

INSPECTION REPORT

Harlescott Junior School
Shrewsbury

LEA area: 893 Shropshire

Unique Reference Number: 123393

Inspection Number: 187866

Headteacher: Mr. G. Corfield

Reporting inspector: Ms. P. McNamara

Dates of inspection: 8th – 11th November 1999

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Featherbed Lane Harlescott Shrewsbury Shropshire SY1 4QN
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body at the above address
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. M. Owen
Date of previous inspection:	May 1996

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Ms. P. McNamara	Geography	Leadership and management The efficiency of the school
Mr. A. Dobson		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mrs. L. Jones	Mathematics Information technology Music	Equal opportunities Attainment and progress
Mrs. J. Buswell	English Physical education Religious education	Provision for pupils with special educational needs The curriculum and assessment
Mr. C. Minton	Science Design and technology History Art	Teaching Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The school has successfully raised standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Good standards are achieved in art and children make good progress, particularly in observational drawing.
- The high percentage of good and very good teaching is a particular strength.
- The management of children's behaviour is consistently very good in all classes.
- Monitoring by the core subject co-ordinators has been strengthened and is impacting positively on standards in English, mathematics and science.
- The school is led very well by the headteacher and there is a strong commitment to the raising of standards.
- The provision for the children's personal, social and moral development is very good.
- The very structured approach to the teaching in lessons is having a positive impact on standards and progress in many subjects. Relevant vocabulary relating to subjects is taught well.
- The breadth and quality of the curriculum is good.
- The accommodation is used well and the quality of the exhibited work is very good.
- The provision for children with special educational needs is good, and most of such pupils make good progress.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are always positive and there is a strong work ethic in all classes.
- The school gives very good value for money.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. While improvements have been made in writing, standards are still below average for many of the children.
- II. The standard of spelling requires improvement.
- III. The overall quality of handwriting for many children is unsatisfactory.
- IV. The progress made by the higher-attaining pupils is too slow.

The weaknesses are far outweighed by the school's many strengths but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made significant improvements since the last inspection. Standards have improved significantly in English, mathematics and science. The percentage of teaching which is good or very good has increased significantly. All staff consistently implement the strategies which have been put in place to support the management of pupils' behaviour. This improvement in teaching and the management of pupils' behaviour is having a very positive impact on learning and makes a major contribution towards the improved standards. The school has addressed most of the issues raised since the last inspection. The recently-established information technology suite is used effectively to develop the confidence of pupils and members of staff and it has a significant impact on the development of

computer skills for the children. The role of subject co-ordinators has been strengthened with an emphasis on monitoring standards in English, mathematics and science. The school is led very well by the headteacher. The very effective management strategies that are in place will enable the school to continue to improve and raise standards further.

• **Standards in subjects**

This table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests.

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools		Key
			well above average	A
			above average	B
English	D	C	average	C
Mathematics	D	C	below average	D
Science	D	C	well below average	E

The calculations are based on the average points achieved by all 11-year-old children at the school in July 1999. Similar schools are those which have similar characteristics.

End-of-key-stage results show significant improvements in English, mathematics and science over the last four years. Inspection evidence also indicates improvements in attainment and that by the end of the key stage standards in English are close to the national average overall but are below average for a significant number of children in writing, including spelling. Standards in mathematics are close to the national average. Standards are in line with the national average in science. Standards in art are better than expected for children of the same age. In all other subjects standards are as expected for the children of the same age. Pupils' competence in information technology is average. Pupils' attainment in religious education is average. Overall pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in most subjects.

• **Quality of teaching**

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

Teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory or better in 100% of lessons. It is good in 47% of lessons and very good in 28%. Very good or good teaching was seen in all subjects.

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

• **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good. The consistent, agreed approach to the management of pupils' behaviour is having a positive impact on their learning.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Punctuality at the start of the school day has improved since the previous inspection.
Ethos*	Very good. Children have positive attitudes to learning. Relationships are very good and this contributes to the rise in standards.
Leadership and management	Very good overall. There is effective leadership by the headteacher, who is supported well by a good senior management team and governing body.
Curriculum	Good breadth and quality. Detailed schemes for most subjects support the planning and the teaching. Assessment is used well to monitor general progress but needs to be developed further to target specific groups of children.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision which is managed well. Effective support leads to good progress being made by these children.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Provision for spiritual and cultural development is good, and is very good for social and moral development. This is a strength of the school.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Accommodation is used very well, particularly the information technology suite. Displays of work are very good. Very good use of learning resources. All staff work well together as a team committed to raising standards.
Value for money	The school gives very good value for money in terms of the improved standards in English, mathematics and science, the good teaching overall and the very good management and provision for children with special educational needs.

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

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

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<p>V. People who work at the school are approachable.</p> <p>VI. Children enjoy school.</p> <p>VII. Standards are improving.</p> <p>VIII. The way parents are encouraged to play a role in the school.</p> <p>IX. The workshops on how subjects are taught.</p>	<p>There were no concerns expressed by a significant group of parents.</p>

Inspectors' judgements fully support the parents' positive views.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to build on the significant improvements already made, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1.raise standards in writing further by:

- ensuring that children consolidate and apply the skills they are learning in literacy to all their writing;
- providing more frequent opportunities for pupils to undertake extended writing;
- using the analysis of assessment data to target specific groups of children.

(see paragraphs 10, 15, 17, 33, 63, 83, 102, 109, 118, 167)

1.improve the progress made by higher-attaining pupils by:

- ensuring that more of the teaching is sufficiently challenging;
- targeting the questions asked during whole-class and group discussions more specifically to the more able pupils;
- providing more tasks and activities to challenge the investigative and problem-solving skills of the pupils.

(see paragraphs 17, 33, 35, 38, 41, 61, 83, 117, 124, 133)

1.improve standards in handwriting and spelling by:

- providing regular opportunities to specifically teach skills related to handwriting and spelling;
- consistently implementing the agreed schemes of work;
- ensuring that pupils apply their skills in their subsequent written work.

(see paragraphs 33, 45, 110)

Other points to consider, which are not key issues, but which will support the improvements already achieved, are listed below.

- **Develop the use of homework to support the raising of standards.**

(see paragraph 43)

- **Consistently implement the agreed policy for the marking of pupils' work, focusing specifically on what pupils need to do next to improve.**

(see paragraphs 43, 52, 110)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1 Harlescott Junior School is situated to the north of Shrewsbury in an area of mixed council and privately-owned properties. It enrolls junior-aged pupils who live in the local area, with the vast majority transferring directly from the nearby infant school.

2 The school was built in 1930 as an all-age school. In 1950 a separate infant school was opened and in 1954 senior pupils transferred to one of two newly-opened secondary schools, also in the immediate area.

3 The original building changed little until a major remodelling programme in 1985. Further expansion took place in 1994, which included the building of new classrooms. The school is located on a spacious site with extensive grounds. Some classrooms are accommodated in three demountable buildings located at the side of the main building.

4 There are 379 pupils on roll, nine of whom have statements of special educational needs. This is above the national average. Very few children are from minority ethnic family origins. Pupils enrolling at the school represent the full ability range, although attainment is below average for a significant number of children in aspects of reading, writing and mathematics. A large number of pupils receive learning support, with 26% of the pupils enrolled on the special educational needs register. This is above the national average. While the percentage of children eligible for free meals is close to the national average, this does not fully reflect the level of attainment on entry for a large percentage of pupils.

5 Employment opportunities in the area have changed over time from those relating to manufacturing to the retail trade. Full-time employment opportunities for unskilled and semi-skilled males are limited. Employment is generally of a part-time nature in the many retail outlets located near the school.

6 The headteacher has been in post for twenty-one years. The changes in staffing at the time of the previous inspection have continued and have resulted in some subject co-ordinators being relatively new to their roles. However, strategies established by the headteacher and governors have ensured that these changes have not impacted on the commitment to the raising of standards and this is reflected in the year-on-year improvements in the end-of-key-stage SAT results.

7 Current targets relate to the school's aims for personal, social and academic achievement. They include the development of the literacy and numeracy strategies, further developing science, information technology and religious education and to continue monitoring the effectiveness of the behaviour management programme.

8 **Key indicators**

Attainment at Key Stage 2¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	52	51	103

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	30	38	46
	Girls	37	30	38
	Total	67	68	84
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	65 (59)	66 (42)	82 (58)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	28	38	28
	Girls	31	30	35
	Total	59	68	63
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	57 (58)	66 (60)	61 (60)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	5.1
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.02
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

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

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:	%
Very good or better	28.4
Satisfactory or better	100.0
Less than satisfactory	0.0

¹ Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year (i.e. 1998)

- **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**
- **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**
- **Attainment and progress**

9 Trends over a four-year period indicate there has been significant improvement in end-of-key-stage attainment in all three core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This improvement has been greater than national improvements.

10 Inspection findings confirm these improvements and show that overall attainment in English and mathematics is now close to the national average by the end of the key stage and there has been substantial improvement, particularly in mathematics and reading. The standards in writing, including spelling, are, however, still below average for a significant number of pupils and this needs to be addressed. Attainment has improved in science and is now in line with national standards by the end of the key stage.

11 The results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 show that the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above in English and mathematics was below average in relation to all schools nationally and broadly average when compared with schools that are similar. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above in reading was close to the national average for all schools. Attainment in writing was well below the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 5 in English was well below average when compared with all schools and below average for schools which are similar. In mathematics the percentage of pupils attaining Level 5 was broadly average when compared with all schools and above average when compared with similar schools.

12 Results of national tests show that in science the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above was in line with the national average for all schools nationally and above average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 5 was below average when compared with all schools, but average when compared with similar schools.

13 When the average points achieved by all pupils who took the tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 are taken into account, achievement in English, mathematics and science was below average when compared with all schools nationally but broadly in line when compared with similar schools.

14 The results show that variations in the attainment of boys and girls is not significantly different from the national picture.

15 While attainment on entry at the age of seven reflects the full range of abilities, overall attainment is below average for a significant number of children in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment on entry in science is generally average. An analysis of the Key Stage 1 SAT results, undertaken by the headteacher over a four-year period, has shown a high percentage of children who just manage to attain at Level 2c or below, particularly in writing and mathematics. This analysis of data is used by the school as a baseline to monitor overall progress and to target support to raise standards.

16 Overall progress made by the majority of pupils is good in English, mathematics and science. This improvement in progress can be attributed to the improvements in the quality of teaching, which is

good overall, the effective management of pupils' behaviour, which is consistent across all classes, and the effective management strategies being implemented to support teaching and learning.

17 The structure of the literacy hour and good class management have contributed to the progress made by the pupils in English. By the end of the key stage attainment in speaking and listening is broadly average. The majority of children listen attentively and use appropriate vocabulary when talking about their work. Good progress is made in reading and at the end of the key stage attainment in reading is broadly average. While progress in writing has improved over the last two years, attainment in writing remains below average for a significant number of pupils. Progress for the more able could be better. To raise standards further and improve the rate of progress for all pupils more opportunities need to be provided for extended writing. A more rigorous approach is needed to the teaching of handwriting and spelling, where standards are unsatisfactory, and pupils should be expected to apply previously-learned literacy skills to other subjects.

18 While attainment in mathematics is just below average for many of the pupils at the end of the key stage, most pupils make good progress. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the development of effective strategies for whole-class teaching have made positive contributions to the raising of standards.

19 Attainment at the end of the key stage in science is now average. Teachers' subject knowledge, the use of scientific vocabulary and the recent emphasis on investigation in science contribute to the progress made by the pupils.

20 Attainment in information technology is average, and the pupils make good progress. The use of the recently-established information technology suite is having a significant impact on the progress made by many pupils in the development of computer skills. In religious education children attain in line with the locally agreed syllabus and make satisfactory progress across the key stage.

21 The pupils' information technology capability is developed well when they apply their skills in other subjects, for example word-processed writing across a range of subjects requiring different styles and the use of design packages in art, geography and mathematics. Children are able to use and consolidate their numeracy skills in science and geography. Opportunities are provided for the pupils to develop literacy skills in other subjects, for example pupils extracting information from texts in religious education.

22 In art attainment is above that expected for children of the same age and good progress is made. This has been achieved through teachers' subject expertise, high expectations and the range of opportunities offered to the children. The quality of observational drawing is a particular strength. In all other subjects standards are in line with those expected nationally. Satisfactory progress is made in history, geography and music. Good progress is made in physical education and in design and technology, where pupils are taught relevant design processes in a broad curriculum.

23 Pupils on the special educational needs register make good progress. They are supported well by all members of staff.

· **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

24 Pupils have positive attitudes. They enjoy going to school, settle quickly to work and listen attentively. They are well-motivated and show a keen interest in lessons. The pupils persevere well, take a pride in their work and are keen to discuss it.

25 Behaviour in the school is very good and shows improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils understand clearly the high standards expected of them. The gaining of certificates and awards is popular and pursued seriously. Classrooms are calm and conducive to learning.

26 Relationships are very good and the school is friendly. Pupils are courteous and polite. In lessons, when working in pairs or larger groups, pupils collaborate very well, treating each other's views with respect and showing a keenness to share ideas and to help each other.

27 Pupils make very good use of the opportunities for personal development. They respond very well to the emphasis on developing skills for independent learning. They show a responsible attitude when choosing and using equipment and materials, for instance in art and design and technology lessons. Extra responsibilities are accepted with enthusiasm and pride, for instance assembly duties and looking after younger children when they first enter the school.

28 The majority of pupils' enthusiasm, together with their very good behaviour, makes a major contribution to their successful learning.

- **Attendance**

29 Attendance at the school is satisfactory. The attendance rate is broadly in line with the national average for similar schools. Unauthorised absences are considerably lower than the national average.

30 Punctuality is very good and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Systems are in place to monitor attendance. Registration takes place promptly and efficiently, and lessons start on time.

- **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

- **Teaching**

31 The quality of teaching is very good in 28% of lessons, good in 47% and satisfactory in 25%. In the main it is good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The school has significantly improved the overall quality of teaching since its previous inspection.

32 Good or very good teaching was observed in all subjects. All teachers were observed teaching literacy, numeracy and science. Children are taught in ability sets in English and mathematics.

33 The teaching of English ranges from very good to satisfactory. In the main it is good. The effective implementation of the literacy strategy is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching. The structure of the daily literacy lesson incorporates a good balance of whole-class teaching and group work. Generally lessons are delivered at a good pace. However, teachers need to focus more on the teaching of handwriting and spelling, and more opportunities need to be provided for pupils to write in extended fashion. Classroom support assistants are deployed effectively. They assist pupils in their acquisition of literacy skills. For example, targeted support is given to groups of pupils in Years 3 and 4. This is having a positive impact on the literacy skills of these children. Where the teaching is good or very good teachers' exposition is brisk, lively and motivational. For example, in a Year 4 class good use was made of humour to motivate pupils when studying limericks as part of their work on poetry. The satisfactory teaching lacks a brisk pace and expectations need to be raised for some of the pupils.

34 The teaching of mathematics across the school ranges from very good to satisfactory. In the

main the teaching is good. The national framework for mathematics is being implemented very well. The structure of the daily lesson, with an emphasis on calculation, is having a positive impact on standards. Where the teaching is good or very good teachers make effective use of resources to demonstrate mathematical ideas. For example, in a Year 5 class an overhead projector was used well to demonstrate how to use a protractor. In the satisfactory lessons questions are not used sufficiently well to challenge and clarify the pupils' mathematical understanding.

35 The teaching of science ranges from very good to satisfactory. In the main it is very good. Where the teaching is good or very good pupils are consistently challenged to explain and justify their answers. Questions are used skilfully to assess and extend children's scientific understanding. In answering questions pupils are expected to use appropriate scientific vocabulary. For example, in a Year 4 class the pupils used vocabulary such as transparent and translucent when describing the properties of materials. In the satisfactory teaching insufficient account is taken of the needs of all of the pupils and answers are readily accepted rather than challenged.

36 In information technology the quality of teaching ranges from very good to satisfactory. In the main it is good. Good use is made of the computer suite to teach the children information technology skills. All classes have weekly lessons in the suite. This is having a positive impact on the raising of standards in information technology. Where the teaching is good or very good the teachers demonstrate new skills effectively. For example, in a Year 3 class pupils were effectively introduced to the features of a writing program.

37 In other subjects the teaching ranges from very good to satisfactory. It is mainly very good in design and technology, where specialist teaching in Year 6 is having a positive impact on standards by the end of the key stage. The teaching of art is a strength. Teachers have good subject expertise. Skills are demonstrated effectively, and high expectations are set for the standard of pupils' completed work.

38 In the lessons where the teaching is very good the teachers demonstrate high expectations and secure subject knowledge. The lesson develops at a brisk pace. Very good use is made of questioning. Demonstration and illustration is used effectively to support and extend pupils' understanding. For example, in a Year 6 design and technology lesson the teacher used resources very well to demonstrate the components needed to construct a motorised vehicle.

39 Where the teaching is good, the lesson builds well on prior learning, and its objective is shared with pupils. The children's behaviour is good. The lesson develops at an appropriate pace. However, the level of questioning is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that all pupils are challenged and involved. Where the teaching is satisfactory the lesson is planned well and resourced appropriately. However, the pace needs to be increased. Teachers spend too-long on exposition, resulting in some pupils losing interest. Activities are not-targeted well enough to meet the needs of all of the pupils.

40 The teaching of the pupils with special educational needs is good. They are supported well by support assistants and the co-ordinator. The majority make good progress in the key skills of literacy and numeracy. These children are supported effectively through an appropriate balance of in-class support and withdrawal. Class teachers liaise well with support assistants to ensure that work is matched appropriately to the needs of each pupil.

41 In the main the needs of the higher-attaining pupils are not met sufficiently well.

42 Generally policies and schemes of work support teachers' planning well. The most effective schemes have clear learning objectives for each year group. There is a need for all schemes to contain this level of detail to assist teachers in providing appropriately challenging work for all of the pupils.

43 Regular assessments are used well in English and mathematics to track pupil progress. Children's work is marked conscientiously. However, marking is not used consistently across the school to set targets for improvement, or to provide pupils with additional challenges. This is an area which needs to be monitored and developed further. In the main, homework is used to consolidate learning in literacy and numeracy.

• **The curriculum and assessment**

The curriculum

44 The curriculum is broad and all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. All requirements, including for religious education and sex education, are met fully.

45 The requirements for speaking and listening and art are met particularly well. However, as yet, the requirements for spelling and handwriting are not met well enough, and in these aspects of English the school has not fully addressed the issues raised in the last inspection report.

46 There is an agreed allocation of time for both the core and foundation subjects and most are taught on a weekly basis. Some subjects are blocked for parts of a term. In the main subjects are planned and taught separately. However, good thematic links are made between subjects when relevant. For example, a river study undertaken by pupils in Year 4 linked units of work in geography, design and technology, art and music. There is some specialist teaching in Year 6 when teachers take a lead in design and technology, music and art and teach these subjects to classes other than their own.

47 All classes set time aside daily for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. For these lessons pupils are set according to ability across each year group. This organisation is having a positive impact on standards. In both literacy and numeracy relevant skills are supported well through other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils learn to write in a range of genres and use subject-specific vocabulary well across most subjects. Children are able to use and consolidate their numeracy skills in science and geography by measuring and interpreting data. The provision for information technology is good and is having a significant impact on the standards of pupils' computer skills. The pupils' capabilities in information technology are developed well by the application of skills in other subjects, for example English, mathematics, religious education and history.

48 The current long-term plan and schemes of work help to ensure that the teaching addresses all National Curriculum programmes of study and National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy objectives. An appropriate emphasis is given to the acquisition of knowledge and skills. In science teachers' plans indicate an appropriate balance of illustrative and investigative work. In literacy the planning gives due attention to pupils acquiring more advanced reading skills. In mathematics emphasis is given to pupils' different methods of computation.

49 There are policies and schemes of work for all subjects. In the main they offer helpful guidance to teachers when planning for continuity and progression. Schemes of work are particularly effective when they indicate which skills are to be taught to which year group, for example in art, religious education and physical education. The religious education policy is in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus.

50 There are separate policies for assessment, recording and reporting, equal opportunities and living in a multi-ethnic society.

51 The school has adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the recommended approaches to medium and short-term planning. The quality of teachers' planning is good. A common format has been adopted which is helpful in focussing the teaching on key learning objectives and assessment opportunities. Joint year-group planning takes place to ensure balance and consistency in what is to be taught. Curriculum planning is monitored regularly by the headteacher and curriculum co-ordinators. The school newsletter informs parents about what is to be taught each term.

52 There is a homework policy, which clearly indicates the type of work that each year group will undertake and the time it should take. The focus for homework could be extended to further support the raising of standards. Currently spelling and reading form the major components of homework and reading diaries are an important feature. In order for these diaries to be more effective in supporting pupils' reading, increased use needs to be made of them as a means of setting individual targets for improvement. There is also a need to develop the interactive nature of the reading diary in order to encourage greater communication between the pupil, teacher and parent.

53 All children have equal access to the curriculum and pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into all aspects of the life of the school. There are currently 99 children on the register of special educational needs, of whom nine have specific statements. This is above the national average. Provision for children with special educational needs is good, particularly in literacy and numeracy. They receive effective support from the special educational needs co-ordinator, visiting specialist teachers, class teachers and trained additional support staff.

54 Pupils with special educational needs receive some support in the development of specific skills, for example in reading and writing. They are also supported well in their classrooms by teachers or support assistants. This has a positive effect on the social and emotional development of these pupils. Children included on the special educational needs register have detailed individual education plans which are used well by class teachers to help to raise attainment.

55 Recent initiatives, which include increasing the hours of classroom assistants to give specific support in literacy to pupils in Year 3 and Year 4, and the purchase of additional reading materials, are having a positive impact on the progress made by the children. Parents are actively involved in their children's learning through regular meetings with the staff. The well-planned special educational needs programme has resulted in some children requiring less support over time, and a number of children have moved down the stages of the special educational needs register. The policy for special educational needs complies fully with the requirements of the code of practice.

56 The policy for personal, social and health education includes provision for drugs education in conjunction with the police school liaison officer. The nurse contributes to the teaching of sex education for pupils in Year 6. Opportunities to explore issues relating to equal opportunities and multicultural awareness are provided in cross-curricular work and religious education. Visitors from a variety of ethnic backgrounds share their faith and traditions in assembly and this is a positive feature.

57 A wide range of visitors and visits enhances the curriculum. These include artists and dancers from other cultures and representatives from different sections of the local community, for example religion, safety and the world of work. Visits are made to Ironbridge, Wroxeter, Clive House and Shrewsbury. Residential visits are offered for pupils from Year 4 to Year 6 to Stottesdon, Clun and Arthog.

58 A very good range of extra-curricular activities is provided for the children. Clubs are organised after school by members of staff supported by parent helpers. These activities include netball, recorders, guitar, football, rugby, singing, French, art, information and communications technology and library. Approximately 50% of pupils attend. Peripatetic music teaching for cornet, saxophone and flute is provided on a weekly basis. The school takes part in local and regional sporting competitions and has achieved considerable success

· *Assessment*

59 There are detailed policies for assessing, recording and reporting, and for the marking of pupils'

work which give guidance on a range of procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress and for the effective evaluation of their work. Assessments focus mainly on the core subjects and are used to inform curriculum planning. This has contributed to the significantly improved levels of attainment in literacy, numeracy and science.

60 Induction procedures for pupils entering the school are good. Records of pupils' attainment on entering school at 7 years of age include results of assessments in English, mathematics and science from Key Stage 1, together with examples of children's work in these and other subjects. Children represent the full range of abilities. However, analysis of entry data from Key Stage 1 SATs and testing which is carried out in Year 3 indicates that attainment for a significant proportion of pupils is below average in aspects of reading, writing and mathematics.

61 Children enter one of three parallel classes and are set according to ability in English and mathematics. There are advantages in this organisation, particularly for the pupils of lower attainment. However, the ability span of children within each set is still wide and in some lessons the needs of the more able pupils are not being met well enough, for example in writing, when the teachers' expectations are not high enough and the work set does not offer sufficient challenge.

62 Short-term planning identifies assessment opportunities in the core subjects. Plans are evaluated weekly by year group leaders and the findings inform future planning and the grouping of children.

63 Careful records are kept of pupils' progress, which include examples of their work. Tests in reading and writing are administered termly and the national optional tests have been introduced for children in Years 3, 4 and 5. Teachers have begun to use these to assess pupils' progress and to identify future targets for attainment. This process has contributed towards the upward trend in attainment in English, mathematics, and science. In order to improve standards further the analysis should focus more on individual pupils and identify clearly what needs to be taught next and when. Parents of children on the special educational needs register are fully involved in regular reviews of progress and, when necessary, the statementing process.

64 Annual reports to parents meet statutory requirements. Consultation evenings are held three times a year. Parents are also encouraged to attend regular curriculum presentations. Parents are generally positive about these contacts with the school and the information they receive.

· **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

65 Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good. Provision for their moral and social development is very good. These aspects contribute very positively to the school's ethos and are highlighted in the school's aims and in the prospectus.

66 Provision for the pupils' spiritual development is good. The religious education policy provides helpful guidance on the place of reflection in a range of curriculum areas including art, music, dance and drama. Spiritual beliefs and values are promoted effectively in religious education and in personal and social education. Good opportunities are provided for spiritual reflection through the act of collective worship, which meets statutory requirements. Music and religious artefacts are used well to foster a sense of awe and contemplation. History and literacy lessons provide valuable opportunities for pupils to empathise with characters in books, and to reflect on their feelings. For example, in history the children in Year 5 were encouraged to reflect on the feelings and emotions of those who witnessed the sinking of the Mary Rose. The personal and social education programme includes a strong emphasis on the development of self-worth and the importance of reflecting on personal responsibilities.

67 The school provides very good provision for pupils' moral development. The pupils are provided with opportunities to consider a range of moral and social issues, including the difference between right and wrong. At the beginning of the academic year pupils formulate rules for their class which effectively instil the importance of collective responsibility and fairness. The act of collective worship is used effectively to focus on moral issues. For example, as part of an act of collective worship, extracts from Anne Frank's diary were read sensitively, and the futility of war was reflected upon. Provision for the pupils' moral development is underpinned by a very helpful behaviour policy. This policy is understood and applied consistently across the school by all adults. The vast majority of pupils demonstrate very good behaviour. The school has addressed the key issue identified in the last inspection, related to behaviour management, very effectively. Those pupils who demonstrate challenging behaviour are managed by all staff with sensitivity and fairness. Weekly personal and social education lessons are having a very positive impact on pupils' moral and social development. Charitable fund-raising activities are used well to foster responsible attitudes within the pupils. The vast majority of parents are very pleased with the values promoted by the school.

68 Provision for pupils' social development is very good. In the main they are courteous and polite. Pupils are provided with a good range of opportunities to collaborate on tasks. They share resources well, and are aware of the importance of taking turns when working together. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 4 children co-operated well on a game involving multiples.

69 The positive and professional attitudes of adults in the school provide very good examples for the pupils to emulate. The ethos of teamwork pervades the life of the school. There is a strong sense of mutual respect. Sensitive issues such as prejudice and bullying are addressed well through the school's personal and social education programme. The pupils are given appropriate opportunities to consider the lives of those less fortunate than themselves. For example, in geography the children consider the plight of the poor in developing countries. Community involvement includes visits from local religious leaders, the police and the nurse. The children distribute harvest goods to local pensioners living in sheltered accommodation. Extra-curricular activities and residential visits, effectively enhance the pupils' social development.

70 Provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. This demonstrates an improvement since the last inspection. English, religious education, art, music, history and geography effectively support the pupils' cultural development. For example, the children have studied and painted pictures of Hindu gods. Visits and visitors are used effectively to extend the children's cultural awareness. For example, as part of an act of collective worship on Diwali, a visiting Indian speaker used a range of artefacts to tell the story of Rama and Sita. Very attractive and informative displays around the school celebrate a variety of cultural traditions. Resources satisfactorily reflect a range of different faiths.

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

71 The overall provision for pupils' support, welfare and guidance is good.

72 The school is a friendly community and relationships are very good. Induction procedures for new pupils are thorough and supportive. Older pupils are given a mentoring role which contributes to an effective and smooth transfer. Teachers and other staff in the school provide good role models. They are good listeners and treat the pupils' views with consideration and respect. Pupils are supervised well at all times.

73 The monitoring of the pupils' progress and personal development is good. There are good systems in place for monitoring their academic progress. The procedures for the monitoring of their

personal development are good. Teachers know the pupils well and are familiar with their strengths and weaknesses.

74 The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. The school has taken behaviour management very seriously. It has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The behaviour management procedures are a strength of the school.

75 The school has sound procedures for monitoring attendance. Registration meets statutory regulations. There is a good relationship with the Educational Welfare Service. Parents are regularly reminded of the importance of good punctuality. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection.

76 Health and safety issues are taken seriously. The responsible person and a named governor have received training. The school premises and equipment are inspected regularly, fire drills take place each term and there is satisfactory first aid, with all accidents being correctly recorded.

77 The school exhibits effective practice in relation to child protection. The named person has been trained and all staff are familiar with the school's procedures.

- **Partnership with parents and the community**

78 Parents are supportive of the school. In response to the questionnaire, the vast majority of parents reported that they find the members of staff approachable and that they are encouraged to be involved in the school. Their positive views are endorsed by the inspection.

79 The quality of information that the parents receive is sound overall. The prospectus is detailed and easy to read. There are regular newsletters keeping parents in touch with developments. The inclusion in newsletters of a list of pupils with merit awards successfully reinforces to parents and pupils the importance of good behaviour. There are regular consultation meetings between parents and teachers and good records are kept of any areas of concern. The school holds workshops to inform parents about how specific subjects are taught. These are consistently attended well and appreciated by parents. Pupils' reports are satisfactory and meet statutory regulations.

80 Parents are encouraged to help in the school. Helpers in the school are organised well and make a contribution to the pupils' learning. Members of staff and parents are involved in organising social and fund-raising events. Money is raised each year, donated to charity, and also used to improve the school.

81 Links with the community are satisfactory. Assemblies are taken by a wide range of visitors ranging from members of the local clergy to the nurse. Pupils study the local area in geography and history and these studies are enhanced by a satisfactory range of educational visits. Festivals are also arranged for pupils to exhibit their skills to a wider audience

- **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

- **Leadership and management**

82 The overall management of the school is very good. The headteacher has a very clear vision of the educational direction of the school. The headteacher leads a strong team of staff and governors who are committed to raising standards. The school has undergone significant staff changes since the previous inspection. The headteacher has ensured that school improvement has continued by

establishing a comprehensive programme of staff development to support both new appointments and more established teachers in the classroom. This has been effective in improving the quality of teaching across all year groups and a significant factor in the improvement in end-of-key-stage attainment in English, mathematics and science.

83 The development of the school is guided by a very detailed and helpful school development plan. Governors and members of staff are fully involved in identifying priorities and in monitoring and evaluating outcomes. The main focus of the school development plan is to continue to raise attainment in the core subjects. Attention is also given to developing the arts. The headteacher, together with the senior management team and governors, through the monitoring of curriculum planning, supporting the development of effective teaching methods, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and using end-of-key-stage data to establish targets for improvement, has successfully raised standards. The targets set by governors for end-of-key-stage attainment in 1999 have all been exceeded. To ensure that standards continue to improve the headteacher and senior management team should now develop the analysis of existing pupil-level data to identify clearly which groups of pupils need targeted support in specific aspects of reading, mathematics and, in particular, writing.

84 The majority of key issues highlighted in the previous inspection have been addressed fully. The roles of the co-ordinators have been strengthened, and a comprehensive programme to monitor the core curriculum has been established. Schemes of work have been adopted to develop the quality of handwriting and spelling across the school but these need further development to ensure that existing standards improve. Curriculum planning now ensures that all children have the opportunity to use a range of computational methods in mathematics and carry out investigations in science. The management of behaviour has become more structured and systematic and this has resulted in the consistently very good standards of behaviour across the school. This is enabling more children to achieve standards appropriate to their abilities.

85 There are regular meetings between the headteacher and chair of governors, and other governors visit the school regularly. Most governors have spent time in the classrooms and have a good knowledge of curriculum matters. A committee structure is established well with clear terms of reference. Governors have been guided by the headteacher in the analysis of end-of-key-stage SAT results and have set targets for 1999, 2000 and 2001 for English, mathematics and science. The governors take their responsibilities seriously and meet them well.

86 The headteacher, who has been in post for 21 years, has a thorough and structured approach to the management of the school. There are detailed and effective procedures in place for the health and safety of pupils, for their academic progress and for their social, moral and personal development. The headteacher has established a system of professional interviews where staff are able to discuss curricular issues and school development priorities and agree targets for improvement with the headteacher. Appraisal and induction for newly-qualified teachers have a high priority. All members of staff have job descriptions and work conscientiously to fulfil their roles. The governing body is committed to funding the release of subject co-ordinators to enable them to develop their subjects, with particular emphasis on English, mathematics and science. This has supported the significant improvement in standards in these subjects since the previous inspection.

87 The headteacher regularly monitors all curriculum planning, feedback is given to teachers and points for development followed up. The quality of teaching has been monitored by the local education authority and a programme to monitor teaching by subject co-ordinators has been established but is still at an early stage of development.

88 There is good provision for all children on the special educational needs register and children

generally make good progress. This provision is a particular strength.. Children are supported well by class teachers, special support assistants and classroom assistants.

89 The school is well-regarded by the parents. The vast majority are very positive about its work and appreciate the information they receive. They find the school approachable and feel that they are encouraged to get involved. They value the workshops which the school has organised to show how subjects are taught and the vast majority feel that their children enjoy school. Parents recognise that standards are improving and value the work of the staff and the headteacher.

• **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

90 The overall level of experience of teachers is high although many teachers are relatively new to the school. Few of the current teachers were at the school at the time of the previous inspection. There is a good level of support staff, most of whom have appropriate qualifications and a considerable number of years experience. There is a strong team spirit evident amongst the teachers, the support staff and helpers. All staff have good, detailed job descriptions. Appraisal procedures are satisfactory and professional development is effectively linked to the school development plan and the individual's particular needs, as assessed at an annual meeting with the headteacher.

91 The accommodation is very good. Generally, classrooms are of a good size. The state of the decoration is good and is greatly enhanced by the very high quality of the work exhibited around the school. The new information technology suite is impressive. A classroom in a demountable building has been converted to an activities room for pupils to use at lunchtimes. The hall is small for conducting whole-school assemblies. The school is clean and maintained well. There is a courtyard containing a pond which is used as a useful learning resource. A wild area is currently being developed in the grounds.

92 The school is equipped well with adequate learning resources for teaching all areas of the National Curriculum. The levels of resources in information and communication technology, art and mathematics are particularly good. The storage of resources is effective and they are generally easily accessible.

• **The efficiency of the school**

93 Financial planning is thorough. It is linked clearly to the school development plan, which accurately identifies and prioritises both curricular and non-curricular targets for improvement which are costed over a three-year period. Criteria for success are stated clearly and include key stage SAT results, end-of-year attainment and the quality of teaching achieved. The headteacher, senior management team and governors monitor targets carefully. All subject co-ordinators are involved in identifying targets for the school development plan and in monitoring and evaluating progress in their subjects. This element of school development planning has improved significantly since the previous inspection and has contributed towards the improved standards in English, mathematics and science.

94 Targets identified in school development plans have generally been met well, in particular the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the management of children's behaviour. The development of information technology is still at an early stage due mainly to funding issues. However, the recently-established computer suite already demonstrates good value for money in terms of improved standards in pupils' information technology capability and in teachers' confidence.

95 The budget is monitored regularly by the headteacher and the governors' finance committee, with day-to-day control of income and expenditure delegated to the headteacher and office staff. The

most recent audit report confirms that there are satisfactory financial systems in place. Minor recommendations in the report have all been addressed.

96 In setting the budget full regard has been given to issues relating to both the raising of standards and maintaining staffing levels. While the school has a significant amount of funding in reserve this has recently been allocated to address the deficit in the annual school budget share and to support the raising of standards by maintaining existing levels of staffing, particularly the level of additional classroom support.

97 Classroom and support assistants are employed to support pupils' learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy in all classes. Currently half of the hours of additional support are funded through money specifically allocated to the school for children with special educational needs. This is having a positive impact on the progress made by the majority of these pupils. Governors are committed to maintaining this high level of support for all children in the school.

98 Additional money has been set aside to fund the increasing staffing costs that the school is experiencing annually due to the recent changes of staff. Further funding has been used to establish the computer suite and to supplement the funding grant for information technology from the National Grid for Learning.

99 Specific grants allocated for training are used well, for example to release subject co-ordinators to monitor standards and to offer support in their subjects to all teachers. This has been particularly successful in literacy and numeracy and contributes significantly to the improved levels of attainment being achieved by the end of the key stage.

100 Taking into account the children's attainment on entry, the good progress made by the majority of pupils, the significant improvements in standards over the past four years in English, mathematics and science, the very positive ethos, the good provision for the children with special educational needs and the high percentage of very good and good teaching, the school now gives very good value for money.

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

· **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

· **English**

101 The results of the 1999 Standard Assessment Tests indicate that the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above in English was below average in relation to all schools nationally and broadly average when compared with schools that are similar. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above in reading was close to the national average for all schools. Attainment in writing was well below the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 5 in English was well below average when compared with all schools and below average for schools which are similar. Indicators show a sharply rising trend in results over a four-year period. This improvement has been faster than national improvements. Variations in the attainment of boys and girls are not significantly different from the national figures, with girls' attainment slightly better than boys' in both reading and writing.

102 Inspection findings show that overall attainment in English at the end of the key stage is close to the national average. However, whilst there have been substantial improvements in reading, standards in writing remain below average for a significant proportion of pupils. According to attainment on entry to the school, progress is good overall by the end of the key stage.

103 The literacy strategy has been adopted and a daily literacy session is taught to all pupils. The teachers' planning takes account of the recommendations in the literacy framework, ensuring that pupils are engaged in whole-class text, sentence and word-level work. This planning is of good quality and gives a clear focus to what is to be taught in each lesson. This has a positive impact on the quality of teaching. The structure of the lessons includes an effective balance of whole-class, group and individual work. The use of good-quality texts as the basis for the subsequent work is a common feature throughout the school. The use of setting by prior attainment is a feature across all year groups and is having a positive impact on standards. There is evidence of movement between sets dependent on pupils' attainment.

104 Overall attainment in speaking and listening is average. The pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in these skills. Pupils concentrate well for sustained periods of time. They speak with confidence and can convey their opinions clearly. For example, in a lesson in Year 6 pupils showed the ability to empathise with a character from the novel 'Goodnight Mr. Tom' and interpreted the situation from a different viewpoint. The pupils are responsive to the ideas and views of others when given the opportunity to collaborate in groups. The development of specific vocabulary is provided for effectively through whole-class teaching. Plenary sessions are used well, providing pupils with opportunities to explain what they have learned in a lesson. Children are challenged appropriately to give explanations using correct grammatical terminology. For example, in a Year 5 lesson the pupils were required to use the terms synonym, antonym and alliteration.

105 Overall standards of attainment in reading are average. Pupils' reading skills are developed effectively through the sharing of whole-class texts and through group and individual reading opportunities. Overall progress in reading is good. In addition to the daily timetabled literacy session, all classes set time aside several times a week for quiet reading. The pupils are able to participate in group reading activities or personal reading, using both fiction and non-fiction.

106 The majority of pupils in Year 6 currently display appropriate confidence as readers and develop a satisfactory level of fluency and accuracy. Pupils are able to discuss their favourite authors and books. Text and sentence-level work based on selected texts further enhances children's attainment in reading by focussing on punctuation, expression and inference of meaning. The effective teaching of reading ensures that pupils are able to employ an appropriate range of strategies to assist them in their reading. In discussions with pupils they were aware of a good number of strategies to help including the use of pictures, phonics, prediction and the grammatical structure of sentences.

107 Pupils have satisfactory dictionary and thesaurus skills. They can explain how to use non-fiction texts confidently. Skills in the use of contents, glossaries and indexes are taught well. Older pupils can explain how to use the library and information technology facilities to access information. They have appropriate reference skills and understand the purpose of skimming and scanning for information. The issue highlighted in the previous inspection relating to teaching more advanced reading skills has been addressed successfully.

108 Pupils are encouraged to choose books from a selection available in each class base. Pupils' choices mainly focus on fiction and poetry books. Although most texts were appropriately matched to pupils' abilities, for a number of children texts were either too easy or too difficult to support their reading development. This was a concern raised in the last inspection report. Pupils keep their own record and evaluation of the books they have read in their reading diaries. These diaries form an integral part of the school's homework procedures. Generally, although homework is used satisfactorily to consolidate teaching in literacy, to be more effective to support pupils' reading there should be increased use of the diaries as a means of setting individual targets for improvement, and a more

interactive dialogue between pupils, home and school.

109 Progress made in writing has improved over the last two years. However, while improvements have been made, attainment in writing remains below average for a significant number of pupils and progress for the more able pupils needs to be better. All pupils need more opportunities to apply their skills when writing in an extended form.

110 According to prior attainment the majority of pupils make satisfactory and often good progress overall. However, in the aspects of handwriting and spelling, progress is generally unsatisfactory. As yet the school has not successfully addressed the concerns highlighted in the last inspection report. Pupils are given handwriting lessons but there is a lack of consistency across the school in the teachers' expectations and the time allocated to practise. The pupils are not sufficiently challenged to develop a fluent joined script, with the result that in all year groups a significant number of pupils are still printing. Similarly there are inconsistencies in the teachers' expectations with regard to the teaching of punctuation and spelling. The National Literacy Strategy informs the teaching of punctuation and spelling and pupils are tested weekly on the spellings which have been given as homework. Although many of the pupils achieve correct answers when tested, a significant number spell common and regular words incorrectly in their writing. Many do not use correct punctuation and fail to make use of dictionaries to support their spelling during free writing.

111 The newly-formulated marking policy is helping to address some of these issues. However, there is a need to monitor the use of the scheme because currently it is not used consistently. The standard of writing across the school needs to be monitored on a regular basis by the co-ordinator and the senior management team in order to ensure that pupils are applying the skills that they have learned during literacy sessions and that expectations are raised and current inconsistencies eliminated. The school has identified writing as a focus for development, and inspection findings endorse this decision.

112 Pupils are given opportunities to write in a wide variety of genres and by the end of the key stage use a variety of sentence structures. For example, pupils in Year 3 wrote a persuasive account of 'Why Harlescott is a good place to live'. In Year 4 pupils wrote story settings for the 'Terrible Dragon' and made good use of adverbs and adjectives. Pupils in Year 5 have focussed on character development and instructional writing for recipes. Year 6 pupils have written book reviews in journalistic style for 'Murder at Marwell' and the school newspaper, 'The Harlescott Times'.

113 Opportunities are provided for pupils to enhance and practise their literary skills outside literacy sessions and through other curriculum subjects. For example, in all curriculum areas good emphasis is given to the learning of subject-specific vocabulary. In science pupils use writing frames to structure their work, in geography they label their maps and diagrams and in history and religious education they write notes whilst researching facts from reference books. Good use is made of information technology in supporting the development of pupils' writing and this is contributing to the raising of standards, for example the use of story writing frames for less able pupils in Year 6.

114 The provision for supporting children with special educational needs is good. They make good progress and attain levels commensurate with their capabilities. They receive effective teaching from their class teachers, the special educational needs co-ordinator and specialist teachers. Good support is provided by support assistants who implement what is planned well. Relationships with these adults are good and the pupils respond positively.

115 Additional literacy support is focussed on pupils in Years 3 and 4 who are judged to be under-achieving. This is having a positive impact on the literary skills of these children. The school is well-placed to continue the upward trend in results given the success of these initiatives.

116 The pupils' response to learning is generally good and at times very good. They behave very well in lessons and are keen to do their best. The majority concentrate well and demonstrate a good work ethic. They take part willingly and sometimes enthusiastically in whole-class discussions.

117 The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. Overall across the key stage the quality of teaching is good. Good teaching was observed in all year groups with instances of very good teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6. This indicates an improvement since the last inspection. When the teaching is satisfactory, the planning based on the National Literacy Strategy objectives ensures that the different elements of the hour are addressed and that appropriate texts are chosen. However, questioning does not sufficiently challenge all pupils and the pace of the lesson is often too slow. The good teaching is characterised by the effective use of questioning to focus pupils' attention and to target particular pupils. Good use is made of the text and the activities offer appropriate levels of challenge. In the very good teaching the teachers' expectations are high and discussion ensures that all pupils are involved. Grammatical terms are used well and lessons are conducted at a brisk pace. Tasks are challenging and explained clearly. Pupils' incorrect responses are dealt with sensitively and are used to clarify teaching points. Plenary sessions are used very well to assess and extend pupils' levels of understanding.

118 The assessment and record-keeping procedures used to monitor pupils' progress are contributing significantly to the raising of attainment in English. In order to raise attainment further, particularly in writing, analysis of data should include identification of where improvements can be made to specific aspects of writing and in the teaching, together with target-setting which links group and individual pupils' targets to National Curriculum levels or national literacy objectives for each year group.

119 The subject is led ably by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who is supported well by a shadow co-ordinator. The curriculum is resourced adequately. The school has recently purchased a good range of texts for literacy sessions. The recent provision of multiple texts for group-reading sessions has enhanced the reading programme. The co-ordinators have monitored planning and have carried out a recent audit relating to reading, the results of which have provided the basis of an action plan to develop the subject further.

120 The requirements of the National Curriculum are met fully.

• **Mathematics**

121 The results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 show that the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above in mathematics was below average in relation to all schools nationally and broadly average when compared with schools that are similar. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 5 was broadly average when compared with all schools and above average when compared with similar schools. Inspection findings show that there has been substantial improvement in mathematics and overall attainment is close to the national average by the end of the key stage.

122 Since the last inspection the school has placed greater emphasis on mental mathematics and increased the range of computational strategies. Pupils use mathematical notation correctly and understand the inverse relationship between operations. Pupils can use the inverse when solving missing number problems. They can partition numbers and apply this skill in their calculating.

123 Trends over a four-year period indicate that there has been significant improvement in end-of-key-stage attainment and this improvement has been faster than national improvements. Attainment on

entry at the age of seven reflects the full range of abilities, but is below average for a significant number of children. Effective whole-class teaching and raised awareness of strategies for mathematical thinking have contributed to the good progress made by most pupils in reaching standards close to national averages.

124 Good planning systems are in place, based on the framework from the National Numeracy Strategy. Curriculum planning shows good coverage of mathematical content and an appropriate emphasis on numeracy skills. However, pupils have limited opportunity to develop investigational processes. In some lessons pupils are encouraged to explain their reasoning but there is little evidence of pupils organising their work, collecting data from which to make predictions or developing mathematical reasoning in extended tasks. Pupils are taught in ability sets and teachers plan from appropriate objectives within the scheme to meet the needs of the majority of pupils in these groups. However, daily planning does not always cater for the full ability range within the sets and there are insufficient opportunities for the more able to work at the higher levels. The school uses Key Stage 1 and optional end-of-year SAT results to monitor progress and set subsequent targets. The school has recognised that closer scrutiny of these data, analysing strengths and weaknesses, would contribute further to the raising of standards.

125 Pupils on the special educational needs register are supported well by all members of staff and make good progress. The children are able to use and consolidate their numeracy skills in science and geography.

126 The quality of teaching ranges from very good to satisfactory and is good overall. Where teaching is most effective teachers have developed effective strategies for whole-class teaching, and have worked together to build up a good repertoire of activities to start lessons briskly. For example, a Year 4 lesson began with a bingo game based around multiples of 2, 5 and 10 which quickly engaged all of the pupils. They make very good use of resources, especially overhead projectors, to demonstrate their ideas to the class. For example, in a Year 5 set the teacher used the overhead projector to demonstrate the accurate measuring of angles with a protractor. Mathematical words are displayed in classrooms and teachers emphasise the use and understanding of correct vocabulary. In Year 3 pupils were learning about multiplication and division and the teacher used effective questioning to ensure that pupils understood how to use the mathematical terms and symbols to represent these operations. Teachers are confident in directing, instructing and explaining to the pupils.

127 Children respond positively to their work and support each other when solving problems. When given problems to solve they show perseverance. For example, in Year 6 pupils responded well to a challenging shape activity drawing quadrilaterals with particular properties onto a grid.

128 The subject is led well by the co-ordinator who has supported staff in developing their subject expertise and confidence in teaching aspects of numeracy. The school has also received further training and support through the National Numeracy Strategy. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the subject and of how to raise standards further.

129 The requirements of the National Curriculum are met fully.

• **Science**

130 In the 1999 end-of-key-stage tests the percentage of pupils who attained Level 4 and above was average when compared with all schools in England. In comparison with similar schools it was above average. This represents a significant improvement, as the 1998 results show that pupils' attainment was well below average. The proportion of pupils who attained Level 5 in 1999 was below the national

average, and average when compared to similar schools. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.

131 Over the past four years end-of-key-stage test results show significant year-on-year improvement. The school attributes its success to the effective implementation of a scheme of work, a sharper focus on subject vocabulary and knowledge and an increased emphasis on investigative work. Inspection findings show that these factors have contributed very positively to the raising of standards. Classroom observations, discussion with pupils and a scrutiny of completed work shows that the vast majority of children are currently working securely at a level expected for their age. However, very few pupils demonstrate above-average attainment.

132 By the end of the key stage pupils can name the major organs of the body and know the conditions necessary to sustain life. They show a sound understanding of the effects of exercise on the heart, including the quickening of the pulse rate. They can explain how forces affect the movement of an object. For example, as a result of an investigation using paper aeroplanes, the pupils could explain how air pressure affects the speed at which an object moves. They can describe how sound is created and travels. They can describe the properties of a range of materials, using appropriate vocabulary such as transparent and flexible. The majority can use their knowledge of electric circuits to explain how a switch works.

133 Overall progress is good throughout the key stage. It is mainly satisfactory in Year 3, but increases markedly in Year 4. In the main progress is maintained at a good rate in Years 5 and 6. The pupils make good progress in their acquisition of scientific knowledge. An increased focus on the use of scientific vocabulary is contributing to the good progress being made by pupils. For example, in Year 4 the pupils were using words such as transparent and translucent to describe materials. The key issue raised in the previous inspection report in relation to increasing opportunities for experimental and investigative work has been addressed well. Current work indicates that good progress is being made in the pupils' ability to use and apply their scientific knowledge in investigative work. Pupils can make sensible predictions. For example, in Year 5 the pupils used prior knowledge when predicting which would be the best material for soundproofing. The pupils understand and appreciate the importance of fair testing. Progress in this aspect of science is particularly evident in Year 4, where the teachers' high expectations are resulting in consistently good progress. However, across the key stage lack of explicit differentiation is resulting in the more able pupils being insufficiently challenged.

134 The subject makes a valuable contribution to the teaching of literacy, numeracy and information technology. Pupils can present their findings in a range of ways, including reports, graphs, charts and tables. For example, the pupils used the computer in Year 6 to construct graphs showing the distances travelled by paper aeroplanes. Pupils' investigative work involves the use of a range of measures and the collation, recording and simple analysis of data. However, in order to raise standards further, a more rigorous approach needs to be adopted in this aspect of the investigative process.

135 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to the additional and effective support that they receive in literacy and numeracy. They attain levels commensurate with their capabilities.

136 The children demonstrate very positive attitudes. They particularly enjoy the practical investigative activities. In lessons they listen well and show a lively interest during discussions. Most are keen to answer questions. They work very well on collaborative tasks, appreciating the importance of taking turns and sharing equipment. The vast majority of children demonstrate a very good work ethic.

137 The quality of teaching ranges from very good to satisfactory. In the main it is very good. Where the teaching is very good the teacher demonstrates high expectations. Questions and demonstration are used skilfully to assess and extend children's scientific understanding. For example, in a Year 6 lesson the teacher challenged the children to demonstrate on the whiteboard, using correct scientific symbols, the effect that a closed and open switch has on an electric circuit. The lesson develops at a brisk pace and there is a very good balance of consolidation and new learning. This results in the pupils being motivated and remaining on task. Resources are used very effectively to introduce and clarify scientific principles. For example, in a Year 4 lesson resources were used skilfully to introduce to pupils the properties of solids, liquids and gases. Where the teaching is good it contains many of the characteristics of the very good teaching, but the pace of the lesson and the use of questioning is not as rigorous. The satisfactory lesson builds soundly on prior learning. However, children's answers are readily accepted, and insufficient use is made of questions to extend the level of scientific understanding. Lack of differentiation and the pace of initial whole-class discussion, result in some pupils losing interest.

138 Medium and short-term planning is used effectively to identify key scientific ideas and questions. The scheme of work, long-term plan and policy successfully support teachers' planning. This documentation helps to ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced. Inspection findings indicate that to raise standards further, teachers would benefit from support in the identification of explicit learning objectives for year groups. This would help teachers to match activities and questions more rigorously to pupils' capabilities.

139 The subject is co-ordinated very well by two members of staff. They demonstrate very secure subject expertise. They have jointly monitored the quality of teachers' planning. Opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching have been designated for the spring term 2000. Resources to teach the subject are good.

140 The requirements of the National Curriculum are met very well.

· **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

· **Art**

· 141 Findings from lesson observations, a scrutiny of current and completed work and displays within classrooms and shared areas indicate that standards in art are better than expected for children of the same age, and the majority of children make good progress throughout the key stage.

· 142 Children across the key stage are able to produce drawings and sketches of a good standard. For example, as part of a study in Year 6 about the work of Lowry, children produced careful sketches of a landscape. Children across the key stage demonstrate a good understanding of drawing and painting techniques in their finished work. The development of observational drawing across the key stage is a particular strength. Pupils are able to describe and discuss the work of a wide range of artists, both European and non-European and incorporate some of the techniques used within their own work. Children are given the opportunity to explore colour using watercolours, inks, pastels and paint. They produce good-quality work using a wide range of media including, clay, modelling and most recently observational studies of fruit using batik printing.

143 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and through carefully-targeted

support attain standards that are often good.

144 Children are very enthusiastic about art. They respond very well to instructions and demonstration and are able to make links with work carried out previously in sketchbooks. They show great care when using resources and take a pride in their work.

145 The teaching ranges from good to very good and is generally very good. Questioning is used effectively to develop children's understanding of techniques and extend their technical vocabulary. Very good use is made of demonstration and work undertaken in sketchbooks to reinforce the focus of the lesson and to guide children in the use of new materials. Teachers demonstrate good subject expertise and set challenging tasks. Time is used well. High expectations are set for the quality of completed work.

146 The co-ordinator leads the subject well using very good subject expertise and experience to support colleagues. The scheme of work supports the curriculum planning and teaching well and outlines the progression of skills clearly. The children are offered a wide range of experiences, linked well to other subjects, which enhances the richness of the subject..

Design and technology

147 Evidence from the lessons observed during the inspection, an examination of teachers' planning, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of completed work shows that the majority of pupils are working at a standard expected for their age by the end of the key stage.

148 Overall progress is good, ranging from good to satisfactory. The expertise of the design and technology co-ordinator is deployed effectively by the use of specialist teaching in Year 6 which has a positive effect on attainment and progress.

149 Pupils make good progress in design. This demonstrates improvement since the previous inspection. By the end of the key stage pupils' designs contain appropriate detail. Pupils are aware of the importance of scale, and use measurements with increased accuracy. Most pupils make good progress in making.. Good use is made of focused practical tasks to extend children's design-and-make capabilities. For example, in Year 5 the children were shown how to pin a paper pattern accurately on to fabric. Appropriate opportunities are provided for the pupils to disassemble and examine existing products, using what they have found out to enhance their own skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, before designing their own wallet, pupils in Year 5 looked closely at a range of wallets and evaluated their strengths and weaknesses. By the end of the key stage many pupils are able to design and construct increasingly complex models with moving parts. For example, pupils in Year 6 were using motors to move a vehicle that they had constructed. Pupils make good progress in the control aspect of the curriculum. They can explain how syringes can be used to move a vehicle. Good progress is made in the pupils' use of technical vocabulary such as axle and chassis. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for pupils to evaluate their completed products. In order to raise standards further, greater emphasis needs to be given to evaluation.

150 Design and technology supports the teaching of numeracy and literacy well. Very effective links have been made with science. For example, the pupils' work on electricity enabled them to construct circuits to move their motorised vehicles. These links are having a positive impact on standards in both subjects.

151 Children with special educational needs make good progress in design and technology owing to the good levels of support that they receive in literacy and numeracy. For example, the pupils are able

to use measuring apparatus with growing accuracy.

152 Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to design and technology activities. They are keen to explain their work and show very good levels of involvement in their tasks. They persevere with practical tasks and collaborate very well. The vast majority work with diligence and enthusiasm.

153 The quality of teaching ranges from very good to good. In the main teaching is very good. Where the teaching is very good the teacher demonstrates high expectations. Pupils are consistently challenged to make choices that meet their design specifications. For example, pupils in Year 5 were challenged to reflect on their designs before selecting fabrics for their wallets. Demonstration and illustration is used very well to assist pace and progress. For example, in a Year 6 lesson the teacher effectively used resources to assist children in identifying the components needed to construct a moving vehicle. Where the teaching is good, activities are well-planned and appropriate to the needs of most pupils. The lesson develops at a good pace. However, increased use needs to be made of questions which challenge the children to justify their decisions and choices.

154 The teaching of design and technology is guided well by a helpful policy and scheme of work. Teachers would benefit from additional guidance on the identification of learning objectives related to each year group. This should assist teachers in matching expectations more rigorously to pupils' different capabilities. The long-term plan effectively ensures that the subject is broad and balanced. The subject is led very well by the co-ordinator who demonstrates very secure subject expertise. The resources for the subject are good.

Geography

155 Geography was not taught in Years 5 and 6 during the inspection. However, findings from lesson observations in Years 3 and 4, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' previous and current work indicate that children are working at levels expected for their age.

156 Pupils make satisfactory progress. In Years 3 and 4 children are able to demonstrate an understanding of seasonal changes occurring in the weather and the environment and about changes in temperature, rainfall and sunshine. They talk confidently about their work on rivers. They use geographical terms well when describing features of a river, for example when describing meanders in the River Severn. They are able to explain how rivers erode, transport and deposit materials and describe the course of a river from its source to the sea. They are able to use a range of maps to locate given places and are beginning to develop an understanding of grid references.

157 By the end of the key stage pupils can use a wide range of maps and use co-ordinates to locate features on a map. They are able to compare locations according to climate and physical features. Pupils are able to describe some similarities and links which exist between countries. For example, in their work on the European Union they describe the benefits of being a member state.

158 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and attain standards commensurate with their capabilities.

159 Good links are made between geography and other subjects. For example, children in Year 4 produced textured pictures of different parts of the river that they had been studying as part of an art lesson. Opportunities are also provided to develop information technology and numeracy skills in work on localities, carrying out surveys and recording data, and in the river study.

160 The children show enthusiasm and interest in the subject. They talk positively about the work

that they have undertaken. They are attentive and keen to share their ideas during whole-class discussions.

161 The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. It is mainly good. Where the teaching is most effective good use is made of demonstration to develop children's understanding. Questioning is used effectively to see what children know and to extend their use of geographical language. Lessons are brisk and well-organised and the focus is shared with the children. All children are involved in the lesson through carefully-selected activities and targeted questioning.

162 Where the teaching is satisfactory it is because exposition is too long and questions are not sufficiently targeted to ensure that all of the children take part.

163 The subject is led satisfactorily by the two co-ordinators. Both are only recently in post but have clear plans for the development of the subject. An appropriate range of materials and resources is available and good use is made of outside visits.

History

164 Evidence from lesson observations, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work shows that pupils are broadly working at a level expected for their age. Overall they make satisfactory progress through the key stage.

165 Pupils make satisfactory progress in their factual knowledge and understanding of a range of historical periods, including Ancient Greece and Britain since 1930. They can describe an appropriate range of historical events, and characteristic features of past societies and periods that they have studied. For example, they can describe the coronation of Queen Elizabeth the Second. In the main they make satisfactory progress in their understanding of chronology. They can explain chronological conventions such as decade, century and BC. However they are less secure at placing these historical periods into chronological order. This is an aspect of the curriculum which needs greater emphasis. Overall pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of skills. They can identify a range of historical sources including information books, artefacts and videos. When given the opportunity they can combine information from a range of sources. However, they are less confident at analysing information critically; recognising the difference between fact and opinion. The pupils need further opportunities to consider the nature of interpretation within history. They organise and communicate their work in an appropriate range of forms including reports, maps and timelines.

166 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to the effective support that they receive in literacy. They attain standards commensurate with their capabilities.

167 History supports the teaching of literacy skills well. Pupils' writing skills are consolidated satisfactorily through their work in history. However, more opportunities need to be provided for pupils to write extended reports. Research work involves the use of a range of information texts. Stories are used well to enhance and extend pupils' historical understanding. For example, the reading of 'Goodnight Mister Tom' to pupils in Year 6 is enriching their understanding of life in the 1940s. Information technology supports the subject satisfactorily.

168 The children apply themselves well to tasks. Displays are used very effectively to promote interest and curiosity, as well as to enhance and inform the pupils' learning, for example displays of artefacts from the 1940s.

169 The quality of teaching ranges from good to satisfactory. In the main it is satisfactory. No

teaching of history was observed in Years 3 and 4, as it was not scheduled during the inspection. Where the teaching is good, the lesson develops at a brisk pace, questions are used skilfully to motivate and extend children's historical understanding and good use is made of resources. For example, in Year 5 a labelled drawing of the Mary Rose was displayed on an overhead projector. This effectively supported the lesson's objective as it contained additional detail. Where the teaching is satisfactory the lesson is prepared well and the teacher demonstrates secure subject expertise. However, questions focus on reviewing factual knowledge rather than challenging children's historical understanding. The pace of the lesson needs to be increased and expectations need to be raised for some pupils.

170 In the main the needs of the higher-attaining pupils are not being met sufficiently well. Pupils need more opportunities to select, combine and interpret historical information from a range of sources.

171 The subject is led satisfactorily by the co-ordinator. However, this role needs to be further developed to include opportunities for monitoring. The range of resources is satisfactory. A policy and scheme of work support teachers' planning. The school's long-term plan ensures that the subject is broad and balanced. However, teachers would benefit from additional support and guidance on the nature of interpretation within history. The scheme needs to contain learning objectives related to the year groups to support teachers in matching tasks more rigorously to pupils' capabilities.

Information technology

172 The teaching of information technology was observed in each year group. Evidence from these lessons, a scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils indicate that attainment for most pupils is of the standard normally found for children of the same age. The school has invested in a computer suite allowing whole-class teaching of information technology skills. For many pupils this has resulted in rapid progress in the development of skills and all children are making good progress.

173 Children across the key stage are competent users of information technology to communicate and handle information. They are able to save and retrieve work, can confidently use the mouse and keyboard to select and position text and pictures on the screen. In geography pupils have created maps for their local study work. Children can compose text on the screen and edit their work deleting words, letters and phrases. They use word-processing skills, incorporating text, charts and pictures to produce writing across a range of subjects. They can access and interrogate information stored on systems. However, pupils have limited experience with control, monitoring and modelling.

174 There is a detailed scheme of work which shows planned coverage across the programmes of study and outlines development in information technology skills for each year group. Whole-class teaching in the suite provides all pupils with the opportunity to make good progress in the development and consolidation of their skills. For example, during a lesson in Year 3 all pupils were introduced to tools in a new program for word-processing and older pupils using the same program were developing speed and accuracy in their editing. These skills are then used to support learning in other areas of the curriculum. For example, in art pupils have used a paint program to produce work in the style of Lowry. In Year 6 pupils interrogate data to collect information about beliefs and the rites of different religions.

175 Children's attitudes and responses to information technology are good. They are enthusiastic and work with obvious enjoyment. In the suite they organise themselves quickly at stations and develop good working habits. They collaborate well in pairs and are developing independence.

176 The teaching of information technology ranges from satisfactory to very good. Overall it is good. Lessons are planned well, informed by the scheme of work but matched to the needs of the

pupils. Resources and activities are prepared well. Teachers give clear instructions using appropriate vocabulary. Time is used effectively and teachers move around the groups both supporting and monitoring the processes that children are using.

177 Information technology is led well by the co-ordinator. Effective use has been made of release time to work alongside and support colleagues working in the new computer suite. Resources are managed properly. There is a detailed scheme of work to support the teaching, and the co-ordinator has identified and planned further development in control technology.

178 The requirements of the National Curriculum are met in full.

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Music

179 Inspection findings show that pupils are working at a standard expected for their age and make satisfactory progress. They can recognise and continue rhythmic patterns. Pupils can compose using sounds and structures to achieve an intended effect. For example, Year 6 pupils used a range of instruments to create music based on the Blitz. When composing they can devise and play using notation. They are beginning to understand musical structures and are encouraged to refine their work. In a Year 4 class pupils using their voices to represent water were encouraged to use a variety of dynamics. Younger pupils can recognise instruments which are used to create sounds and how the sound is created. Older pupils show appreciation of the differences in style of music from different eras.

180 To support their planning teachers have a reference bank of ideas and activities which make good links with other areas of the curriculum which can be used to stimulate musical work. Planning shows that pupils have opportunities to perform, compose, listen and appraise music, and overall progress is satisfactory.

181 Children respond well in their music lessons. They co-operate well in groups when composing and listen carefully to performances. They share ideas and value the contributions made by other children.

182 Teaching of music ranges from very good to satisfactory. Overall it is good. Music is taught in a designated room with sufficient resources for whole-class teaching. Teachers use the time well and lessons are planned and organised well. Clear procedures are set for maintaining discipline while allowing all pupils the opportunity to create music. They introduce children to relevant musical vocabulary and encourage the pupils to listen carefully to music.

183 Prior to this academic year music was taught by a specialist but is now the responsibility of class teachers. The co-ordinator has very recently taken on the role and music is not a priority in the school development plan. However, the co-ordinator has identified what needs to be undertaken to support colleagues with their class teaching. The resources in the music room have been re-organised and made more readily accessible to pupils and teachers. The co-ordinator has identified the need for a more detailed scheme of work to ensure progression and continuity across the year groups.

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Physical education

184 Five lessons in dance were observed during the course of the inspection. From the evidence of the lessons in dance and a scrutiny of teachers' planning it is judged that by the end of the key stage pupils are working at standards expected for their age.

185 The programme of work includes games, dance, gymnastics, athletics, swimming and other

athletic activities. A recently-introduced and very helpful scheme of work allocates units of work to academic terms and year groups and guides teachers' planning to provide for continuity and progression in the teaching of skills

186 Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in dance. They listen attentively to their teachers, use space sensibly and safely and are able to sustain appropriate levels of activity for suitable periods. Pupils are able to create and repeat accurately a range of movements with increasing skill. They express ideas and feelings with confidence and move harmoniously as individuals and as members of a group using different levels, patterns of movement and shape. They have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of technical vocabulary and use terms such as sequence, pause, freeze and twist.

187 The overall quality of teaching is good when the pupils undertake dance. This indicates an improvement in teaching since the last inspection. Appropriate attention is given to health and safety issues. Lessons are structured well and start with a warm-up activity. Where the teaching is particularly effective the teacher's subject knowledge is secure, lessons progress at a brisk pace and questioning and demonstrations are used well to enhance the teaching of specific skills. Pupils are encouraged to refine and improve their work. In the satisfactory teaching there is room for improvement in the pace of the lesson and in the self-evaluation of performance.

188 Pupils show enjoyment in dance. They are keen to participate and respond sensitively to the well-chosen music. High priority is given to the teaching and enjoyment of physical education. A five-day festival of sport for staff and pupils offered a programme ranging from martial arts and athletics to hockey, basketball and orienteering. Pupils wrote their own reports on the events which were published in the local press.

189 The school is resourced well for the teaching of physical education and effective use is made of the hall and grounds to support the children's work. A very good range of extra-curricular activities including football, netball, cross-country athletics and rugby, enhances the physical education programme. Almost half of the pupils are involved in the activities offered. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 undertake residential visits to activity centres in Clun, Stottesdon and Arthog. The school regularly engages in competition with other local schools and has met with considerable success.

190 The co-ordinator provides effective support to teachers. Planning is monitored, feedback is given and advice offered.

· *Swimming*

191 The inspection of this school included a focussed view of swimming which is reported below.

192 Swimming was not taught during the inspection. Discussions with the headteacher and the teacher co-ordinating swimming and scrutiny of the scheme of work indicates that attainment of pupils is just below national expectations within the constraints of curriculum time and the availability of pools. The scheme of work is well-structured and progressive and provides clear guidance for staff and good incentives for pupils.

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Religious education

193 Four religious education lessons were observed during the inspection. One lesson was seen from each year group. Further evidence was obtained from a scrutiny of pupils' books and teachers' planning and through discussion with pupils. These findings indicate that by the end of the key stage pupils' attainment is in line with the requirements of the agreed syllabus.

194 The children make satisfactory and sometimes good progress through the key stage. By the end of the key stage they demonstrate a sound understanding of Christian ceremonies such as baptism and marriage. They are able to name a range of faiths including Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism, Hinduism and Islam. They understand that different religions have common principles such as prayer and festivals. They understand that people can make choices in life and that religious beliefs are important to them. They have opportunities to discuss questions and feelings associated with life experiences and they know that the main events in life, birth, marriage and death are marked by ceremonies and that the ritual differs according to faith. They study the customs associated with the festivals of Christmas, Easter, Eid and Diwali

195 Pupils have an understanding of the symbolism of water in a religious context and have explored the use of water in religious ceremonies, for example washing before worship in Sikhism and the use of water in baptism for followers of Christianity.

196 Younger pupils can name and explain the relevance of a range of Christian festivals and celebrations including Harvest and Christmas. They know that the bible is a special book for Christians. They have studied and compared stories from different faiths including Noah's Ark and Manus' Ark. They have explored friendship and the essential characteristics of good friends, and related this to their own life and to the life of Jesus and his disciples.

197 Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by their teachers. They make satisfactory progress and attain standards commensurate with their capabilities.

198 The children demonstrate positive attitudes during religious education lessons. They are attentive, express opinions, join in discussions and listen to the contributions and views of others. During acts of worship pupils contribute positively. They sing tunefully and with enjoyment. They show respect and listen attentively to each other and to visiting speakers.

199 The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and in one lesson seen was very good. Lessons are planned carefully and resources used effectively. Where the teaching is very good pupils are provided with appropriate direct teaching about religions as well as opportunities for reflection and discussion. Questions are used very well to elicit children's thinking and to provide new challenges

200 Where the teaching is satisfactory the lesson is planned soundly, with appropriate attention being given to prior learning. However, the attention of all pupils is not held and groups formed for research activities are too large for all of the pupils to be actively involved.

201 Good links are made with literacy. Pupils are given opportunity to research information on different religions from information books and CD-ROMS. For example, Year 5 pupils compared the different marriage ceremonies across faiths, and pupils in Year 6 researched how different faiths deal with death and related beliefs. Throughout the school pupils' vocabulary is effectively enriched and they have the opportunity to write in a range of genres, including prayers, stories and accounts.

202 The subject is co-ordinated and led well by the co-ordinator and shadow co-ordinator and is a major target in the current school development plan. There is a helpful policy and long-term plan, which incorporates the local education authority's agreed syllabus and supports the teachers' planning effectively. The policy for collective worship contains a detailed long-term plan which ensures that pupils are provided with a good range of religious themes over the academic year. A helpful daily record is kept of the themes for collective worship.

203 The co-ordinator has monitored planning and children's completed work across the school and appropriate advice is offered to teachers. A sufficient amount of time is allocated to the teaching of religious education and year-group leaders also take responsibility for ensuring that religious education is taught systematically and effectively.

204 Good-quality resources, books and artefacts from a range of faiths enhance the provision. The subject is supported through the use of visits and visitors. Religious education contributes well to the spiritual moral, social and cultural development of the children. The requirements of the agreed syllabus are met.

· **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

· **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

205 The inspection was undertaken by a team of five inspectors who, over a period of four days, spent the equivalent of nineteen days assessing the work of the school. A total of 47 hours 15 minutes was spent evaluating the teaching and learning. 81 lessons or part-lessons were seen.

206 A selection of children from every class were heard to read. The pupils' current work and some which had been completed previously was scrutinised. Teachers' written planning and records of children's progress were examined. Discussions were held with members of staff, governors, parents and pupils. Curriculum policies and other documentation relating to numerous issues were read.

207 A meeting was held before the inspection to provide parents with the opportunity to express their views and to inform them about inspection procedures. The meeting was attended by six parents. 379 parental questionnaires were distributed and 175 returned. The responses were analysed and used to inform the inspection team. The Registered Inspector met with teachers, non-teaching staff and a number of governors prior to or during the inspection to inform them of the inspection process.

• **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full- time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y3 – Y6	379	9	99	70

• **Teachers and classes**

• **Qualified teachers**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	13.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	27.5

• **Education support staff**

Total number of education support staff:	10
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	95

Average class size:	31.6
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• **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	581074.00
Total Expenditure	569281.00
Expenditure per pupil	1402.17
Balance brought forward from previous year	4220.00
Balance carried forward to next year	16013.00

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 379

Number of questionnaires returned: 175

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	29.3	63.8	5.7	0.6	0.6
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	40.8	54.6	2.3	2.3	0.0
The school handles complaints from parents well	16.2	58.1	21.6	3.0	1.2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	22.2	63.7	8.8	5.3	0.0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	32.7	59.1	5.3	2.9	0.0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	34.1	59.5	5.2	1.2	0.0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	32.9	59.4	4.7	2.9	0.0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	29.3	63.8	4.0	2.9	0.0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	34.5	55.6	8.2	1.8	0.0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	28.2	57.1	10.0	4.1	0.6
My child(ren) like(s) school	42.5	54.0	2.3	1.1	0.0