

INSPECTION REPORT

NEWTON REGIS C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newton Regis, Tamworth

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125643

Headteacher: Mrs M. E. Wright

Reporting inspector: Roderick Passant
2728

Dates of inspection: 20 – 24 March 2000

Inspection number: 187918

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Infant and Junior |
| School category: | Voluntary Controlled |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Austrey Lane Newton Regis Tamworth Staffordshire |
| Postcode: | B79 0NL |
| Telephone number: | 01827 830220 |
| Fax number: | |
| Appropriate authority: | The Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Reverend D. Hare |
| Date of previous inspection: | 22 April 1996 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| Roderick Passant | Registered inspector | Science, Special Educational Needs, Design and Technology, Music, Art. | The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? |
| Leonard Shipman | Lay inspector | | How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| Alison Fiala | Team inspector | Mathematics, Under Fives, Physical Education, Information Technology. | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? |
| Patricia Baldry | Team inspector | English, Religious Education, Geography, History Equal Opportunities, | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |

The inspection contractor was:

Advisory and Inspection Service
Essex County Council
PO Box 47
Chelmsford
Essex
CM2 6WN

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

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Newton Regis Church of England Primary School is a rural school in north Warwickshire serving the villages of Newton Regis, No Mans Heath, Seckington, Alvecote and Shuttington. A high percentage of pupils travel to the school on the school bus. The school is popular and a high proportion of pupils come from outside the immediate area. The school is smaller than average with 123 pupils on roll. Almost all pupils are UK heritage. A small number of pupils come from traveller families. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average. The socio-economic background of the pupils is mixed. Pupils' ability, on entry to the school, varies year on year, but is overall broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective. It is led well. The quality of teaching is good, often very good. The standards in English and mathematics of the current pupils are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Consistent good quality teaching ensures that pupils often make good progress. Classroom assistants give very good support.
- There is a good range of learning opportunities and pupils' progress is monitored very well.
- The school provides a very caring environment where pupils are known, valued and challenged appropriately by high expectations and interesting work. The overall ethos is one in which pupils thrive.
- The behaviour of pupils in and around the school is excellent.
- Parents and the community feel a strong sense of ownership of the school, there are very good links with the community and the school is enhanced by the community's contribution to the life of the school.
- The school is led very well by the headteacher who has developed a team of committed staff who share similar values and attitudes towards teaching and the pupils. The governing body is effective.

What could be improved

- Ensuring that the school development plan has the raising of standards as its primary focus and that indicators of success in achieving a specific goal relate directly to improvement in standards. Consider using a three-year plan.
- Build on the existing pupil target system so that pupils are more aware of what they have to do in order to improve. To ensure that whole class review at the end of lessons is used effectively to reinforce this process.
- Develop speaking skills, especially relating to formal presentation particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Review the provision for design and technology and music.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since it was last inspected in April 1996. At that point the school was in the process of transition from a 'First School' to a primary school. Two of the key issues in the previous report related to preparing the older pupils for transfer to the secondary phase. These issues have been addressed well and very strong links have been forged with the High School and other members of the Anker Valley partnership. Guidelines and schemes of work have been developed and a cycle of teacher appraisal has been carried out.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. The numbers taking the tests are relatively low and care needs to be taken in interpreting the test results. The performance of one or two pupils can lead to large percentage swings. In 1999, for example, one pupil equated to six percent.

| Performance in: | compared with | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | all schools | | | similar schools |
| | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 1999 |
| English | C | C | B | B |
| Mathematics | D | A | C | C |
| Science | C | A | B | B |

| Key | |
|--------------------|---|
| well above average | A |
| above average | B |
| average | C |
| below average | D |
| well below average | E |

Attainment in English at the end of Key Stage 1 of the current pupils is in line with national expectations. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with national standards. In Year 5 there are examples of above average standards.

In Mathematics at Key Stage 1 all pupils are given a good foundation on which to build their mathematical knowledge. Standards by the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with national expectations. In Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment is broadly in line with national expectations.

In science standards are above national expectations at both key stages.

In history and geography standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages.

In information technology standards of attainment are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. There is evidence of work at a higher level in both key stages.

Attainment in art and physical education throughout the school is satisfactory.

In religious education pupils' attainment in both key stages is in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

Standards in design and technology and music are broadly in line with expectations at Key Stage 1 but in design and technology are below at Key Stage 2. There are opportunities for pupils to experience design and technology and music but the planned progression in skills is lacking.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Good teaching and interesting lessons ensure that pupils enjoy learning. They are enthusiastic, confident and motivated. Interest and involvement in activities is very good. In lessons the level of concentration is very good and pupils respond eagerly to questions. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Behaviour in and around the school, including playtime, is excellent. |
| Personal development and relationships | Personal development and relationships are very good. Pupils cheerfully and willingly take on responsibilities appropriate to their age in the everyday running of the school. The school also encourages all children, and in particular Year 6 children, to show initiative and to accept responsibility for their actions. |
| Attendance | Levels of attendance are good and have remained so over the last three years. These figures are better than the national averages. Levels of unauthorised attendance are kept to a minimum. |

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good and contribute to the gains made in learning. This is a strength of the school. The school has improved these overall standards since the last inspection.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. It is very often very good and sometimes excellent. It is never less than satisfactory. In 41 percent of lessons teaching was good. It was very good in 32 percent and excellent in 6 percent of lessons. Teaching is satisfactory in 21 percent of lessons.

The quality of the support given by classroom assistants is very good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Provision for the education of children under five is very good and is a strength of the school. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school for its pupils are good. Statutory requirements including provision for religious education are met. The teaching of basic skills in the core subjects of English, maths and science is very good. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | The provision is good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against their targets. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Provision for personal development is very good and is a strength of the school. The school's ethos is one of care and concern for the individual and promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils. The provision for spiritual development and cultural development is good. The provision to help pupils develop an appreciation of the richness and variety of contemporary multi-cultural society is sound. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | The steps taken to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety, including the school's arrangements for child protection, are very good and are a particular strength of the school. The school has worked hard to develop the links with other local schools and particularly the High School to ensure a smooth transfer to secondary education. |

Links between the school and the parents or carers are very good and have improved since the last inspection. These links are a strong feature of the school and help support a better quality of education. Many parents want a 'village school' style education for their children and this school is at the very heart of this rural community.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The quality of leadership is very good. There is a strong sense of teamwork, a shared commitment to improvement and a very good capacity to see improvements through. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | The governing body is effective in fulfilling its statutory duties and in shaping the direction of the school. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | The school monitors its own performance very carefully. |
| The strategic use of resources | The school makes very good use of resources. |

There is a very good match of teachers to the curriculum. The members of the support staff make a very good contribution to learning. Overall, accommodation and resources are good. The under-fives lack a specific outdoor play area and there is an over-reliance on re-used materials for design and technology.

The principles of best value are applied well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour is good • Teaching is good • School is well led • School expects children to do their best | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern over increasing numbers leading to large class sizes • Homework • Extra-curricular activities |

The inspection team fully support parents' very positive views of the school. The school effectively uses a range of strategies and additional members of staff to break down class sizes. There is very good teamwork in classes with classroom assistants and voluntary helpers. Teachers manage classes well and the overall quality of teaching is good. The homework seen being set during the inspection was appropriate and demanding and extended the learning opportunities which had taken place in the classroom. The school has creative approaches towards work carried out at home and the involvement of parents in their children's learning. Given the numbers of staff and the size of the school the range of extra-curricular activities is good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Provision for the education of children under five is very good and is a strength of the school. The experiences they receive while working and playing together in a purposeful learning environment ensure that the vast majority are performing in line with expectations. In some areas such as reading, writing, mathematics and creative development, many pupils are working above this level.
2. The school's results in the 1999 reading and writing national assessments for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 were above the national average. Overall, standards in reading and writing in the period 1996 – 1999, have been maintained and are consistently above average. Compared to similar schools, the 1999 results in reading were above average, and in writing well above.
3. The school's 1999 results in the national English tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 were well above national standards. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels in the tests was above the national average. Overall, taking the results in the period 1996 – 1999 together, the performance of boys was below the national average and the performance of girls was well above. The school has picked up on boys' achievement and in the 1999 tests, boys' performance in English exceeded the national average. Compared to similar schools the results in 1999, for all pupils, was above average.
4. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in reading. They apply phonic skills to work out new words and use clues such as pictures to predict what is happening in the story. Pupils in Year 2 use dictionaries and have a good understanding of alphabetical order. Pupils make good progress in their writing skills. Letters are usually correctly orientated and words appropriately spaced. Pupils are developing confidence in writing sentences. There is limited evidence of pupils composing more sustained writing.
5. The majority of pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress with their reading. They read with expression and fluency. They are developing good comprehension skills and can use reference books effectively. Pupils develop a good range of writing and use appropriate punctuation and paragraphing when appropriate. Some pupils in Year 5 write in a vivid manner and are beginning to use complex sentence structures. There are some weaknesses in handwriting and some pupils who write well make surprising spelling errors of common words.
6. Speaking and listening skills are generally good across the school although there is a weakness with the oldest pupils. These pupils lack the ability to project their voices when giving a presentation to the whole class, in for example, religious education or art, so that, although what they have to say is interesting it is sometimes inaudible.
7. Over the last three years the performance of pupils in mathematics has been close to the national average at Key Stage 1 and above the national average at Key Stage 2. The small cohort sizes means that there is considerable year-to-year variation.

8. Standards in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 of the current cohort of pupils are broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils are developing good strategies in mental calculations and are familiar with numbers and the number system and a sound understanding of place value in numbers of two or three digits. Pupils can measure and estimate. They are confident in collecting data and using simple graphs to compare their findings.

9. Pupils' attainment in mathematics in the current Year 6 is broadly in line with national expectations. Most pupils can carry out number operations using fractions, decimals and percentages. They are very confident with mathematical language associated with probability. They can construct angles and calculate area. They confidently interpret graphical information. They are developing strategies for working on mathematical problems.

10. In 1999 the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 or above in science by the age of seven, according to the school's teacher assessment, was well below the national average. The percentage achieving Level 3 or above was very high in comparison with the national average. Standards in science by the age of seven are good. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above and Level 5 and above was above the national average. When considered over a four year period standards are well above the national average.

11. Younger pupils study the life cycle of a frog and understand what conditions are necessary to sustain life. They understand the differences and similarities between materials and can explain how heating or cooling changes these properties. They use technical vocabulary well. Pupils are able to construct an electrical circuit in pairs and explain the reasons why the bulb might not light up.

12. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 demonstrate an increasing understanding of aspects of materials and can compare properties. They understand the various situations when evaporation and condensation might take place. They plan and carry out investigations and experiments and use information technology to record their results graphically. They use a microscope and record their observations. They write and speak in an appropriately scientific manner using key vocabulary precisely.

13. Standards of attainment in information technology are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. There is evidence of work at a higher level in both key stages.

14. Pupils' achievements in history, geography, art and physical education in both key stages are in line with national expectations. In religious education pupils' achieve standards in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. In design and technology standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with expectations. On the basis of the limited evidence available current standards are below expectations at the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils make inconsistent progress. In music standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with expectations. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have a planned musical experience but progress in developing musical skills is less assured.

15. Work is generally matched well to the abilities of the pupils so that they make at least steady and often good progress across the school. Because of the quality of support, pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress against their targets. In some mathematics lessons the progress of higher attaining pupils is sometimes slowed because they carry out more demanding activities after completing an initial task. The school uses additional staff and a variety of ability or age groupings well to focus on specific groups of pupils leading to good progress. Literacy and numeracy are supported well across the

curriculum. The school sets demanding targets for pupil performance in the National Curriculum tests and these are modified in the light of assessment information. Planning is detailed and usually leads to a progressive development in skills. In design and technology at Key Stage 2 and to a lesser extent aspects of art, planning for skill development is not cross referenced to the theme being studied. In music, pupils in Key Stage 2 have a meaningful musical experience but current arrangements do not develop musical skills progressively.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good and contribute to the gains made in learning. This is a strength of the school. The school has improved these overall standards since the last inspection. There are no significant aspects for development. Attendance and punctuality are good.

17. The very good ethos of the school is clearly recognised by parents and members of the governing body as a significant feature. Parents are involved in the Home School Agreement that focuses on both pupil and parent responsibilities in developing positive attitudes to learning. The headteacher and all members of staff establish routines which are clear to pupils and implement consistently policies and procedures. The very high standards of pupils' attitudes, values and their personal development have a positive impact on the gains made in learning

18. Pupils enjoy school. They come to school with a willingness to learn and show very good attitudes to learning in more than half of the lessons seen. The children are dressed smartly, smile and laugh frequently and exchange courtesies with other and adults. Their entry into their respective classrooms is both orderly and considerate of each other. From an early age pupils are clearly aware of the routines; they know what to do and what is expected of them. Through role-play and other learning experiences relevant to their stage of development, very young children develop the necessary social skills to enable them to form good relationships, work co-operatively in small groups and work independently

19. Good teaching and interesting lessons ensure that pupils enjoy learning. They are enthusiastic, confident and motivated. Interest and involvement in activities is very good. In lessons the level of concentration is very good and pupils respond eagerly to questions. They show developed inter-personal skills. They do not interrupt one another when speaking. They collaborate and exchange information well. For example, in an information and technology lesson, pupils worked in pairs using the programmable robot, comparing notes and coming to an estimate of the distance to be covered. When their estimate proved correct there were squeals of delight. The teacher shared in their enthusiasm providing the motivation to achieve further and develop their skills. Teachers know the pupils very well and are responsive to individual needs.

20. Behaviour in and around the school, including playtime, is excellent. The children play happily and noisily but without any evidence of aggression. No anti-social behaviour was observed during the inspection. There are no exclusions, nor has there been in recent years. The pupils respect their school, their property and each other. The school's Code of Conduct is well established and underpins the very good behaviour of all the pupils. They need little reminding of the rules of behaviour which they help to formulate. Pupils understand that they have a part to play in ensuring the school is a happy and secure place to learn and they accept this responsibility fully.

21. Personal development and relationships are very good. Pupils cheerfully and willingly take on responsibilities appropriate to their age in the everyday running of the school. The school also encourages all children and in particular Year 6 children, to show initiative and to accept responsibility for their actions. All Year 6 children take on the role of prefects on a rota and are very good role models. Younger children talk about how helpful the prefects are as they meet and play with them in the playground and walk in with them in the mornings and at playtimes. Prefects also help prepare for the Act of Collective Worship by setting out the flowers and the Cross, giving out the hymn books and playing the tape recorder for background music. In assemblies, children are given opportunities to reflect on what they do and how this may affect others and in so doing they gain a respect for the values and beliefs of others.

22. There is a School Council where, under the guidance of the headteacher, Year 6 pupils meet once a week to discuss ways of improving the school. Recent improvements include the range of equipment for playtimes and increased privileges for older pupils such as having a separate play area with benches where they can meet and talk with their friends. Pupils take these meetings seriously and make use of the opportunity to take initiative and voice their views. The school council is a good example of how pupils demonstrate mature and considerate attitudes to school life.

23. Pupils are encouraged to record their achievements and reflect on the achievements of others. A personal achievement folder is on display in each classroom. Relationships are excellent between pupils and adults and between pupils themselves. Children are very friendly to visitors and give a warm greeting when meeting them in the corridors or in the playground. It is the combination of all these factors that ensures that the school is a very positive experience for all its pupils.

24. Levels of attendance are good and have remained so over the last three years. The figures are better than the national averages. Levels of unauthorised attendance are kept to a minimum. Registration is undertaken promptly with a minimum of delay and there are few latecomers. This ensures a very good start to the day and help to creates a very positive ethos.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

25. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teaching for the very young children is very good and sometimes excellent. Very good teaching is seen across the school. In over three quarters of lessons teaching is good or better. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The quality of teaching has shown further improvement on the overall good quality noted in the previous inspection report. A key factor in the standards, pupils' attitudes and the often good progress that pupils make is the consistently good and often very good teaching that takes place across the school.

26. The quality of teaching with the very young children is very good. It is sometimes excellent. Planning in this area is meticulous and there is clear communication with classroom support staff and voluntary helpers which ensures that they are fully engaged in the activities and play a full part in developing them. This characteristic is seen across the school but is very evident in this class. The teacher is lively and enthusiastic and has very good professional skills. She manages the learning in the classroom very well ensuring that the children are challenged appropriately.

27. The quality of the teaching of English is good across the school. There is good support for pupils of different abilities and pupils generally make good progress. There are clear learning objectives, planning is detailed which ensures that the teacher, classroom support staff and the pupils know what the focus of the lesson is. In Key Stage 1, there is systematic teaching of phonic skills, sight vocabulary and word and sentence level work. There is a lack of opportunity for compositional aspects of writing across the three terms towards the end of the key stage which the school has identified. The teaching of English in Key Stage 2 has many strengths. Spelling, writing and reading, including the teaching of higher order skills in reading comprehension, are taught well. There is some teaching in ability groups which has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Work is matched well to pupils' abilities. Teachers have high expectations and questioning challenges pupils to develop their thinking skills.

28. The quality of teaching of mathematics is good across the school. The National Numeracy Strategy is effectively implemented. Pupils are motivated by the enthusiasm of the teachers and interesting well-structured lessons. Questioning skills are good and used effectively to check on pupils' understanding and use pupils' mistakes positively to correct misunderstandings.

29. Science teaching is good, often very good and is a key factor in pupils' standards and very positive attitudes to science across the school. Lessons are planned well. There are clear and precise objectives and the activities within them are carefully sequenced and resourced. Good assessment strategies ensure that work is carefully matched to the pupils' abilities.

30. The quality of teaching in geography lessons is good. Pupils make often good progress because teachers have good subject knowledge, plan in detail and construct well sequenced activities.

31. In information technology the school makes excellent use of a specialist teacher to act as a catalyst to develop the work in classrooms. The quality of teaching by the specialist teacher is very good, often outstanding. The very good relationships, trust and confidence that pupils gain from the consistent high quality teaching ensures that they are motivated and enthusiastic. As a consequence they often make very good progress when they apply their knowledge to other situations back in the classroom.

32. Music is well taught. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are enthusiastic about the subject. Pupils often make good progress in physical education across the school as a direct consequence of the good teaching. Skills are taught, practised and improved in well planned lessons. The aims of the lesson however, are not always shared with pupils and sometimes insufficient time is set aside for reflecting as a class on what pupils have achieved in the lesson. Teaching is consistently challenging. Teachers have high expectations and effectively use questioning and demonstration to develop quality work.

33. The teaching of religious education is sound across the school. There are good elements. These include the detailed planning and the effective use of strategies such as drama, and group work to help pupils develop their ideas. At Key Stage 1 sometimes the religious aspect of the lesson needs to be made more explicit. The thoughtful contributions to discussions by older pupils are sometimes marred by their lack of formal speaking skills.

34. Because of the school's timetabling arrangements it was not possible to make accurate judgements about teaching in other subjects.

35. Across the school the quality of marking is supportive. Particularly good marking occurs in science which is related precisely to the lesson objectives. Good examples of demanding homework being set were observed and there is evidence of creative approaches to work at home involving parental support.

36. Work is generally matched well to pupils' abilities and adults provide good support to pupils because of effective assessment strategies which determine what the pupils know and what they should go on to learn next. Pupils with special educational needs are generally supported well and make good progress against their targets. Higher attaining pupils are generally appropriately challenged through extension work. In some classes in mathematics harder tasks for higher attaining pupils are reserved for when they have finished the initial task. As a consequence higher attaining pupils sometimes make slower progress in mathematics than they could. In whole class discussions at the end of lessons pupils could be encouraged to a greater extent to reflect on their progress in their targets and the key facts, ideas and vocabulary they have learnt in the lesson. This applies particularly in mathematics but has application in other subjects too.

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

37. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school for its pupils are good. Statutory requirements, including provision for religious education are met. The teaching of basic skills in the core subjects of English, maths and science is a strength of the school. The provision for pupils to use and apply their skills in information technology to support learning in other subjects is good. The skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing are used well across the curriculum. Sex education is taught within the curriculum and set within a context of Christian care and commitment. The curriculum provision for the under fives is very good.

38. The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is good. The school has given additional time to teaching extended writing in Key Stage 2 which has a positive impact on standards of writing. Specialist teaching provision in the core subjects and some 'parallel' focused teaching of pupils in ability groups in Key Stage 2 has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. This ensures a good match of the curriculum to individual needs, including pupils with special educational needs and pupils who are learning at a faster rate. There is full integration of pupils from the travellers' community and aspects of travelling culture feature in curriculum provision. In Key Stage 1, provision for some single year teaching has a positive impact on pupils' learning. The curriculum for the under fives is planned from the six areas of learning. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when curriculum provision for the under fives was in subjects. The curriculum provision for the under fives is now a strength.

39. The curriculum is organised in a two-year topic cycle so that work is not repeated in the mixed year classes. Subject content is allocated within topics and is the basis of the overall planning framework. Detailed medium term plans, built up each term over a number of years, form detailed schemes of work for curriculum guidance in all subjects. The scheme of work for religious education is based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when curricular guidelines and schemes of work were partly in place. Curriculum planning is now good.

40. The provision for extra-curricular activities, taking into consideration the size of the school, is good. There are opportunities to participate in sport, chess and recorder groups. Pupils in Key Stage 1 can attend drama and art and craft clubs in the spring term.

41. There are very good links with primary, special and secondary schools and inter-school liaison is having a positive impact on the enrichment of the curriculum. There are good arrangements in place to ensure a smooth transition from Key Stage 2 to secondary school. Pupils' records are exchanged on disk, including individual educational programmes for pupils with special educational needs. Senior managers from the secondary school visit Newton Regis C.E Primary School to discuss pupils' needs. In addition, a panel from the partner secondary school holds open days in the local primary schools and pupils are also invited to attend an induction day. Good progress has been made in this aspect of provision since the previous inspection.

42. The school's ethos is one of care and concern for the individual and promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils so that they flourish and thrive. Provision for personal development is very good and is a strong feature of the school.

43. The provision for spiritual development is good. Pupils develop a sense of their own worth through having opportunities to contribute their own ideas. In both key stages, pupils are valued and given opportunities to make decisions. For example, very young children take control as they ask questions of 'Jack and Jill' who act in role on the 'hot seat'. They experience wonder and excitement in their science lessons when they look at frog spawn in the school pond and in the classroom. Older pupils justify the choices they have made in making decisions about styles of writing. In their religious education lessons, pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on the values that others hold, including how power is used to make people behave in particular ways through threats or persuasion.

44. The school's provision for moral and social development is a major strength. The school's Code of Conduct is promoted in all aspects of school life and is part of the Home School Agreement. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and shows that pupils can distinguish right and wrong. The planned opportunities for collaborative work develop pupils' awareness of personal rights and responsibilities and allow for active participation in their own learning. Relationships between staff and pupils, and pupils and pupils, are very good and create a secure ethos where pupils are not frightened of making mistakes. In both key stages, pupils assume responsibilities which develop their initiative and concern for others. Values of caring and sharing for the less well off in the community are promoted as shown in the notices displayed on the 'Millenium Tree' in St Mary's Church.

45. The school's provision for cultural development is good. Musical tuition for piano and woodwind instruments is organised. Theatre groups are invited into school and offer breadth to the curriculum. Pupils attended a 'Tudor Day', acted 'in role', and participated in dancing, drama and art activities. Educational visits to support the teaching programme are arranged such as a visit St John's museum as part of a unit of work on Tudor houses. In Year 5 pupils can take part in a residential activity-based trip in Wales. The provision to help pupils develop an appreciation of the richness and variety of contemporary multi-cultural society is sound. Younger pupils have been introduced to an 'African Alphabet' and to different types of food as part of their topic work. Older pupils study rivers of the world in geography lessons and ways of living in village communities in other countries. In religious education lessons, pupils learn about other world faiths and festivals that celebrate important events. Poetry and music tapes, videos and photographs support this aspect of the teaching programme. The school is also part of a rural network, through which schools from the inner city that serve communities with a culturally diverse background, visit Newton Regis C.E. Primary School.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. The steps taken to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety, including the school's arrangements for child protection, are very good and are a particular strength of the school.

47. The school provides a very caring, friendly and stimulating place of learning, in which the headteacher and all her staff know the pupils and their families very well. All adults work very effectively as a team to care for all pupils. They provide consistency in routines and great importance is placed on valuing each other. This caring approach and the very good support and guidance given contribute significantly to both progress and learning. These qualities enable pupils to have high and realistic expectations in lessons and to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered. Easy access to the respective classroom teachers or the 'open door' policy promoted by the headteacher allows for sensitive issues to be dealt with quickly and in a compassionate style. Parents frequently mentioned the way that the school boosts the children's confidence as being a particularly praiseworthy feature of the school.

48. There are very good arrangements for pupils' welfare and health and safety. The headteacher, together with very committed members of the governing body, ensures that good Health and Safety procedures are in place. Regular risk assessments are conducted and reported back to the full governing body. All appropriate records of maintenance inspections are in place. There is a named 'first-aider' and all members of staff have received basic first aid training involving the local ambulance service. The recording of any accident or injury is consistently well implemented throughout the school. Each class has its own accident book. The buildings are maintained in a spotlessly clean and hygienic manner.

49. The headteacher is the designated member of staff for child protection issues. She is fully trained and has adopted locally agreed procedures. All members of the teaching staff have had awareness training. Although there has been no recent training in child protection for non-teaching staff they are aware that the headteacher is the named person and are aware of what to do if they suspect, or have disclosed to them, that an individual child may need protection.

50. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. The school has recently introduced new measures to promote good attendance. There is a new policy which promotes punctuality and the need for authorisation of any absence. The governing body has set an attendance target of 95 percent for the academic year. Class teachers monitor the pattern of absence, the headteacher monitors attendance levels each term with the possibility of referral to the Educational Welfare Office.

51. The promotion and monitoring of good behaviour and the elimination of oppressive behaviour are excellent. The school expects high standards of behaviour which are promoted through the Prospectus and the Home School Agreement. Team points are awarded to pupils who consistently demonstrate good attitudes to learning and each other. Consistent implementation of the Code of Conduct and other policies provide a stable and secure environment for the pupils. There are strategies to deal with more serious breaches of behaviour should they arise. For example through the system of the 'Bully Box', pupils know that they can say if they are being bullied without necessitating 'telling on' a pupil. To date this system has not been used as the pupils report there are no incidents of bullying.

52. The assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic performance, and the monitoring of personal development are very good overall.

53. Assessment of the under fives is very effective. There are good procedures in place which inform planning and ensure good records are kept. The school uses the Warwickshire Baseline Assessment scheme to assess pupils soon after children start school. It is used to identify the developmental stage of the child and any learning difficulties. Targets are set for the children and these are shared with parents, along with the results of the baseline assessment. The information gained from the baseline record informs curriculum planning and how the teacher groups the children for the range of learning experiences. Good assessment procedures are used effectively to ensure that children make good progress.

54. The school has developed comprehensive procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Progress in attainment in these subjects is mapped throughout the school for each pupil. Records of these assessments for each year group are kept in the 'Red Year Boxes' in each class. A portfolio of pupils' work is built up and each sample of work is annotated against National Curriculum levels in the core subjects. Evidence of artwork is kept in a sketchbook. The school does not keep evidence of progress in all of the other foundation subjects. Records of attainment are kept in key stage booklets and passed on to the new teacher each July. All records and evidence base of pupils' work are kept up to date in most subjects and are easily accessible.

55. The school has a very good system of tracking the progress of individuals as they move throughout the school. There is a timetable to assess and annotate work in mathematics, science and English. Predictions for pupil attainment at the end of key stage are informed by the outcomes of these twice-yearly assessments. Teachers are asked to identify the very able, able, average pupils and those who with additional targeted support could achieve higher standards.

56. The school has started to set targets for individuals and involve pupils in setting targets for themselves and in discussion with their teachers. However, these targets are not always informed by the assessment of annotated work and targets are often too broad: for example, "I need to improve my writing". In some lessons teachers remind children of their individual targets and provide feedback on the work including what can be improved and how. In the whole class discussion at the end of a lesson more could be made of opportunities to encourage reflection on what progress individuals have made in the lesson and in their targets and how they might improve further.

57. The subject co-ordinators monitor assessments and the use of the record of achievement portfolios to inform target setting and future planning. There are plans for co-ordinators to monitor standards and progress in their subjects twice yearly. The school is developing subject portfolios to support moderation against the level descriptors. Evidence from the scrutiny of work and the last series of tests and teacher assessment indicates some variance in judgements made particularly in mathematics at Key Stage 1. Short term planning, particularly for the more able, does not always reflect pupils' prior attainment or the use of the levelled outcomes of annotated work. Tasks to extend more able children are often planned as an extension when they have finished the group activities rather than introduced at the start of the lesson. In some lessons too much reliance is often given to common activities that differentiate pupils' achievements by pace or outcome.

58. The marking policy is due to be reviewed in the summer term. There are some very good examples of marking which inform pupils whether they have achieved the learning objectives and set targets for future learning, particularly ,for example in science. This practice has the effect of also informing parents, other teachers and teaching assistants of standards to be expected and specific targets for individuals, but it is not consistent practice across all subjects and in all classes.

59. Annual records on individual pupils are narrative in style. They give a clear picture of strengths including the levels achieved by the pupil, and fulfil statutory requirements. Targets for the next academic year are identified for each child.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

60. Parents show very good support for the school. Links between the school and the parents or carers are very good and have improved since the last inspection. These links are a strength of the school and help improve the quality of education. Many parents want a 'village school' style education for their children and this school is at the very heart of this rural community.

61. At the parents' meeting comments were positive on all aspects of the agenda. Parents felt that high expectations are set and teachers are approachable. They felt it was a 'family school.' There were concerns about the size of class 3 although parents recognised the very good support given by classroom assistants and voluntary helpers. Under any other business this concern was stressed. They felt that as a result of the growing popularity of the school 'the school is becoming a victim of its own success'.

62. Parents at the meeting felt well informed about their children's progress and the quality of information provided. One or two parents felt there was insufficient homework whilst one or two felt too much was set. It was not clear from the parents' returns to the questionnaire what aspect of homework concerned them.

63. The inspection team fully support parents' very positive views of the school. The school effectively uses a range of strategies and additional members of staff to break down class sizes. There is very good teamwork in classes with classroom assistants and voluntary helpers. Teachers manage classes well and the overall quality of teaching is good. The homework seen being set during the inspection was appropriate and demanding and extended the learning opportunities which had taken place in the classroom. The school has creative approaches towards work carried out at home and the involvement of parents in their children's learning. Given the size of the school the range of extra curricular activities is good.

64. The induction process for potential parents with school age children is very effective. Many parents examine a number of schools before choosing this particular school. The warmth of the welcome they receive was commented upon. In many instances a new pupil is allocated a 'special friend' or a mentor, which enables that pupil to settle in quickly.

65. Routine information is very good and easily assimilated by parents. The annual progress report meets the requirements and gives the parent a clear picture of how their child is progressing at school. Targets are set and there are sections for child, parent or class teacher to comment. Behaviour and personal development are also featured, together with attendance statistics. The Prospectus and friendly Governors' Annual Report to Parents both meet the 1999 requirements as to content.

66. For those children with special education needs parents or carers, are invited to the regular reviews.

67. The provision of homework is very good and supported well by the parents. Many parents have attended workshops provided by the school explaining literacy or numeracy. Reading diaries require a parental signature. For younger children, the school has adopted the 'SHARE' scheme, designed to promote improved levels of literacy which closely involves parents. The contribution parents make has a positive impact on raising levels of attainment.

68. The recently introduced Home School Agreement is a significant feature in developing links with parents. Parents have been surveyed and the results are being analysed.

69. During the inspection some parents were observed helping in school, for example, with reading or class preparation. Their contribution is planned well. The parent helpers enjoy their role and are very confident that their support contributes to the progress that the children make, delighting in those moments when for an individual child the 'penny drops'. The support of the 'Parent Friends Teacher Association' (PFTA) is excellent. A small but dedicated number of parents raise large sums of money to benefit the school and the quality of the education provided, for example, contributing to the purchase of a new computer. Last year over £3,500 was raised. The target sum of £5,000 for this year is well on its way to being reached. A variety of events involve the whole community. As the school has grown in popularity, so the committee has promoted the school to a wider audience and are attracting more business support. Some parents support the school with extra curricular or other help; for example, one parent upgrades the computers, whilst others assist with a football team. The PFTA wishes to develop a wider choice of interests to broaden the children's' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

70. The school is managed and led very well by the headteacher. She has a clear commitment to the pupils, parents and the staff of the school. She has developed within the school a strong sense of teamwork. The contribution of all adults working in the school is valued. There is a very strong sense of a shared commitment to the pupils for whom they have responsibility and also to school improvement and development. This teamwork ensures a consistency in values and attitudes and also to a commitment to high standards. The teamwork is also mutually supportive. Members are generous towards the skills of others. The ethos of the school very effectively supports its aims and values.

71. The headteacher has developed the community's confidence in the school. The school is a focal point in the community and is enriched by the community's contribution. A feature of the school is the commitment of voluntary adult support. Teachers manage their classrooms well and the quality of the teamwork in classroom is very high. Throughout the school adults treat each other with respect. The school is open, friendly and welcoming. Communication between adults is open. The school functions well on a daily basis.

72. The governing body is effective. In the main it fulfils its statutory responsibilities well, although not all pupils attend assembly. A number of the governing body are relatively new to the role. They have participated in governor training and are developing a good understanding of the strengths of the school. They make effective use of comparative data to act as critical friend of the school. The budget is managed well and specific grants effectively used. The principles of best value are applied well. The headteacher and members of staff monitor the school's performance very well and this is reported to the governing body on a regular basis. Information from National Curriculum tests is used to compare the school's performance with other schools and also to inform how and what is being taught. Members of staff carry multiple subject management responsibilities. They monitor the work in subjects by scheduled examination of pupils' work and through monitoring of planning. Opportunities to monitor how subjects are taught are more limited. The headteacher teaches for approximately half the week. She monitors the quality of teaching in an informal manner by being about the school. She also monitors the work of teachers in a more formal way.

73. The governing body have taken a conscious decision to move from a three-year school development plan to a detailed one-year version because they felt that, given the number of national initiatives which re-ordered priorities, a more responsive plan was required. Whilst the headteacher has a very clear view of the educational direction of the school a review of this decision would be helpful in that it would help determine the school's priorities over the medium term. Given the small size of the school and the relatively small pool of energy available for development, ordering the priorities and establishing a trajectory for improvement within a timescale is important if sufficient time is to be allowed to enable improvements to become part of the school's working ethos. In addition the development plan requires a sharper focus on raising standards. Currently, indicators of successfully achieving a goal within the plan are not related directly to a rise in pupils' standards. Currently the focus is on the successful implementation of an initiative rather than assessing the impact of that initiative on what pupils do and achieve.

74. The accommodation is good and used well. At present the under fives lack a designated outdoor area. There is a good match of staff to the demands of the curriculum and support staff play an important role in pupils' very good attitudes and standards. Resources are good although there is an over-reliance on re-used materials for design and technology.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

75. In order to build on the many strengths of the school the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

1.
 - ensure that the school development plan has the raising of standards as its primary focus and
 - that indicators of success in achieving a specific goal relate directly to improvement in pupils' standards;
 - consider using a three-year plan; (paragraph 74)
2.
 - build on the existing pupil target system so that pupils are more aware of what they have to do in order to improve;
 - ensure that whole class review at the end of lessons is used effectively to reinforce this process; (paragraphs 37,57)
3.
 - develop pupils' speaking skills relating to formal presentation particularly in Key Stage 2; (paragraphs 7,102)
4.
 - review the provision for design and technology and music;
 - develop schemes of work in these two subjects which ensure a progressive acquisition of skills;
 - cross-reference the schemes of work in design and technology to the themes being studied so that work in design and technology is derived from the skills to be learnt rather than based on the content of the topic. (paragraphs 15,16,140,161)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 34 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 22 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 6 | 32 | 41 | 21 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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

Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | | 123 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | | 9 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | | 0 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | | 28 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 0 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 9 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 5 |

Attendance

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|---------------------------|-----|---------------------------|-----|
| | % | | % |
| School data | 5.0 | School data | 0.0 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 | National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 1999 | 9 | 11 | 20 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 8 | 8 | 7 |
| | Girls | 10 | 10 | 9 |
| | Total | 18 | 18 | 16 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 90 (89) | 90 (94) | 82 (87) |
| | National | 82 (80) | 83 (81) | 87 (84) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 8 | 6 | 8 |
| | Girls | 9 | 7 | 8 |
| | Total | 17 | 13 | 16 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 85 (88) | 65 (81) | 80 (76) |
| | National | 82 (81) | 86 (85) | 87 (86) |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 1999 | 10 | 6 | 16 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 9 | 6 | 9 |
| | Girls | 5 | 4 | 5 |
| | Total | 14 | 10 | 14 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 88 (75) | 63 (81) | 88 (100) |
| | National | 70 (65) | 69 (59) | 78 (69) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 5 | 6 | 8 |
| | Girls | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| | Total | 9 | 10 | 12 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 56 (75) | 63 (75) | 75 (88) |
| | National | 68 (65) | 69 (65) | 75 (72) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | |
| Black – African heritage | |
| Black – other | |
| Indian | |
| Pakistani | |
| Bangladeshi | |
| Chinese | |
| White | 106 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 5 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 30.8 |
| Average class size | 26.5 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 5.0 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 85 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

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

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Financial year | Mar 98 – Apr 99 |
|----------------|-----------------|

| | £ |
|--|--------|
| Total income | 212064 |
| Total expenditure | 210099 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1737 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 13425 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 15390 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 123 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 81 |

Percentage of responses in each category

May not always add to 100 percent due to rounding up

My child likes school.

My child is making good progress in school.

Behaviour in the school is good.

My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.

The teaching is good.

I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.

I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.

The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.

The school works closely with parents.

The school is well led and managed.

The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

| Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| 64 | 33 | 4 | | |
| 64 | 31 | 5 | | |
| 44 | 56 | | | |
| 43 | 42 | 12 | 3 | |
| 73 | 26 | 1 | | |
| 56 | 34 | 10 | | |
| 70 | 24 | 6 | | |
| 75 | 25 | | | |
| 56 | 36 | 9 | | |
| 62 | 37 | | | 1 |
| 60 | 40 | | | |
| 30 | 39 | 21 | | |

Other issues raised by parents

76. There were 18 parents at the parents' meeting. Comments were positive on all aspects of the agenda. Parents felt that high expectations are set and teachers are approachable. They felt it was a 'family school.'

77. There were concerns about the size of class 3 although parents recognised the very good support given by classroom assistants and voluntary helpers. Under any other business this concern was stressed. They felt that as a result of the growing popularity of the school 'the school is becoming a victim of its own success'. Parents at the meeting felt well informed about their children's progress and the quality of information provided. One or two parents felt there was insufficient homework whilst one or two felt too much was set. It was not clear from the parents' returns to the questionnaire what aspect of homework concerned them.

78. The inspection team fully support parents' very positive views of the school. The school effectively uses a range of strategies and additional members of staff to break down class sizes. There is very good teamwork in classes with classroom assistants and voluntary helpers. Teachers manage classes well and the overall quality of teaching is good. The homework seen being set during the inspection was appropriate and demanding and extended the learning opportunities which took place in the classroom. The school has creative approaches towards work carried out at home and the involvement of parents in their children's learning. Given the size of the school the range of extra curricular activities is good.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN UNDER FIVES

79. Provision for the education of children under five is very good and is a strength of the school. The appropriate statutory curriculum is in place and the quality of teaching is very good overall. The governing body has identified the need for an improved outside play area which includes fencing to secure the area and resources to provide a wider range of constructive, physical and imaginative play. This is to be in place for the start of the Autumn Term 2000 when the Early Learning Goals will be adopted and implemented.

80. At the time of the inspection eight children were under the age of five. These children are taught as part of a Reception and Year 1 Class. The teacher has high expectations and is especially successful in promoting children's literacy and numeracy skills, their personal and social skills and their physical development. Good procedures are in place for children and parents to visit prior to starting school. Children start school in the year in which they become five. For the first two weeks this is on a part-time basis to allow the children time to settle in to the class and school routines. A number of parents commented very positively that their children were happy and content and looked forward to school. The guidance the school gives to parents about early learning and the half-termly newsletters explaining the curriculum and class events is very good and ensures an effective and continuing partnership between home and school.

81. The quality of teaching is very good. The quality and range of learning opportunities is very good and they are planned around the key areas of learning through a range of well-organised activities. Opportunities are provided for children to learn through structured play and to develop their understanding of new concepts through practical experiences. Children's social and physical skills are effectively developed through these opportunities. The meticulous planning and clear communications with the classroom support staff is excellent. This characteristic extends throughout the school but is very evident in this class. Classroom assistants have a good understanding of their role. They work well with small groups, focusing questions on the activities, ensuring that learning takes place and recording their observations to inform the teacher of the progress made.

82. Assessment information gained from the Baseline Tests, taken soon after children start school, is used to identify the developmental stage of the child and screen for any learning difficulties. This information informs curriculum planning and determines how the teacher groups the children for the range of learning experiences. Good assessment procedures are used effectively to ensure that children make good progress. The curriculum is effectively planned ensuring that the areas of experience provide effective progression into the start of the National Curriculum. Attainment on entry is broadly average although there is some year-on-year variation. During their time in the Reception class the majority of children make very good progress in their learning. The experiences they receive while working and playing together in a purposeful learning environment ensure that the vast majority are performing in line with expectations. In some areas such as reading, writing, mathematics and creative development, many pupils are working above this level. Pupils' attitudes to learning are always very good. They are very enthusiastic, interact very well with each other and they concentrate on the task in hand and are very involved in activities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

Personal And Social Development

83. The classroom is well organised and attractive. The 'task board' encourages children to be independent and they are encouraged to choose from the tasks planned for them. Routines are clear and pupils know what to do and what is expected of them. An appropriate range of role-play and other learning experiences relevant to their stage of development provides children with the necessary social skills to enable them to form good relationships and to work co-operatively in small groups and independently. The children are very enthusiastic; they are happy in the secure and caring environment and develop confidence as a result.

84. The well-established rules for behaviour in the School Code of Conduct make a positive contribution to the very good behaviour of all the children. Children are particularly well behaved during registration, while getting changed for PE and when moving around the school. They are able to concentrate and persevere and take great care with their work. Children share and take turns in choosing a shape to print a repeated pattern in their mathematics work, working with a computer to extend their skills in matching numbers to ten and in taking on the role of the pet carer or shopper at the 'Pet Shop'. The teacher, classroom assistants and parent helpers use praise and encouragement to motivate the children. They provide effective support and encourage co-operation and engagement. Children are polite and show consideration to others. They listen well to one another in whole class discussions.

Language and Literacy.

85. Language and literacy skills are effectively developed. Attainment is always at least satisfactory and mostly good, above expectations for five year olds. Children listen attentively, they respond well to stories and a range of texts. Children talk about their learning experiences with considerable confidence. In the Pet Shop they use a wide range of appropriate vocabulary in their imaginative play to make up their own stories. Children read along with the teacher with increasing confidence, they know that print conveys meaning and the sounds that letters make and they use these skills effectively to read new words. They enjoy correcting 'Dougie the Dog' when he misreads a word they know and tell him why he is wrong! Many children read with expression especially where repeated patterns of language such as '*he pulled and pulled and pulled*' appear in the text. They have a love of books, handle them with care and enjoy talking about pictures and stories. Children make good progress in handwriting and in developing independence in writing simple sentences. Generally, there is correct orientation, words have finger spaces and some children are able to keep their writing on a line. There is some inconsistency in the size of letters.

Mathematics

86. Attainment in mathematics is above national expectations. Progress in learning is very good. The children develop good numeracy skills in counting and recognising numbers. They count on and back to 20 in ones and twos and count to 100 in tens. Children count reliably up to ten objects and match the numeral. They know how to use the keyboard on the computer to enter the numeral and use the menu to have another go. A good variety of practical activities, number rhymes and computer programs reinforce their learning. The majority of children use the vocabulary of addition and subtraction in practical activities and in discussions. Children are very confident with mathematical vocabulary, they name simple 2D shapes and they delight in describing the properties of a shape using number of sides and corners to the 'magic rabbit' who uses the child's description to try to find the shape in his top hat. They know how to use a tally chart to record the number of each 2D shape they have sorted according to these properties. Children talk about, recognise and recreate

simple patterns using a shape or letter. Effective teacher questioning in the whole class discussion prompts children to select their best pattern, describe the repeated pattern and talk about the movements of the shapes in half turns.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World.

87. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developed through a wide variety of activities and they make good progress in this area of learning. In the topic about 'Materials', children were able to use their senses to explore and recognise the differences and similarities in materials. An interactive display encourages the children to handle the materials found in their homes; they are able to sort them according to their uses and properties of texture and appearance. The topic on 'Living Animals' has provided opportunities for children to find out about and identify features of living things including the pet gerbil called 'Chewit', and a tank of tadpoles. A daily observation record is kept and children study and record the movements and growth of the tadpoles using a magnifying glass. Children made a book called 'This is me'. In it, they included information about the people and pets that live in their home. They drew pictures and included photographs of their family and home and events important to them. The children are able to use a computer with support to enter data to record the features about their house. They use a graphics software programme to draw their houses. The plans included opportunities to use the skills learned in this work to design an Easter Egg. The whole class recently 'went on a bear hunt' to explore the school local environment. The class made a large map of the route taken to explore the local features.

Physical Development.

88. Children have good physical co-ordination. They move confidently in physical education lessons with increasing control and co-ordination. They have an awareness of space and each other, which was seen when the children played 'stick in the mud' in the warm-up part of the lesson and in the ball games. The children display considerable agility and dexterity with small apparatus such as bats and balls. In gymnastics, children perform tasks confidently with good co-ordination of limbs and thought. They approach the activities in a sensible and mature way. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop fine co-ordination skills whilst working with a range of construction kits, sand equipment and other materials such as dough and plasticene.

Creative Development.

89. All children are making good progress in their ability to express ideas and feelings creatively through a wide range of experiences in art, craft, music and imaginative play. Attainment for the majority of children is above national expectations. In music, children learn to sing songs from memory, they recognise the patterns and match their movements and voices to the words in the songs, for example, 'frogs jump high'. They move spontaneously and appropriately to the rhythm and music on the 'jumpy bumpy' music tape, lifting their shoulders in time with the beat of the music. The children explore texture, shape, form and space in two and three dimensions. They enjoy learning new techniques when making models and pictures, such as using Modroc to make the characters in the display for 'Spike, the Bird who Couldn't Sing'. There is good use of a 'sketchbook' to record the techniques children are learning in art and the development of their artistic skills.

ENGLISH

90. The previous inspection found that overall attainment in English was above national standards in both key stages. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 now, based on classroom observation and scrutiny of work, is broadly in line with national expectation. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with national standards. In Year 5, there are examples of above average standards.

91. The school's results in the 1999 reading and writing national assessments for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 were above the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving higher levels in reading was above the national average and in writing well above. Overall, standards in reading and writing in the period 1996 – 1999 have been maintained and are consistently above average. Compared to similar schools, the 1999 results in reading were above average, and in writing well above.

92. The school's 1999 results in the national English tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 were well above national standards. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels in the tests was above the national average. Overall, taking the results in the period 1996 – 1999 together, the performance of boys was below the national average and the performance of girls was well above. The school has picked up on boys' achievement and in the 1999 tests, boys' performance in English exceeded the national average. Compared to similar schools the results in 1999, for all pupils, was above average.

93. Overall, there is good implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and pupils make good progress across the key stages in their reading and writing skills.

94. In the shared and guided reading sessions, pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in reading. They develop a good sight vocabulary and read simple texts accurately, applying phonic skills to work out unknown words. They use illustrations to explore and predict what is happening in the text and use their knowledge of word order to work out unknown words. Pupils know the differences between fiction and non-fiction texts and develop an enthusiasm and enjoyment of stories. Pupils in Year 2 can use dictionaries to locate words using the initial letter and have a good understanding of alphabetical order.

95. Pupils make good progress in their writing skills and at the end of the key stage the majority are developing consistency in the size of letters which are usually correctly orientated with words accurately spaced. Younger pupils know that the speech bubbles they use in their writing represent what people say. They are developing increasing confidence and independence in writing sentences and are becoming more accurate in using lower case letters appropriately. In Year 2, pupils can write labels and charts and compose short pieces of writing as part of their topic work. During the inspection there was limited evidence to make judgements on pupils' skills in composing more sustained pieces of narrative and non-narrative writing. There were few examples of extended independent writing and so judgements on standards of spelling at the end of the key stage were limited.

96. The majority of pupils in Key Stage 2 read with fluency and expression. Pupils with special educational needs are using their knowledge of letter blends and clusters to decode words and make good progress. In Key Stage 2, pupils are developing good reading comprehension skills. They use inference and deduction to determine the author's meaning and can refer back to the text to justify their views. Pupils can locate information in non-fiction texts, know book parts and are familiar with the Dewey system. They can use reference books including dictionaries and thesaurus.

97. Pupils in Key Stage 2 develop a good range of writing, which includes reviews, biographies, stories, fables, poems and newspaper reports. They use their writing and word processing skills across the curriculum, which widens further their writing range. Pupils make notes and draw up plans and diagrams. They produce concept maps and can compose persuasive non-narrative writing. Pupils can plan, draft, revise and amend their work making some authorial choices to achieve a particular writing style. This was achieved when pupils worked to compose a fable in a modern day setting. They use the appropriate range of punctuation within sentences and organise their work in paragraphs when appropriate. Pupils are developing a good knowledge of grammar and use grammatical terminology. Some pupils in Year 5 write vividly and are beginning to use complex sentence structures.

98. There are some weaknesses in handwriting in Key Stage 2 with a proportion of pupils not consistently joining their letters. Presentation of work is generally good but there is some inconsistency when decisions are made to use pens or pencils. A minority of pupils who write well are still making some surprising errors in regularly spelt words, such as 'father' ('farther') and 'wives' ('wifes').

99. In the 1999 teacher assessments for speaking and listening in Key Stage 1, teachers judged pupils' skills as very low in comparison with national standards. Standards of speaking and listening in Key Stage 1 are now good. Pupils take turns when they want to participate in discussions and ask and answer questions in role-play and in group and class discussions. They listen very attentively for sustained periods to stories and to teacher explanations. In small class groups, in guided reading sessions, young children give detailed explanations to predict and explain what is happening in a story.

100. At Key Stage 2, overall, pupils' speaking and listening skills are good. Pupils use a wide range of vocabulary. They can collaborate in small groups to share ideas and pupils assign each other roles to complete tasks set by the teacher. They use talk effectively to develop their thinking in subjects across the curriculum. Pupils listen well to the staff and, generally, to each other. They give lengthy and detailed explanations in whole class and group discussions. An area of weakness at the end of the key stage is the lack of ability for pupils to use presentational talk when speaking to the whole class group. At times, although pupils have interesting things to say, they do so in voices that are sometimes inaudible.

101. The quality of teaching for English is good. There is a higher proportion of good and very good teaching in Key Stage 2, but there is good teaching in both key stages and excellent teaching in the under fives. There is very good teamwork between the class teacher and the learning assistants. Adults use time well so that there is good support for pupils of different abilities and pupils make good progress. Planning is detailed so that all teachers and learning assistants have a clear teaching focus and pupils know the purpose of their learning activities. Pupils' progress in English is closely tracked and each year group has targets set for reading and writing with predictions made by teachers of end of year attainment. Regular feedback to pupils is given through marking. Teachers of older pupils comment on what pupils can do well and where they still need to improve. Pupils set their own targets for improvement after discussion with their teachers although sometimes these are very broad. Teachers regularly set homework as an extension to work done in lessons and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

102. In Key Stage 1, there is systematic teaching of phonic skills, sight vocabulary and word and sentence level work. Teachers are skilled at using demonstration and explanation so that all pupils are clear on the expected outcomes of their literacy tasks. The strategies and methods used for very young pupils, such as role-play in the literacy hour, have a very positive impact on learning and pupils make very good progress. At the end of this key stage, there is sometimes a limited range of objectives that address the word and sentence

level work with some lack of planned opportunities to develop the compositional aspects of writing across the three terms of the school year. This is a weakness in teaching provision for English that has been recognised by the school through its own monitoring processes.

103. The teaching of English in Key Stage 2 has many strengths. Spelling, writing and reading, including the teaching of higher order skills in reading comprehension, are taught well. Teaching of pupils in smaller class ability groups in Key Stage 2 has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. It ensures a good match so that individual needs are met, including those pupils with special educational needs and pupils who learn at a faster rate. Teachers' questions challenge pupils so that they develop and extend their thinking skills. Teacher expectation is high and pupils are consistently asked to give of their best. Pupils were urged, 'Don't be satisfied with the obvious choice of verbs and adjectives. Give your reader a picture.'

104. In Key Stage 2, pupils frequently participate in speaking and listening activities. However, learning objectives for these activities are not made explicit in teachers' plans, including the provision for pupils to speak in more formal ways to larger groups. There are some weaknesses in the teaching of handwriting and pupils need more targeted teaching so that pupils learn specific handwriting joins based on their individual needs.

105. Reading and writing are often taught through the use of extracts from a range of texts. During the inspection, scrutiny of work, classroom displays and book corners, provided little evidence of the promotion of literature as whole texts. Opportunities to foster a love of reading and the richness of literature, with books at its centre, are limited.

106. The effect of the leadership and management of English has a positive impact on pupil attainment and progress. The subject manager monitors medium term plans and, with the headteacher, has completed work trawls to assess standards and progress. The headteacher has analysed data information from standardised tests and end of key stage tests and discussed this information with the subject leader. The subject manager has led staff training modules in literacy and reviews the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy with staff on an ongoing basis and responds to information on what works well and where further changes are needed.

MATHEMATICS

107. Over the last three years the performance of pupils in mathematics has been close to the national average at Key Stage 1 and above the national average at Key Stage 2. The small cohort sizes means that there is considerable year-to-year variation.

108. In 1999, at the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above both in the test and in teacher assessment was below the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving level 3 or above was close to the national average in the test results and on the basis of teacher assessment, the percentage of pupils was above.

109. In Key Stage 1 all pupils are given a good foundation on which to build their mathematical knowledge. Standards by the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with national expectations.

110. By the end of the Key Stage 1, most pupils can suggest suitable units and equipment to estimate and measure length using centimetres and metres. They compare lengths using well thought through estimations. In the plenary session, pupils demonstrate good progress in their acquisition and knowledge of measuring skills and evidence indicates the majority of children are achieving Level 2 with a group working towards Level 3. Pupils are familiar with numbers and the number system, they have a sound understanding of place value in

numbers with two and three digits. They recognise, describe and extend number sequences including odd and even numbers and two digit multiples of 10. Pupils are developing good strategies in mental calculations. In the mental and oral starter, pupils are enthusiastic and are confident, they suggest numbers that are between two given numbers, double and halve numbers and can total two numbers in their heads. They can count on and back in ones, twos or tens from any two-digit number. They understand the operation of multiplication as repeated addition and are beginning to know by heart, facts for the two and ten multiplication tables. The pupils are confident in collecting data and recording their results in a block graph to compare their findings. Evidence in the pupils work books indicates the majority of pupils are attaining Level 2, but there is insufficient evidence of differentiated activities providing opportunities for pupils of higher ability to be achieving Level 3.

111. In the 1999 Key Stage 2 national tests, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above was below the national average, whereas the percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 was above the national average. The average national curriculum point was close to the national average for similar schools. When the average point score achieved by this group of pupils at Key Stage 1 is used to compare with schools achieving a similar average then the indications are that pupils made good overall progress.

112. When the results are considered over a four-year period pupils' performance in mathematics is above the national average. The performance of boys in mathematics is below the national average whilst for girls it is well above.

113. In Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. Most pupils in Year 6 add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers with growing confidence, involving a variety of numerical forms including fractions, percentages and decimals. More able pupils are confident to multiply three digit by two digit numbers, estimating and checking their answers. They solve whole number problems, recognise equivalent fractions, decimals and percentages and use their knowledge to calculate the probability of events happening including the chance of predicting the first three winners in a race. Most have a sound understanding of place value in numbers with up to five digits; some extend to decimals and can give the value of each digit. They solve addition, subtraction, multiplication and division problems mentally with growing assurance. For example, they can estimate and work out which is the correct answer to sums such as 327×5 ; $143+27+450$ and 19243 divide by 23. They are very confident with the mathematical language associated with probability, for example, 'certain', 'possible' and 'expected outcomes' when tossing a coin or working out the various combinations of wearing shirts and shorts together. Many understand that different outcomes may result from repeating a series of controlled activities. Pupils construct angles and calculate the circumference or area of a circle accurately. They confidently interpret graphs and diagrams correctly, including pie charts, and draw conclusions. Pupils are developing their strategies for working on mathematical problems using their acquired knowledge and skills. They explain their methods and justify answers with growing confidence.

114. The quality of teaching is good overall at both key stages.

115. The school is effective in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers prepare interesting, well-structured and sequenced lessons. Their own enthusiasm motivates pupils. The planning for the daily mathematics lesson is thorough. The school makes good use of the objectives listed in the Numeracy Framework to establish progression in pupils' learning and the methods of calculation that pupils are to be taught. Teachers are clear about the learning objectives although the mathematical skills and knowledge they are to learn is not always shared with the pupils, nor how long the tasks should take.

116. All teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding of mathematics, which ensures explanations are clear. The use of well-focused questions, and good teaching points, provide opportunities for teachers to check pupils' understanding of what is expected. Teachers are quick to recognise pupils' mistakes and use these as teaching points to correct any misunderstandings. In the main, marking provides effective feedback to pupils on what has been learned and guidance about how to improve their work. A high standard of work and behaviour is expected and lesson pace is good overall. Teachers use bright, colourful resources, often made by themselves, to help pupils learn. The use of digit cards in a mental starter encourages high participation, thinking time and opportunities for the teacher to appraise the pupils' responses. Praise and encouragement motivates pupils to do well.

117. The school has a good system of tracking the progress of individuals as they move throughout the school. There is a timetable to assess and annotate work in mathematics. Predictions for pupil attainment at the end of each Key Stage are informed by the outcomes of these twice-yearly assessments.

118. The school has started to set targets for individuals and involve pupils in discussion with their teachers, in the process of setting targets for themselves. These targets are not always informed by the assessment of annotated work however and targets are often too broad, for example, 'I need to improve my mathematics', or 'I need to improve my tables'. In only a few lessons, teachers remind children of their individual targets and provide feedback on the work including what can be improved and how. In the plenary session of lessons, more could be made of opportunities to encourage reflection on what progress individuals have made in the lesson and in their targets and how they might further improve. Teachers do not always use the plenary to highlight the key facts, ideas and vocabulary pupils have learned as well as the need to remember and identify what has been achieved in the lesson. Good use is made of homework to reinforce and build on concepts and skills learned in the lessons.

119. The statutory target for mathematics set and agreed with the local education authority for year 2000, has been reviewed and significantly increased in light of information from more recent teacher assessments. The target agreed for the 2001 is challenging but also reflects the ability of the pupils currently in Year 5. The class teacher tracks the progress of each individual using the non-statutory National Curriculum tests results from 1999 and the use of regular 'check up' tests and planned assessment tasks. Setting the children for mathematics once a week, means that lessons are planned to match the potential of the children and good progress is made in these lessons.

120. Pupils make good progress in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils work at a good pace, sustain interest and keep on task for very long sessions. The activities pupils get engaged in are appropriately matched to the intended learning objectives and on the whole, are suitably adapted to meet the learning needs of pupils within different ability groups. In some lessons, however, the expectations of the teachers do not ensure that the more able pupils are sufficiently challenged and this restricts their progress. In all lessons pupils spend some time consolidating and practising their numeracy skills but for some more capable children, the activities do not extend learning at the start of the lesson. Harder tasks are often prepared for children to do when they have finished. Consequently, the higher attaining pupils in some classes make slower progress than they could.

121. Teachers respond very well to the needs of pupils who have special educational needs. Very good use is made of classroom assistants and parent helpers who provide effective support. Overall, the progress of these pupils is good in relation to their prior attainment.

122. Pupils really enjoy mathematics and their behaviour in class is exemplary. For many pupils mathematics is a favourite subject. They show good concentration and respond with enthusiasm and interest to the teaching. They want to succeed. They have very positive attitudes to their learning; great care is taken over the presentation and layout of work. Pupils are good at listening to their teacher's instructions; many show confidence in answering questions and are articulate in discussions. Relationships throughout the school are very positive. In paired activities, pupils are very co-operative, they discuss work and they share ideas but work independently. In paired work, they suggest alternative strategies and are genuinely helpful to each other. During the inspection, there were good examples of pupils working collaboratively, for example, when discussing a range of solutions to a probability problem and when using the computer. The younger pupils particularly, are keen to share their work with adults. Transition to group work is good, effectively supported by well-briefed classroom assistants who are confident to support the teacher in the activities planned, including the warm-up session at the start of the lesson for a particular targeted group of pupils.

123. In the last inspection report, the school was encouraged to focus to a greater extent on using and applying mathematics and identify opportunities to develop numeracy in other subjects. In the scrutiny of workbooks, displays around the school and from discussions with the mathematics co-ordinator, there is a range of evidence which indicates good progress has been made in both of these areas. Overall, work in mathematics makes a satisfactory contribution to the development of literacy skills. Mathematical vocabulary is taught well. The use of information and communication technology to improve mathematical skills is very good. Particularly good is the use of the programmable robot 'Roamer'; data handling to analyse and interpret a range of data entered by the pupils in their topic work and practice in the quick recall of multiplication facts. Good links are also made with geography, history, design technology and physical education.

124. The mathematics co-ordinator provides effective leadership. There is a new mathematics policy. Her subject knowledge is extensive and she supports her colleagues with advice on planning, resources and through the provision of training. As a consequence, both staff and pupils are more confident and enthusiastic and levels of attainment are clearly rising.

125. The school action plan has identified that the teaching of mental strategies, the use of open questions and improving differentiation within the same task are areas that need further development. Some training has already been provided, including working with other schools in the 'cluster' and more is planned. There are plans for the co-ordinator to monitor mathematics lessons and conduct twice yearly 'worktrawls'. This should help the school focus on future areas in order to raise standards further in mathematics. There is still the need to provide more challenge through direct teaching and group tasks for the higher attaining pupils in some classes. This was also identified in the previous report.

SCIENCE

126. In 1999 the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 or above in science by the age of seven, according to the school's teacher assessment, was well below the national average. The percentage achieving Level 3 or above was very high in comparison with the national average. Standards in science by the age of seven are good.

127. Pupils know the life cycle of a frog and reflect on the human life cycle. They understand the conditions required to sustain the life of a frog. They talk with excitement about what they have seen in the school pond and record their observations in their drawings. Pupils understand the differences and similarities between a range of common materials and can describe how some materials are changed by processes such as heating or cooling. They good use of specific technical vocabulary using words such as 'opaque', 'flexible', 'malleable' and 'translucent'. They record their observations:

'Candles are made of wax. The wick is in the middle and is made of string. When the candle is lit the wax melts.'

Pupils are also able to record their experiments:

'We found out that the marble went through our maze. It hit the barrier and bounced back.'

128. Pupils are able to construct an electrical circuit in pairs and explain the reasons why the bulb might not light up 'if it was not wired up properly' or if 'the battery was flat', or 'the bulb not screwed in'. They are able to analyse diagrams and give explanations whether the circuit will operate or not.

129. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above and Level 5 and above was above the national average. Standards are well above the national average when averaged over four years. Girls' performance was slightly better than boys over the four year period though it was not clear from observation of lessons why this should be the case.

130. Standards in science by the age of eleven are good. Pupils demonstrate an increasing understanding of aspects of materials and can compare properties, for example, sand, cooking oil, milk and syrup. They understand the various situations when evaporation and condensation might take place. They carry out experiments on melting chocolate using information technology to record their results graphically. They use a microscope and record their observations:

'It stayed in the centre- there were little segments...'

Pupils plan investigations to find out, for example, 'whether the size of the canopy affects the speed that a parachute falls' or 'which liquid is the most mobile?' Pupils work in groups exploring 'up-thrust' and carry out experiments, recording their results and giving explanations of their findings. They write and speak in an appropriately scientific manner using key vocabulary such as 'mass', or 'viscous' precisely.

131. Pupils' attitudes to science throughout the school are good. They are often very good, particularly the older pupils. Young pupils are enthusiastic and excited by their observations of the tadpoles in the pond. Year 6 pupils work in mixed groups with interest and maturity showing high levels of co-operation and cooperative work. A key factor is the stimulating and progressive science experience that pupils have at the school which is grounded in practical and investigative work. Pupils enjoy science because they are interested and engaged by a range of activities which are progressively more challenging and stimulating be it designing a circuit, separating sand, rice and chick peas or deciding which soil has the better drainage. The activities are also carefully designed so that the pupils can achieve and gain a sense of success and achievement.

132. A key factor in the standards, pupils' attitudes and the generally good progress that pupils make is the consistent good and often very good teaching that takes place across the school. The science curriculum is well planned in detail. It is progressive so that scientific skills are developed and pupils given access to higher level skills over time. Lessons are planned well. There are clear and precise objectives and activities within them are carefully sequenced and resourced. The curriculum is also carefully matched to the abilities of the pupils, particularly with the older pupils. This is based on good assessment and knowledge of the pupils' ability within science. Marking is supportive, relates precisely to lessons objectives and provides a useful reminder to the teacher of what the pupil has achieved in order to develop the work to a higher level. For example:

'You made careful observations N. and have written up your conclusion well after a clear discussion why the water level rose.' (Year 6)

or

You made your circuit work and copied it carefully, well done.' (Year 2)

133. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well into activities and make good progress. Teachers have at least good subject knowledge and are able to enthuse about the work stimulating pupils' interest. A subject specialist teaches older pupils. Her knowledge is excellent and she is able to respond to pupils' ideas. Above all she challenges the pupils to think carefully, 'How can we stop the bits of soil going through the funnel?' 'Would it be a fair test if I jammed the soil in, packed it tight?' The teacher places appropriate high priority on oral work. Praise is used well and is targeted carefully. The teacher is very skilled at focussing on individual pupils, encouraging and developing their ideas and expression, fostering confidence and self esteem as well as scientific knowledge. In the course of the lesson, for example, pupils develop the skills to plan a specific investigation which takes into account the evidence to be collected. The pace of the lesson with older pupils is steady and deliberate to ensure that ideas are 'centred' well and are built upon carefully. Pupils show very good levels of perseverance and a productive work rate. Homework seen set for Year 6 was demanding and linked to the work for the National Curriculum tests.

134. The management of the subject contributes very effectively to the good standards. The co-ordinator monitors planning in the subject and offers advice to colleagues. Pupils' work is reviewed on a regular basis and points, which arise from this are discussed within the staff. The results of the National Curriculum tests are analysed and the information informs the teaching.

ART

135. Because of the school timetabling arrangements it was only possible to see one art lesson. Judgements about standards are made from a scrutiny of work and informal discussions with pupils. It was not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. Standards in art are broadly in line with expectations across the school and overall pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. There has been improvement of the 'Knowledge and Understanding of Art' aspect which was criticised in the previous report. The previous report also noted that much of the teaching focused on developing technique. A better balance has now been developed and pupils are given opportunities to make choices and assimilate ideas and their work on, for example, Picasso or Monet does not result in a slavish copying exercise.

136. Pupils by Year 6 have had a range of art experiences. Year 3 pupils paint their own self-portraits using a study of Picasso as a starting point. Year 4 pupils explore the use of acrylic paint and paint historical portraits. Year 6 pupils examine the characteristics of Impressionism and are able to give an explanation of the various techniques and contrast it with the work of Hiroshige and explain his approach with a watercolour medium. They use textiles well as part of their weaving work and experiment with art software programmes. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 include sharply observed drawings in their sketchbooks. Very young children know the names of colours and experiment mixing colours. Pupils have sketchbooks but their regular use is variable.

137. In the lesson observed pupils were focused, interested in the task and enjoyed the work. The quality of the teaching was good. The work was set up well and there was very good class control and very positive relationships which supported pupils' good attitudes. From scrutiny of the work it would seem that there is a greater focus on developing art skills in a progressive manner with very young pupils. In this class the sketch book seemed to be used on a more regular basis. In other classes the art work seemed to arise out of the theme being studied rather than developing out of a progressive scheme of skills. For example, there does not seem to be recursive opportunities to develop observational drawing skills.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

138. It was only possible to see one lesson of design and technology. Judgements are made on the basis of scrutiny of the work and informal discussion with pupils. It was not possible to make an overall judgement about teaching.

139. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with expectations and pupils make steady progress. On the basis of the limited evidence available current standards are below expectations at the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils make inconsistent progress. They do however experience a range of design and technological activities. The subject requires review in order that pupils gain a progressive development of design and technology skills. Currently design activities seem to emerge from the theme being studied rather than from the identification of what skills need to be taught. There is an over emphasis on the use of recycled 'junk' materials which limit the range of activities. The previous report noted that pupils long-term progress needs to be planned by a more 'systematic introduction to materials and techniques and materials and the incremental development of skills'. This still holds true.

140. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can make a simple design of a vehicle and use cardboard, balsa wood and wheels to construct it. They use tools such as a junior hacksaw effectively. They use construction toys for example experimenting with cogs. Very young children construct a 'fish house' or 'hamster house'. There is good work on bridges with older pupils and parents which explore using rolled newspaper the different types of bridge construction.

141. Pupils' attitudes are good. They show good concentration and perseverance, sticking with the task, even though in some cases it is difficult and time consuming, for example, in construction of a water-wheel. The quality of teaching is good. There is very effective teamwork with the classroom assistant. There are good relationships and both adults make good interventions, questioning the pupils, to maintain their focus. The teacher is knowledgeable and confident in the subject. The classroom is organised well and class management is good. The atmosphere is calm and there is appropriate attention given to health and safety issues. The teacher is also very observant and is able to question individual pupils about their work and approach to it at the whole class discussion at the end of the lesson.

142. At Key Stage 2 pupils have been engaged in developing masks and puppets, designing 'aliens' as part of their collaborative stories, developing textile and other type of collage and constructing tudor houses. Year 6 pupils created models to illustrate the various geographical features of rivers. Another group worked on weaving using the 'River' theme. Resources for the textile work are good and work from the High School was used as a stimulus. The work across the school reveals pupils' interest in the subject.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

143. Two geography lessons were observed in Key Stage 2 and a short history lesson observed in Key Stage 1. Pupils work was sampled, displays scrutinised, and discussions held with pupils at the end of each key stage. On the basis of this evidence, it is clear that pupils' learning develops steadily in geography and history as they move across the key stages. Pupils' achievements in both key stages are in line with national expectation and they make sound progress.

144. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are developing knowledge, skills and understanding of their own environment and the people who live there. They make maps indicating where their families live. Imaginary maps are made on the computer which represent their own surroundings of houses and gardens. Younger pupils use their first hand experiences of 'Going on a Bear Hunt', around the school grounds and to the church, to develop an understanding of the physical and human features in their own familiar surroundings. Older pupils extend these skills and develop an understanding of how places relate to each other and places and environments in the United Kingdom and overseas. In Years 3 and 4, pupils can use grid references to locate features on a simple map. They can read geographical symbols and use maps and plans to describe the differences and similarities between a town and a village. They are beginning to answer geographical questions such as 'What is this settlement like?' At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils study the rivers of the world. They develop further their skills in answering more complex geographical questions such as: 'What effect would a dam have if it was built here?' Pupils use their own observations from secondary sources of maps and photographs to suggest issues that need to be solved. They are beginning to recognise and describe how people can improve or damage the environment and are developing an awareness of the wider world. Pupils use control technology to support their learning in geography and this has a positive impact on progress.

145. In history, pupils in Key Stage 1 know the differences between past and present. They trace their family trees and in their topic work on 'wheels', describe the differences between old and new cars. Young pupils are developing factual knowledge of people and incidents in the past. They know that Guy Fawkes blew up the Houses of Parliament and that George Stephenson built the 'Rocket'. Older pupils make sound progress in their understanding of chronology and can set historical periods of Tudors, Victorians and Egyptians within a timeline. They know some important dates such as the start of the Tudor period and the date of the Battle of Bosworth. They have some factual knowledge of aspects of life in Tudor times and apply their word processing skills when writing the 'Tudor Times' newspaper.

146. The quality of teaching in geography lessons is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, planning is detailed and teachers construct well-sequenced activities that meet their learning intentions so that pupils make good progress in their lessons. In these tasks, there is provision for collaboration so that pupils can use and develop their own ideas. Teachers use questions well to encourage pupils to justify answers to geographical questions.

147. The provision for teaching history and geography is good. The two year topic cycle allocates a subject specific focus within each year and the detailed medium term plans provide a secure basis for teachers' plans that are linked to the appropriate programmes of study and level descriptors. A strength in provision is the use of the local environment, museums, theatre groups and visitors to bring these subjects to life for pupils.

148. The impact of the positive management of history and geography leads to consistency in the quality of teaching with pupils making sound progress. The subject manager attends cluster group meetings and keeps staff informed of current issues. She audits and orders resources to implement the teaching programme and has built up resources, in particular, to support the teaching programme for Years 5 and 6. She oversees medium-term plans and makes curriculum links between other subjects such as art and design and technology.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

149. Standards in Information Technology have been maintained since the last inspection. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. There is evidence of work at a higher level in both key stages. The majority of pupils are confident and competent users of information and communication technology and their basic skills are well-developed. Excellent use is made of the specialist teacher who teaches small groups from each class on a rota basis. The work is planned to continue back in the classrooms to extend pupils' skills, and to use and apply the knowledge of the applications learned in the group work in other situations. Pupils use appropriate technical vocabulary; they are inquisitive and pose questions to the teacher to further their own knowledge. They are well-motivated and enthusiastic learners. Very good relationships, trust and confidence ensure gains in learning are very good.

150. In Key Stage 1, pupils are introduced to a variety of language and mathematics programmes appropriate to their abilities. They learn to use the computer as a means of collecting, sorting and presenting information. All pupils have opportunities to use keyboard and mouse controls on computers. They gradually become familiar with cursor controls and the use of the click and drag mouse techniques. A good range of programs is employed which ensures pupils gain skills in communicating and handling information, control and modeling.

Young pupils can use computers to solve problems with numbers and paint pictures. Older pupils can use word processing programs, do simple design exercises and solve problems in adventure games. Pupils use a concept keyboard, talking books and program a 'Roamer' turtle to carry out a sequence of travel and turning movements. Pupils apply themselves well and do not waste their time at the computer. They are very co-operative when it is necessary to share computer facilities and freely help each other without prompting.

151. In Years 3 and 4, the teachers have high expectations of pupils' ability to co-operate well and work at a good pace, independently of the teacher. Their planning ensures that information and communication technology is used to support teaching and learning successfully in many other subjects such as English, mathematics, and geography. Teachers often supply additional learning resources such as maps, photographs and information sheets to give a different level to pupils' understanding. The pupils use the computers to collect information in different ways. They create a database about pupils' homes in the local area and they make graphs to show this information. The pupils use 'Roamer' commands to program the 'Roamer' to visit the town of Tamworth. They estimate distances and turns with increasing accuracy. The more able pupils apply knowledge and skills to create sequences of moves to make the 'Roamer' follow a whole route in one go. Attitudes to learning are very good. Pupils are clear about teacher expectations and their increasing confidence and competence helps to sustain a good pace to their learning.

152. In Years 5 and 6, pupils recognise the value of using computers to collect and analyse information in real life. They add information to a prepared data file, use a spreadsheet to enter information about average temperature and rainfall and use this information to make graphs. Pupils are confident to drop information into a word processing programme and reformat it to present the information for a specific purpose and audience. Pupils use digital cameras and are able to merge text and photographs. The pupils use a CD-Rom and the Internet to illustrate and find out information for their research projects. The school website is updated by pupils in this class. Pupils are very confident in their approach to computers, they are very keen to explain what they know and what they can do.

153. The teachers' planning is very detailed and meticulous. It is well focused on what pupils are intended to learn and the activities support these intentions well. Clear progression of skills and differentiated tasks, ensures that children make very good progress in their learning. The planning for information and communication technology clearly relates to other areas of learning such as the class topics, for example, settlements, families, wheels and rivers. Very good use of information and communication technology skills is evident in history, geography, literacy and mathematics work around the school. In the Reception/Year 1 class, pupils' enthusiasm and motivation to use information and communication technology skills helped them improve the speedy recognition and match of the numerals to sets of objects as they appeared on the screen. In Years 5 and 6, pupils learn about the journey of a river combining writing and pictures electronically, they use a talking atlas to retrieve information about climates and places in the world.

154. The quality of teaching of the specialist teacher is very good, often outstanding. Questions are skilfully used to provide links to previous work, consolidate ideas and to encourage the pupils to apply and extend their ideas. In a lesson with a group of Year 4 pupils, the teacher used questions to assess what pupils could remember from the previous lesson and in response explained how the lesson will provide opportunities for them to progress in the skills of locating, organising and interpreting information. Excellent subject knowledge is presented in such a way to capture children's interest and enthusiasm. The teacher taught the pupils key skills to extend knowledge of the 'Pinpoint' programme and their data handling skills, including reorganising and analysing information and comparing and contrasting results when presented in a pie chart, 3D bar graph or line graph. At the end of the lesson, pupils were considerably more competent in using a slide bar, shrinking

and enlarging the graphs, operating within two windows, comparing and contrasting the data and looking at the different ways the programme will show information. They were able to interpret the information and write a label explaining what information was shown in each graph. Most of the Year 4 pupils are working comfortably at Level 3 and some pupils are working towards Level 4 in data handling and in some aspects of communication, for example, familiarity with e-mail and the Internet. Planning indicates the progression of skills to be taught in order for higher attaining pupils to achieve this level by the end of the units.

155. Many pupils have access to information technology at home including the Internet. This access supports their learning well. For example, in the Reception and Year 1 class, parents have helped the children compile a book about themselves and the family. Some include photographs taken with a digital camera and word processed texts to introduce the family members. In Years 5 and 6, children have used CD ROMs and search engines on the Internet to research topics.

156. Pupils' work is constantly monitored and evaluated by the class teachers and the co-ordinator. The school has introduced a record keeping system which requires data about attainment in each area of five applications of information and communication technology to be collated. The system supports the tracking of pupil progress and informs future planning' in particular the level of difficulty of the tasks needed to extend information technology capability for each year group.

157. The leadership of this subject is very effective, the co-ordinator is visionary, very skilled and passionate about teaching and learning in information and communication technology. Her enthusiasm is highly infectious. The school policy, scheme of work and guidance materials are of a very high standard. A programme of training through the New Opportunities Fund is being planned and the development of resources through the National Grid for Learning is underway. All rooms have at least one computer and a printer and access to others and an impressive range of resources. The absence of a centralised suite of networked machines means that whole class teaching of the subject is limited. The existing accommodation does not allow for an information and communication technology suite. The school makes very good use of its resources. Teachers rely on demonstration and skill practice with small groups during the other focussed work in order to ensure all pupils have regular access to the programs to develop the use and application of knowledge and skills. Teachers organise the work of classroom assistants so that they all work well together to give pupils confidence in their use of information and communication technology. Classroom assistants and parent helpers are well briefed in all classes; their involvement in the staff in-service programme has enhanced their computer skills which they are putting to good use.

158. There is equal access for boys and girls, and pupils with special needs are given good access to information and communication technology facilities with sensitive adult support. Good individual help and guidance is provided and this encourages the pupils to apply themselves and develop the confidence to succeed.

MUSIC

159. Because of the school's timetabling arrangements it was possible to only see a small sample of music lessons. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with expectations. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have a planned musical experience but progress in developing musical skills is less assured.

160. Young children sing 'The Frog song' with enthusiasm and develop their skills during the lesson, preparing for Mother's Day assembly. Slightly older pupils listen attentively to the sounds of a steam train journey and sing a sequence of 'I wish I could, I think I can' as part of a sequence based on Thomas the Tank engine which links into the theme of wheels. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make steady progress.

161. Attitudes are good. Very young children are excited by the music lesson. They take pride in their performance and are confident to use their voices. They remember 'One Mother Hen' with great fondness when prompted by the appearance of the prop eggs. Older pupils show good attitudes to the lesson and behaviour is good.

162. The quality of teaching is overall good. It is sometimes very good and never less than satisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are enthusiastic about the subject. There is a good pace to the lesson and activities are varied and good links are established to other subjects such as finding Brazil on a globe. Relationships are very good. A visiting specialist music teacher teaches the older pupils in Key Stage 1.

163. Only one lesson was seen at Key Stage 2 with Year 3 and 4 pupils. The teacher had prepared the unit of work well to introduce the class to a range of music making activities. There is a planned two year rolling programme of work, carefully resourced, to ensure pupils do not meet the same material. There is good use of published and televised material. Pupils are engaged and involved in the activity and clearly show enjoyment. They gain an awareness of structure and improvisation and a repeating motif and can draw the pattern of the sound making. They work with a partner effectively and use percussion instruments to compose a sound sequence but the results are somewhat stereotypical 'the sound of running feet, take off, silence'

164. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher has an enthusiastic style. She has very good class control and manages the behaviour of the class well. Pupils' good attitudes are as a direct result of the teacher's clarity, enthusiasm and skill. She makes the session work and turns it into a challenging activity which broadens pupils' awareness of a range of musical experiences. It is less clear how pupils gain a progressive acquisition of musical skills over time.

165. The current music provision requires review. Whilst the time allocated to the visiting specialist is limited at the moment her work seems somewhat isolated, albeit that the content of the work links directly to the themes being studied. While acknowledging the work done in developing the current scheme a greater emphasis is required on developing pupils' musical skills at Key Stage 2.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

As a result of the timetable arrangements, in the week of inspection, it was only possible to observe three physical education lessons. Two lessons took place in the hall, both in Key Stage 2, one was dance, the other gymnastics. A third lesson in games at Key Stage 1 took place outside on the small playground. Evidence has therefore been gained from teachers' planning, the physical education policy and discussions with pupils and the teacher co-ordinating the subject.

166. Attainment throughout the school is satisfactory

167. The quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages. Planning is good with clear objectives, however, these are not always shared with the pupils and opportunities to reflect on the progress in the lesson are insufficiently planned, both in time allocation and in practice. Lessons are well sequenced, enabling skills to be taught, practised and improved. Teaching is challenging through well-focused, open-ended questioning and regular intervention to demonstrate new skills. Teachers model high expectations or use pupils to demonstrate the quality of movement required to the rest of the class, encouraging pupils to observe and suggest what could be improved and what was good about the movement. As well as highlighting strengths to the class, it has a most beneficial impact on pupils' self esteem.

168. Teachers enjoy good positive relationships with the pupils and lessons proceed at steady pace. Little time is wasted in changing into appropriate clothing and the pupils are enthusiastic and keen to get underway with the lesson. Teachers are careful to remind the pupils of safety aspects at the outset, and throughout there are high expectations of behaviour. Good warm-up exercises precede the main part of the lesson, raising the heart rate. Teachers do not always provide opportunities for pupils to be aware of the impact of the exercise on their bodies and consider the value of participation in physical activity to promote fitness.

169. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are good. They respond willingly to clear instruction and are generally well motivated in lessons. Behaviour is good in each lesson seen, though in the Year 5 and 6 class, a few boys lacked concentration and commitment to improving their movement sequence towards the latter part of the lesson and at times, the level of noise was far too high.

170. There is planned breadth and balance for children in each key stage which means pupils have access to a range of activities within which they make steady progress. Pupils are challenged to review their own performance, and comment on it. However, more time needs to be given in the lessons to improve the quality of the performance. Teachers need to provide more challenging tasks for older and more able pupils in the mixed-age classes in Key Stage 2. Insufficient differentiation, means that all children broadly attain the same level. There are some pupils who receive coaching outside of school in gymnastics or dance. Teachers are able to use these pupils to demonstrate the quality of movement and appropriate skills required in order to progress in gymnastics and dance.

171. Pupils in Key Stage 1 follow instructions appropriately and use space with increasing confidence. They are able to demonstrate good skills in sending and receiving a ball with control and accuracy using their hands and progressing to using a bat. Practice in bouncing and patting a large ball is differentiated for Year 1 and reception and the pupils respond well with good control, showing an awareness of using the available space effectively. Progress in the lesson for most pupils, including children with special educational needs is good. There was no plenary, which meant that pupils were not given the opportunity to reflect on the learning, identify what they had improved in, for example, in sending a ball to their partner through two markers over distance and getting more controlled with increasing accuracy. There was a lost opportunity to consider how their bodies felt during and after exercise, especially as the lesson was outside. The pupils were enthusiastic and throughout the lesson, they worked hard, persevered and demonstrated good co-operative skills and attitudes. For example in the warm-up, they understood the need to take turns to be the catchers and when carrying equipment they shared carrying the baskets with a partner.

172. In Key Stage 2, a gymnastics lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, focused on creating sequences on the floor and apparatus. The lesson was part of a sequence, in the lesson pupils were reminded of the teaching points from previous lessons and the learning intention which was to improve the quality of their own performance. Good prompts for improving

sequences of movements were put up as posters to remind children of the expectations. Large apparatus is put out very efficiently and safely. The teacher had prepared plans of how she wanted the apparatus laid out. Safety in the lesson was paramount, especially as space is very tight due to the large class size and 'large' children. In the lesson, pupils respond positively to instruction, show initiative and take responsibility. Pupils perform safely, alone and in pairs, they demonstrate improvements in sequencing movements at different levels and improve the synchronisation of their movements through practice and refining movements. Attainment is broadly in line with what might be expected from pupils at this age, there were a few examples of sequences, which required increasingly complex movements. The teacher fed back useful teaching points throughout, although the use of 'critical friends' to analyse and feedback on performance to peers could be developed further.

173. A dance session for pupils in Years 3 and 4, which was the final rehearsal prior to a class assembly, provided opportunities for pupils to express feelings, moods and ideas in response to poetry and music through imaginative and creative movement. During the lesson, pupils were shown how to improve co-ordination, control and balance. The pupils worked co-operatively and independently, their movements were expressive and imaginative. The teacher prompted the pupils to evaluate their performances suggesting ways of holding the movements, improving the pathways and use of space and wearing something, for example, a mask or piece of clothing so they could each be identified as a part of the 'funfair'. Due to time restrictions, pupils were not able to use the suggestions made to improve their performance in this lesson, however, the teacher was confident that they would remember the ideas for the final performance.

174. The school benefits from good facilities with a school hall, a playing field and hard surface area. There have been significant improvements in the facilities since the last inspection. The recent increase in class sizes in Key Stage 2 means that space is limited, especially in the hall. Teachers are aware of the safety issues and need to restrict movements particularly in gymnastics with large apparatus. The range of equipment and resources for the subject are good. Pupils are taught how to carry the equipment safely both inside and outside. They are also taught how to use the equipment safely and to be aware of other children around them. Swimming takes place at the local community pool for all pupils; more time is provided at Key Stage 2. The majority of pupils achieve 25 metres and make good progress.

175. There is effective leadership from a very knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. She provides ideas for lessons and guidance on the use of equipment. She currently monitors medium-term planning but has not had the chance to monitor teaching and learning in the subject. There is a co-ordinator's action plan, which is focused on improving the range of activities, resources, and planning to inform the quality of teaching. The school plans to adopt the QCA Scheme of Work to implement the Curriculum 2000, producing a curriculum map to meet the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes. The co-ordinator plans to introduce self-evaluation sheets for pupils to assess what they do well and identify what they need to work on in order to improve. She has identified the need for pupils to go to major events to watch sports at national level and to involve and invite good role models from a range of sporting activities, into school to demonstrate their skills and how they improve themselves, including keeping fit.

176. The subject is well organised, the school uses published schemes of work to inform the planning and the sport programme for games. There is a scheme of work for dance which includes the use of the radio programmes for dance and movement. Long-term plans indicate that all aspects of the subject are covered and the physical education programme includes gymnastics, dance, games and swimming for all, with opportunities for athletics and outdoor and adventurous activities at both key stages at appropriate levels. Aspects of

understanding fitness are linked with the science curriculum. Extra-curricular activities further extend the opportunities for older children to improve their skills and teamwork in football, netball, cross-country and rounders. Good links are made with the physical education department at the local High School. During the week of the inspection there was a netball match at a local school which pupils were very enthusiastic about. The recent successes of the school teams in tournaments and in local matches are celebrated in the assemblies.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

177. Pupils' attainment in both key stages is in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and they make sound progress.

178. At Key Stage 1, pupils know the names of the main Christian festivals and are developing an understanding of special religious and secular events and ways in which people from Christian and other faiths celebrate them. They can re-tell religious stories through drama and demonstrate, in their role-play, the ability to empathise with the feelings and experiences of others. Pupils make sound progress in their knowledge and understanding. In lessons on the story of Moses, pupils can explain what is meant by the 'Passover' and discuss how the Pharaoh responded to the plagues sent by God. Pupils are beginning to understand terminology such as 'unleavened bread' and can relate it to their own experiences of making bread.

179. At Key Stage 2, pupils are beginning to understand and make links between significant people in religious stories and relate them to their own knowledge of the world and what is good and bad. After reading the story of Noah, older pupils collaborated in small groups and shared their views on the good things and bad things that would arise from sending a flood. In the whole class discussion, the larger questions of life were considered, such as "Do people act better when threatened or is persuasion the best method?" Pupils drew on their own understanding of how people went to war to get their own way and then related it to their own motivation to act in particular ways.

180. The quality of teaching in both key stages is sound with good elements. Strengths in teaching include the quality of detailed planning which is linked to the Locally Agreed Syllabus, and the use of effective teaching strategies at both key stages. Strategies, such as the use of drama and pupil discussion and collaboration in small independent groups, encourage good pupil participation, with opportunities for pupils to use and develop their own ideas. An aspect of weakness in Key Stage 1 is the lack of time spent for pupils to reflect on the religious objectives of the lesson linked to the activities in order that the religious aspect of the lesson is made more explicit to pupils. In Key Stage 2, better provision is needed for pupils to develop their more formal skills in speaking to a whole class group in ways that encourages an audience to listen so that pupils' thoughtful contributions are used and built upon through further discussion.

181. The effect of the leadership and management of religious education has a positive impact on pupils' progress. The subject leader has overseen the detailed medium-term planning based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus and this provides a secure planning framework across the key stages. There are good resources to support the teaching programme and medium-term plans are monitored on a regular basis.