resources are now good, and visits and visitors enrich the curriculum. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Years 3 and 4 enjoyed a talk from a dentist. This input fitted in well with their study of the body and healthy eating. The proximity of a nature reserve supports the element which is concerned with life and living processes. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social development when they organise and share resources during investigative activities. Good examples of literacy occur in Key Stage 2 when pupils are encouraged to write their own versions of accounts of experiments, make hypotheses and reach conclusions. This aspect shows improvement since the last inspection. Similarly, good examples of the application of numerical skills are evident when pupils analyse data, draw graphs and carry out measurements.

ART

104. Standards in art are average for the age of the pupils at Key Stage 1, and above average at Key Stage 2. In the previous inspection, standards were judged to be "often below national age-related expectations". At that time, pupils had limited access to a range of media. There was little direct teaching of skills, which led to "a stifling of pupils' creativity" and restricted the development of their skills and understanding. There has been a significant improvement in pupils' achievements over the past four years. At Key Stage 1, pupils acquire a range of skills and learn to use a variety of techniques, often practising these in sketch books before applying them to larger scale pieces of work. They blend colours to create different shades, experiment with collage techniques, print patterns with different shapes, and create a good effect by smudging pastels. Pupils investigate different ways to

apply paint, using glue spreaders, sponges, cardboard and screwed up paper. They sketch artefacts carefully with varying degrees of detail, but few use shading techniques to good effect. Pupils in a Year 1/2 class visited the National Gallery and, after studying Rousseau's painting of a tropical storm with a tiger, they recreated it effectively with a three-dimensional effect, using strips of tissue paper with a tiger hidden between them.

105. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to build on this sound foundation. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make effective links between two and three-dimensional work as they draw detailed and carefully executed sketches of Victorian houses, and then go on to recreate these in clay. The painted and varnished end product is well finished. Pupils in Year 5 were inspired by Monet's paintings and used a variety of painting techniques and brushstrokes to emulate his style. In Year 6, pupils' sketches of Greek vases contain very good detail and shading. A very good series of displays around the hall illustrates how well art is linked with history. Each class contributed to the *Snapshots through a Millennium* exhibition, and the range of work includes good examples of painting and drawing, such as sketches of da Vinci's helicopter and paintings of the *Mona Lisa*. There are clay gargoyles, a collage of the Tudor Rose and examples of paper sculpture.

106. It is clear from the work seen during the inspection, and from the few lessons that were observed, that the quality of teaching and learning in art is satisfactory overall, and sometimes good, at Key Stage 1, and good overall at Key Stage 2. There is consistently good use of sketch books throughout the school to develop pupils' skills, and clear teaching of techniques. Pupils are introduced to the work of a range of artists, and older pupils use their research skills well to find out about their life and work. The hall display indicates good progression in the teaching of skills and techniques throughout the school. The lesson that was observed at Key Stage 2 provides a good example of successful skills teaching and is representative of the high expectations of teachers at this key stage. The lesson formed part of a series that focused on the human body. The teacher made good use of picture resources to teach pupils how to incorporate movement into a drawing of a person engaged in a sporting activity. Very clear demonstration of techniques, coupled with encouragement to 'be brave and have a go', resulted in good achievements. The teacher's own enthusiasm and the high level of challenge in the activity enabled pupils to make good progress in their learning and to be willing to try to improve on their first attempts. In the last inspection, pupils' learning was "restricted by the narrow tasks and low expectations of teachers" and the purpose of lessons was unclear. There has been considerable improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since that time. Pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils make good progress in their learning because work is well matched to their needs.

107. The coordinator for art has recently taken over responsibility for the subject and is enthusiastic about developing it. She has not yet had the opportunity to monitor pupils' work or teachers' planning in the subject. A new scheme of work, devised by the previous coordinator, is soon to be implemented. Teachers create relevant links with other subjects, such as history and geography, as when Year 6 pupils record aspects of their visit to York and pupils in Years 1 and 2 sketch African artefacts. There are also good links with work in graphics in information technology. The curriculum is enhanced by visiting artists and visits to art galleries. Resources are satisfactory to support teaching and learning in the subject. Assessment procedures are not yet in place. Throughout the school, colourful displays are used very effectively to enhance the learning environment in classrooms and communal areas.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

108. Pupils attain above average standards for their ages in design and technology at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. These judgements are made on the basis of two lessons observed during the inspection, analysis of pupils' work on display, discussions with pupils and staff, and on the examination of teachers' planning and records. The findings are that there has been a good

improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be average. At both key stages, the quality of pupils' products is good and they are particularly well finished for the age of the pupils. Pupils incorporate their knowledge of other areas of the curriculum, such as science, into their work very well. This was evident in both the lessons seen in the Year 3/4 classes, when pupils used their knowledge of the value of eating a healthy, balanced diet to design a 'healthy sandwich' for a lunch. The high quality of pupils' products throughout the school reflects teachers' high expectations of all their pupils.

109. Pupils undertake a wide variety of designing and making activities, using different materials and techniques, as they progress through the school. Their skills are enhanced in a series of suitable steps so that they improve in a variety of appropriate ways over time. They create plans and make drawings for their designs before selecting and using a range of materials to be used in their model making. At Key Stage 2, pupils draw the design, clearly labelled, with a written list of equipment and materials to be used. They itemise appropriate methods of how they are to make the finished product. The Year 3/4 paper bag puppets of 'teddy bears' and 'Father Christmas' are good examples of their high attainment in designing and making skills. Year 6 pupils have designed and made high quality 'story boxes' to illustrate a story written by the pupils for a specific audience. Pupils designed and, while making the 'story boxes', modified their plans, when they identified any difficulties in the making process. They cut and shaped a wide range of materials, using different techniques to join and combine these in a permanent way. They applied additional finishing techniques to enhance the appearance of the finished products, which are very attractive. Year 2 pupils drew simple plans and pictures of a decorated box to show groups of similar materials, linking this with their science work on properties of materials. The finished boxes are of a high standard for the age of the pupils and illustrate well their understanding of the properties of materials, such as metal and wood, as well as their making skills. Year 1 drew 'faces' before using a selection of materials, such as paper, paints and wool, to decorate one side of a cube. They worked co-operatively to produce a 'face' on one of four sides of a cube, before the boxes were placed on top of each other to make a 'totem pole' effect.

110. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall at both key stages. One very good lesson was observed at Key Stage 2 and the high standards achieved by pupils by the end of the key stage indicate that pupils consistently receive good and very good teaching for them to attain above average standards. Good and very good teaching are exemplified by the lessons observed in Key Stage 2. Pupils acquired new knowledge well due to the stimulating and knowledgeable teaching. Both teachers clearly explained the objective of the lesson, which enabled the pupils to understand what they were required to do. The very good relationships between teachers and pupils enabled pupils to feel confident to take risks when answering in class. Teachers used good, effective, open-ended questioning, such as 'What is texture? when referring to ingredients to make a healthy sandwich, and gave pupils time to think before one answered, 'What it feels like, either crunchy or smooth'. The brisk pace of the lessons encouraged pupils to complete their task within a given time. Teachers interacted well with different pairs of pupils, while they were working, extended their understanding and enabled them to produce good quality work. Evidence indicates that pupils make good progress throughout both key stages. Teachers' planning shows that the work set is demanding and builds on pupils' previous knowledge and skills well. During the lessons observed, pupils were interested and absorbed in the lessons. Pupils in both key stages are eager to speak about models and artefacts made during their design and technology lessons. Analysis of pupils' work clearly shows that pupils, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and gifted children, all make good gains in their knowledge of design and technology. Assessment is used well, which ensures that the needs of all pupils are met and that knowledge and skills are built upon in an appropriate and systematic way. Pupils' literacy, numeracy and information technology skills are used well in this subject. Their presentation skills are good.

111. The subject is ably led by the coordinator, who feels that the subject has been ‘squeezed’ in the curriculum, but, due to the enthusiasm and good knowledge of the subject by the staff, is still taught well. The scheme of work ensures that there is good continuity between year groups, especially in the teaching of skills. Although the coordinator is not released to monitor the teaching of design and technology, she monitors teachers’ planning, sees displays around the school and discusses the subject with staff and pupils. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils’ social, moral and cultural development.

GEOGRAPHY

112. Standards are average for the pupils’ ages in geography at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. These judgements are based on the four lessons observed during the inspection and also on the analysis of pupils’ work, discussion with teachers and pupils and the examination of teachers’ planning and records. The judgement is lower than that made in the previous inspection, when attainment was judged to be above average at both key stages. At Key Stage 2, pupils use an atlas successfully to locate different countries and continents, and they identify different types of climate around the world. In Year 6, pupils write about extreme weather conditions, such as hurricanes and tornadoes, and understand the effects they have on people’s lives. However, the amount of work recorded is relatively small. Some higher attaining pupils’ independent research into river systems is of a high standard and is presented very well. In Year 5, where there is more evidence of above average attainment, pupils make a detailed study of the climate of St Lucia. They produce graphs which compare the average temperatures of St Lucia and London and make further comparisons about the weather, transport, landscape and food. Pupils also discuss and write competently about the advantages and disadvantages of tourism. In Years 3 and 4, pupils use their knowledge of different countries around the world to select the best location for a holiday, based on given criteria. They use atlases to help make choices and justify their decisions by giving reasons for their choice of location. At Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of the differences between their own country and Kenya. They are able to talk about and locate on a map some of the places that ‘Barnaby Bear’ has travelled to with pupils and their parents on holiday or on business trips. At both key stages, pupils’ mapwork and research skills are developed soundly.

113. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall at both key stages. There was some good teaching at Key Stage 2. However, the analysis of pupils’ work shows that, in some classes there is a limited amount of recorded work and, in others, overuse of worksheets, some of which limit the pupils’ progress. For example, some pupils in Year 4 coloured in pictures of the months of the year and wrote the correct month underneath. The work provided for pupils in Year 5 provides a much higher level of challenge and is well planned to include factual and imaginative writing, flow charts, graphs and use of symbols in mapwork. In a good lesson, which was observed during the inspection, the teacher developed pupils’ understanding of how water is delivered to and piped away from the school by taking them on a tour of the outside of the buildings to look for, identify and mark on a plan the pipes, drains, gutters and taps they could see. Pupils’ mapwork skills were improved as they created and used symbols for each object and created a key. In the lesson observed at Key Stage 1, the teacher made good use of a big book to develop pupils’ knowledge and understanding of the differences between life in a country in Africa and life in England. African artefacts were also used well to engage the interest of the pupils. However, although the quality of the pupils’ learning was satisfactory, the teacher’s questioning was not sufficiently challenging to make the pupils, especially the higher attainers, think for themselves about similarities and differences, as many of these were pointed out to them. As a result, many of the pupils were too passive and not actively engaged in the learning process. At both key stages, pupils who have special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning, but some higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently.

114. The school has recently introduced the scheme of work devised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and this is currently being dovetailed with the school's former scheme. As a result, there is still some overlap between year groups, such that pupils in each year group at Key Stage 2 have studied weather and climate at some stage during the year. The progression in teaching skills, knowledge and understanding is not clear in the teacher's planning and the work does not always increase in challenge as pupils move through the school. Some teachers make good links with other areas of the curriculum, but this is not consistent. There are good links with schools in other nearby areas that the pupils visit in order to compare with Buckhurst Hill. When studying rivers, pupils visit the river close to the school, and pupils in Year 6 take part in a residential visit to York, during which their geographical skills are developed well. There is an appropriate range of information technology software to support the curriculum. Other resources for the subject are satisfactory, though the coordinator has identified the need for more atlases and globes. The co-ordinator has not monitored pupils' work throughout the school and assessment procedures are in the early stages of development.

HISTORY

115. The standard of pupils' work in history is above average for the age of the pupils in both key stages. This judgement is made from a limited number of lesson observations and a thorough scrutiny of classroom and hall displays, pupils' workbooks and folders and discussion with pupils. A scrutiny of the hall display, *Snapshots Through a Millennium*, containing contributions from all classes, also contributed to this judgement, which is in line with the findings of the last OFSTED inspection, when standards were also found to be above national expectations. Pupils in Year 6 describe some of the main changes and events from the past linked to their work on Ancient Greece. They use secondary sources like books, video tapes and pictures to find out about this period of history. They show a good ability to organise and communicate their findings, as when groups of pupils explained to the rest of the class what they had learned about the food, homes, clothes and education in Ancient Greece. One pupil spoke about the different educational philosophies of Plato and Socrates. The pupils' ability to organise and communicate their findings is also well illustrated in their very comprehensive folders of work about Ancient Greece. They also indicate a sound competence to communicate what they have learned through well structured and well written narratives and displays, for example, in their class contributions to the hall display, *Snapshots Through A Millennium*, covering a particular hundred years of British history.

116. The teaching of history is good, overall, in both key stages, and this judgement is roughly in line with the findings of the previous OFSTED inspection. Most teachers are confident in teaching the subject, they use the correct terminology and have the ability to tell stories which bring history to life for their pupils. Teaching assistants, when available, are used well in history lessons, particularly to support pupils with special educational needs. Teachers use their introductory talks and questioning well to ascertain pupils' previous knowledge and understanding, but sometimes the whole-class session goes on for too long and pupils lose concentration. The quality of pupils' learning is also good. Pupils of all abilities, including higher attaining pupils, take the opportunity to develop further their research skills to find out more about the Ancient Greeks. They show a good ability to think and learn for themselves, compiling their own evidence before talking to the rest of the class. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress in their learning with the support of learning assistants. The younger pupils relate history to the changes in their lives and have the opportunity to compare the past with their own lives when listening to visitors from the community talking about life in earlier days. In their work on the Great Fire of London, they demonstrated their understanding of the morning's video film by answering questions and writing about the event. Pupils' work is well related to work done previously, and most work productively, especially when activities are of a practical nature or involve research. Good progress is made by all age groups in their ability to examine various artefacts in order to develop their historical enquiry skills and their historical language.

117. Assessment procedures connected to the scheme of work are not in use, and although some assessment is carried out at the end of a topic, there is not an agreed whole-school approach. Resources are generally satisfactory and have improved since the last OFSTED inspection. There is a good range of books and artefacts related to the different periods of study. The school also makes good use of information technology, including videotapes and software, as well as visiting speakers, to enhance the history curriculum. Visits have been made to Hedingham Castle by Year 3 and 4 classes and history is included in cross-curricular studies in Year 6 residential visits to York.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

118. Standards in information technology are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. These judgements are the same as the findings of the previous inspection. By the age of 11, pupils' competent control of the mouse allows them to create a pattern on the screen very quickly, using a range of techniques. They draw, stretch and overlap circles, rectangles and ellipses, filling segments with different colours. Pupils are able to open programs, locate files, and save and print their work independently. They cut and paste text from one document to another, and change the size, style and colour of the font when making posters. Pupils create timetables, use spreadsheets to collate data and create different types of graph. Work in controlling, modelling and monitoring is planned to take place later in the year.

119. By the age of seven, pupils have mastered basic word processing skills and are able to use the mouse and keyboard competently. They type instructions for making a cup of tea, using capital letters and full stops for each sentence. Pupils use good control of the mouse to draw a picture and 'take a line for a walk'. They save their work with help and use 'flood fill' techniques to create a picture. Pupils control a 'floor turtle', entering commands to make it move in a chosen direction.

120. It was not possible to observe any lessons at Key Stage 1 during the inspection, so judgements are based on an analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning. On this basis, the quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall. There is evidence that the teaching of basic skills is good. However, samples of pupils' work show that some pupils in mixed age classes cover the same work at the same level. Pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils make satisfactory gains in knowledge, skills and understanding. At Key Stage 2, four lessons were seen across all four year groups. Here, the quality of teaching is good overall. It varies from satisfactory to very good, largely according to the teacher's own expertise in the subject. Specialist teaching in Year 6 allows the co-ordinator's considerable expertise to be used to very good effect. Where teaching is very good, the lessons are very well planned to build constructively on pupils' existing skills and knowledge. Clear step-by-step instructions, conveyed verbally and reinforced by written aids to memory, enable pupils to learn new skills and techniques at a fast pace. An experienced and knowledgeable teaching assistant provides very good support for pupils, helping to sort out technical problems and advising them on how to carry out certain operations. This is particularly beneficial to pupils who have special educational needs. Both the teacher and assistant check screens constantly to ensure pupils have understood what they are meant to be doing. Skilful management of the pupils ensures that all have equal access to the machines and opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge. Higher attaining pupils receive a good level of challenge and are used well to share their expertise with other pupils.

121. Different lessons provide good examples of the strengths of teaching at Key Stage 2. In a lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, the teacher built effectively on the pupils' previous knowledge of databases, increasing their capability to enter information independently and create files. Pupils were encouraged to investigate how to convert the information into graphs by exploring what the program could do. In Year 5, the teacher made effective links with the pupils' learning in science by showing them how to create a spreadsheet and a graph to record the effect of exercise on pulse rate. The teacher's high expectations and very good management of the pupils ensured that they progressed at a

fast rate and made significant gains in knowledge and skills. In a very good Year 6 lesson, the teacher encouraged pupils to experiment with a graphics package, using the work of Mondrian and Leger as a creative stimulus. Pupils were well motivated to create their own designs and became increasingly adventurous in their experimentation. New skills and techniques were mastered quickly and pupils made good progress in their learning. At Key Stage 2, the quality of learning is good, overall, and, in some lessons, very good. Pupils show interest in their work, sustain concentration very well and think for themselves. They work at a productive pace and acquire knowledge and skills at a good rate.

122. The subject is managed by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable coordinator, who has been instrumental in setting up the computer suite and training staff to use it. A carefully planned timetable ensures that each class has appropriate access to the computers, though one session coincides with a whole-school assembly. This is one of the reasons why the school is not meeting statutory requirements for collective worship. The school has recently adopted the scheme of work produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, and this is already having a positive impact on the teaching of the subject. However, appropriate procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the subject are in the early stages of development. The overall ratio of computers to pupils is lower than the national average, but the timetabled lessons in the computer suite ensure that this does not have a negative influence on pupils' progress. There is a very good plan for the future development of the subject, which recognises the need to increase the number of computers. Links to the Internet are soon to be established and there is a very good range of software to support most aspects of the subject. A link to the school's weather station enables pupils to monitor external factors, although this was not operational at the time of the inspection. Good arrangements for staff training and good support from the coordinator and teaching assistant are helping staff to develop their own expertise at a brisk rate. This has enabled most to keep pace with new developments. A popular computer club took place one afternoon, where pupils were able to explore a wide range of multimedia applications. The subject meets statutory requirements, and the enthusiasm and commitment of staff indicate a strong capacity for further improvement in the future.

MUSIC

123. Pupils attain standards that are above average for their ages at Key Stage 2 and reach average standards at Key Stage 1. At the time of the previous inspection, the performance element was above average at Key Stage 1 but there was very little evidence of composition or listening to music and appraising it. There were no clear judgements about overall standards in music. By the age of eleven, pupils know that sounds can be structured in different ways through duration, tempo and texture. They recognise instruments when analysing popular music from the fifties and sixties, clap syncopated rhythms and identify accented notes and repeating bars. They compose rhythmical patterns with tuned and untuned percussion instruments using a pentatonic scale. Many pupils sight-read notation when singing or when playing the recorder and several of them also play other instruments.

124. By the age of seven, pupils sing a range of songs, compose by clapping patterns and using body parts, play simple pieces with percussion instruments to suggest an effect, listen to music which sounds like machines and comment on their impressions of whether the music sounds happy or sad.

125. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. At the time of the previous inspection, the quality of teaching was good in the lessons observed. The quality of learning has improved now that pupils have a better access to all the required elements of the curriculum. The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. The quality of learning is often increased because pupils' good behaviour in lessons and their interest enable them to make the best use of the opportunities on offer. Where the teaching and learning are satisfactory, the structure of the taped programmes allows pupils

to receive a balanced curriculum but teachers do not always have sufficient time on the timetable or realise the opportunities to develop some of the musical ideas. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, the work was thoughtfully planned to link with the work on pushes and pulls in science but the musical element was not sufficiently expanded. Imaginative methods used by a teacher in Years 3 and 4 enabled the pupils to use percussion instruments and compose patterns after listening to a recording of 'Rain Forest Dream'. In the best lessons, teachers show secure knowledge of the subject in their instructions and provide useful demonstrations. For example, a Year 5 class analysed Beethoven's fifth symphony and pupils were helped by the clear and precise intervention of the teacher who focused their awareness on repeating bar patterns which were picked up by different instruments. Where the learning is accelerated, as was seen in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher posed questions and probed understanding, had high expectations and made a purposeful effort to introduce the pupils to musical terminology.

126. At the time of the previous inspection, music did not meet statutory requirements, as there was insufficient focus on elements other than performance. The school has addressed the previous deficiencies well. The curriculum is now balanced appropriately with a better focus on composition and listening and appraising. The music coordinator provides good leadership of the subject and has a clear view of further developments of the subject when it is focused in the school development plan. There have been no opportunities to monitor the teaching and give support during practical teaching sessions with other teachers. The policy is due for review but the detailed scheme of work is designed to help pupils to develop musical skills in a logical progression. However, some staff find this difficult to use as there is varying expertise. There are no consistent forms of assessment, which focus on the skills which pupils are expected to acquire. Little use is made of information technology to assist the teaching of music. The school has improved the resources and there is now a good range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. These include examples from other cultures around the world. Good use is made of the dedicated music room for class, individual and group lessons and for extracurricular activities. Wall displays and photographs indicate the wide extent to which pupils are involved in musical experiences. A number of pupils have clarinet, flute, keyboard, piano and guitar lessons with peripatetic teachers and achieve good standards. There is a special scheme whereby pupils from less advantaged families can receive this tuition at a small fraction of the actual cost. Visiting instrumentalists from the local peripatetic music service introduce pupils to a variety of instruments and an opera singer has given a performance. All pupils in Year 3 have recorder lessons and pupils are encouraged to apply their skills by joining recorder groups, a music club and a chime bell group. The school values the support of able parents who contribute to the provision. Pupils in the school enjoy performing in assemblies, school concerts, singing at local community homes and participating in music festivals. In their work on stories and events of the last Millennium, pupils have also been introduced to a wide range of music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

127. The majority of pupils attain standards that are as expected for their age groups in physical education. This judgement is approximately in line with the findings of the last OFSTED inspection when it was stated that the substantial majority of pupils achieved national expectations, even though national recommendations for the coverage of the subject have been revised since then. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils of all abilities show sound co-ordination and control in gymnastics and games activities and pupils indicate a good awareness of the use of space, both indoors and outdoors. However, their appreciation and understanding of the effect of exercise on their bodies are less well developed in the majority of classes. Pupils perform basic gymnastic activities, linking together floor and apparatus work, and their ability to observe and analyse their own performance and that of their classmates is developing well. Most pupils show a sound ability to practise and improve their own performance and can repeat and improve a previously performed series of movements with increased control on small apparatus. They participate well in games sessions, using a variety of balls and equipment, and understand well the need for rules in a game. The statutory requirement to teach

swimming is fulfilled very well and over 90 per cent of the present Year 6 pupils are on course to complete the requirements by the end of the year.

128. The teaching of physical education is satisfactory overall in both key stages, with examples of good or very good teaching. All teachers show a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and its health and safety factors. Most teachers show confidence in teaching the subject, leading to higher expectations for pupils' performance in Key Stage 2. Teachers plan their lessons satisfactorily in line with the school's scheme of work, and enable pupils to progress in the consolidation and refinement of their practice. They manage, control and organise their classes well, including the process of changing and moving to the working space, actively participate, and usually use pupils to demonstrate good performance. They use time and resources well but do not generally use teaching assistants in physical education lessons. The opportunity to point out to pupils the link between physical education and the effect of exercise on their bodies is sometimes missed. The quality of pupils' learning and the progress they make is satisfactory, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils. Pupils enjoy their activities in this subject and their attitudes and behaviour to all its aspects are good. They listen attentively to their teachers' instructions and directions and behave well. When moving from the classroom to the hall or playground, they behave quietly and sensibly. They show a good awareness of safety when handling or setting out equipment or apparatus. Pupils respond well to the opportunity to devise their own movements and sequences and they are willing to work co-operatively with a partner or within a larger group as required. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop an increasing control and co-ordination of their bodily movements, on the floor and on apparatus and they develop well their ability to travel on and off the apparatus using different parts of their bodies. Their ability to perform gymnastic skills safely is developing with work related to their previous activities. In games activities, and in extracurricular sports, they acquire ball skills and the understanding of the need for rules in competitive games. Pupils also indicate a sound understanding of the need to be aware of spacing especially in the confines of the hall. Their awareness of health and safety factors is gradually developed in all age groups and they are able to put out and replace small and larger apparatus safely and sensibly, with the help of the teacher in the youngest classes.

129. The subject curriculum is broad and balanced and all aspects of physical education and development are covered in both key stages. A subject policy and scheme of work are in place but these are shortly to be revised to be in line with Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines. The subject coordinator is enthusiastic and gives good guidance for the subject, but has had little opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching. Resources are generally adequate with a reasonable supply of indoor and outdoor equipment to encourage sound performance from all pupils. There is an internal hall, two playgrounds and a large playing field, within the school confines, which are all used well to enhance pupils' performance. The curriculum is enriched by after school clubs for soccer, netball and tennis. The school also participates in competitive games with other local schools in soccer, netball and athletics. Year 5 pupils, both boys and girls, have received the benefit of rugby coaching and cricket coaching is planned for the summer term. Outdoor pursuits are also provided, linked with history and geography, during a residential visit to York by Year 6 pupils

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

130. In the previous inspection, standards were found to be above average at Key Stage 2. Standards were in line with expectations at Key Stage 1 but a significant number of pupils were found to be underachieving. The findings of this inspection are that pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus, by the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know the significance and meaning of some of the main festivals and traditions of Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. They learn about baptism and customs whereby babies are welcomed into a community, discuss the meanings within the Lord's Prayer and recognise symbols within a church.

During 'circle' times, they think about how others have helped them and how they have tried to show kindness or care for other individuals.

131. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know about the main Christian traditions and beliefs by hearing stories from both the Old and New Testaments. In the theme of 'Ourselves' they learn about joining a community, such as being a member of a club, and know about some important religious figures. They hear the story of Jesus' birth, for example, and they learn about special occasions which occur in a church. They are beginning to explore their own feelings and consider elements of their lives that are special.

132. The quality of teaching was mainly satisfactory to good at the previous inspection. The quality of learning was satisfactory with some good features, although some younger pupils did not realise that lessons were religious education. The findings of this inspection are that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages. Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge of the major world religions and plan their lessons carefully. Pupils are well managed and teachers try to involve all pupils in discussions. Good use is made of artefacts and pupils are encouraged to think for themselves by careful questioning, but there is often insufficient time for analysis and reflection on the issues. Pupils' work is marked regularly but there are few comments on how the work might be improved. Some teachers rely too heavily on worksheets instead of allowing pupils to explore the issues and write in their own words. As a result of sound teaching, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. When they have the support of an assistant on a one-to-one basis, their rate of learning is often good. All pupils are developing an awareness of their own feelings and an understanding of celebration and worship. Visits to local churches have helped pupils to gain new insights into their own heritage. At Key Stage 2, pupils gain knowledge of the similarities and differences between the major world religions and have the maturity to respect the beliefs and customs of others. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' response to the teaching in religious education is good. They behave well in lessons and empathise with the feelings of others and the emotions of the characters in the stories that they study. Many are able to work quietly on their own but are also keen to be involved in class discussions.

133. The religious education curriculum follows the locally Agreed Syllabus and the school has devised a scheme of work, which helps pupils to build on the work from year to year. This has improved since the last inspection and is generally satisfactory. In some classes, however, the expectations are too high and, in others, they are too low. Teachers are not always fully aware of the knowledge that pupils have gained in previous years, as there is no whole-school format for assessing and recording individual progress. Some topics are revisited, for example, with regard to parables, and they are not always treated in further depth when this occurs. In some instances, the planned programmes of study are too wide-ranging, which results in a superficial treatment of some complex issues. In Key Stage 1, for example, many pupils do not have sufficient depth of understanding of the Bible to go on to make comparisons and understand the significance of religious books in a range of religions. The coordinator has not had the opportunity to observe her colleagues teaching although she gives informal support. Time allocations, which were insufficient in some classes at the time of the previous inspection, are now satisfactory. Resources for religious education were found to be inadequate at the last inspection, as there were insufficient artefacts, videos and information about festivals for the study of Christianity and Islam. Information technology was not used to support the subject. Resources have been improved and are now good. Videos and support materials for teachers are very good. Pupils have visited the local Anglican and Baptist churches but have not been to other places of worship. Representatives of different religions have visited the school and spoken to the pupils about festivals and associated traditions.