

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Bishop's Castle Primary School**  
Bishop's Castle

LEA area: Shropshire

Unique Reference Number: 123354

Headteacher: Mrs Ann Bayliss

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Reporting inspector: Mrs J Emberton 22823

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> November - 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707726

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant & Junior School
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Oak Meadow Bishop's Castle Shropshire SY9 5PA
Telephone number:	01588 638522
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Appropriate authority:	Shropshire Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Thomas Martin
Date of previous inspection:	April 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Mrs Joy Emberton Registered Inspector	Science Design and technology Music Religious education Special educational needs	Attainment and progress The management and efficiency of the school
Mr Graham Ellis Lay Inspector		Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Curriculum and assessment
Mr Terry Aldridge	Mathematics Information technology History Geography Physical education Equal opportunities	The efficiency of the school

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- Attainment in English, mathematics and science is above the level expected by the end of both key stages  
Progress is good across Key Stages 1 and 2  
Teaching is good in a high proportion of lessons  
Pupils' attitudes to work are very good. Behaviour is managed well and is good.  
Relationships in the school are strong and supportive  
Provision for the pupils' social development is very good
- The relevance of the curriculum in Key Stage 2 is very good
- The school has a very good ethos and development planning is detailed and monitored well

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Attainment in information technology is not high enough in both key stages
- II. The curriculum for children who are under five is not planned to take account of their differing needs and this affects the progress they make
- III. The accommodation does not provide an adequate library, room for pupils with special educational needs or an adequate outside play area for children under five and this affects considerably the delivery of the curriculum in these areas

Bishop's Castle School is a good school. It has many strengths which far outweigh the weaknesses above. These will form the basis of the governors' action plan which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

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

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection, and it is well placed to improve further. There were no key issues in the last inspection report, but the school identified some minor weakness and has implemented change successfully. The quality of teaching has improved, as has the behaviour of pupils. The curriculum for information technology has not kept pace with the demands of change. However, the school is now in a position with the new IT room to make rapid improvement.

### Standards in subjects

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

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

Children aged five, attain the level expected in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. In physical, creative and social and personal development most do not reach the levels expected. The table above does not take

account of

the number of pupils with statements of special educational needs who took the tests in 1999, and this affects the English results considerably. The majority of pupils, in both key stages attain standards above the level expected in English, mathematics and science. In religious education they attain average standards, and in IT they attain below the level expected.

• **Quality of teaching**

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

\* Indicates not enough teaching seen.

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

Teaching is good. In 94 per cent of lessons it is at least satisfactory, and in 72 per cent of lessons it is good or better. In 22 per cent of lessons it is very good, and in two lessons teaching was of an excellent quality. Very good teaching occurred in English, music, design and technology, science, art, mathematics and religious education. Unsatisfactory teaching occurred in a minority of lessons for children under five and Year 1 where planning is not suited to the children's needs.

## Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good. It has improved since the last inspection. Pupils are courteous and polite. They have very good attitudes and most take great pride in their work.
Attendance	Good. Above the national average.
Ethos*	Very good. Relationships are very good and the school acts as one large family with values that are shared by all. A commitment to raising standards is evident.
Leadership and management	Good. The headteacher is a very strong leader and influences the work of the school. The governing body is very supportive, though is less involved in monitoring the curriculum or teaching. Development planning is very good. The deputy and curriculum coordinators manage their areas of responsibility well.
Curriculum	Good in Key Stages 1 and 2, but unsatisfactory for children under five years old. Pupils of the same age in different classes at times have a different curriculum.
Pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with their peers, their strengths are valued and used by the school. Special educational needs provision lacks a suitable room for tuition.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good overall. Social development is very good and cultural and moral development is good. Spiritual development is satisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory overall. There are enough staff in school, and support staff make a strong contribution to learning. Resources are good, but the accommodation lacks adequate library space, outdoor play area for under-fives and a suitable room for pupils with special educational needs to be taught.
Value for money	Good: given the level of funding, the low level of attainment on entry, the good teaching and progress and above average standards attained by the majority of pupils.

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

## The parents' views of the school

### What most parents like about the school

IV. The school encourages more than just daily lessons

V. Parents are encouraged to take part in the life of the school

VI. The school is approachable when problems arise

VII. The school has positive attitudes and values

### What some parents are not happy about

VIII. Not enough information is given

IX. Parents would like a clearer

X. A few parents were unhappy about

The table above summarises the views of seven parents who attended the meeting for parents and an analysis of parents' responses on the 25 returned questionnaires. Most parents were very positive about the school. Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views and inspectors found no evidence



## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

The governing body, headteacher and staff should now:

- raise attainment in information technology by raising teachers' expertise through professional development; (*Paragraph 28*)
- improve the quality of the curriculum for children under five by ensuring that teachers use assessment effectively to plan a rich and stimulating environment more conducive to learning, and so improve the progress of children whatever their ability; (*Paragraph 38*)
- improve the accommodation so that an area for special educational needs is provided and that the library may be used efficiently by classes. (*Paragraph 74*)

In addition to the above, the following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- Improve the level of monitoring of teaching and learning by the governing body. (*Paragraph 83*).

## · INTRODUCTION

### · Characteristics of the school

1. Bishop's Castle School is situated in a small rural town in Shropshire, and serves the communities from the surrounding villages. The school has undergone a systematic programme of refurbishment to improve and extend the learning environment. Housing in the immediate and surrounding areas varies widely, and includes some privately owned, rented accommodation and nearby local authority housing.
  2. The school's population is predominantly white. Thirteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly average, and similar to the last inspection, although there is a high level of under-employment in the area.
  3. The school is situated in what is considered an area of rural deprivation and has an Area Learning Support Provision. Thirty-three per cent, a much higher than average percentage of pupils have SEN and eight pupils have statements of special educational need, which is higher than average, attend the school.
  4. There are 144 pupils, boys and girls, aged four to eleven, but this number rises as more children are admitted to the school each term. The local education authority's policy is to have three intakes per academic year and to admit children into the reception class in the term in which they are five years old. There are currently seven children aged under five in the reception class. Assessment indicates that attainment on entry to school, although varied, is below other children of the same age.
1. The school priorities are relevant to raising standards, they have been:
    - to continue to improve the standard of attainment for pupils. Any weaknesses in individual attainment are analysed carefully and targets for each class and individuals have been set, and any weakness in year groups receives extra support;
      - to enhance provision for Under 5s in school;
      - to introduce the numeracy strategy;
      - to improve the provision for information technology by increasing hardware and enabling staff development to take place;
      - to review the science curriculum, particularly the investigative and questioning aspects;
    - to continue to refurbish the premises.

## Key indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 1

1

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

Year 1999 (98) Boys 11 (10) Girls 11 (14) Total 22 (24)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	10 (7)	10 (7)	10 (7)
	Girls	11 (13)	11 (13)	11 (12)
	Total	21 (20)	21 (20)	21 (19)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	95 (83)	95 (83)	95 (79)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)
Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	10 (7)	10 (7)	11 (8)
	Girls	11 (13)	11 (13)	11 (14)
	Total	21 (20)	21 (20)	22 (22)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	95 (83)	95 (83)	100 (91)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

### Attainment at Key Stage 2

2

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

Year 1999 (98) Boys 14 (15) Girls 14 (12)

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	7 (6)	11 (11)	13 (9)
	Girls	12 (9)	11 (4)	14 (5)
	Total	19 (15)	22 (15)	27 (14)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	68 (56)	79 (56)	96 (52)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)
Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	7 (7)	10 (7)	9 (8)
	Girls	12 (8)	10 (6)	12 (7)
	Total	19 (16)	20 (13)	21 (15)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	68 (59)	71 (48)	75 (56)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

1 Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year  
2 Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

- **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed			%
through absence for the latest complete reporting year:	Authorised	School	5.4
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.1
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

- **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	1
	Permanent	0

- **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	22
	Satisfactory or better	94
	Less than satisfactory	6

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

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

#### **Attainment and progress**

1. Children's attainment on entry to the school is varied but, overall, is generally below that expected of other children of the same age. Children make satisfactory progress in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world and most attain, and a few exceed, average levels in these areas of learning by age five. In personal and social, creative and physical development, a few reach the recommended level for children of this age, but most do not as the curriculum is not suited to such young children and this affects the progress they make.

The results of the National Curriculum tests and assessments for pupils at the age of seven, in 1999, show that pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at Level 2 was well above average, and in science was very high compared to the national average and for similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was well above the national average in writing and science and was above in reading and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance at Level 3 in reading and science is above average, whilst in writing it was well above and in mathematics it was average.

2. Compared to national averages and to similar schools, the national test results in 1999 show that by the end of Key Stage 2, at Level 4, most pupils attain well above average standards in science, above average standards in mathematics and average standards in English. At the higher Level 5, compared to national standards and to similar schools' standards in science are well above average, whilst in English and mathematics performance is above average.
3. Over the last four years, the school has broadly maintained the levels of attainment in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1. There has been a very slight drop in the levels of attainment in mathematics. However, the 1999 test results show a rise in standards in all subjects. Boys have performed worse than girls in reading, writing and mathematics but the school has recognised this difficulty and has made appropriate arrangements to improve boys' performance. In Key Stage 2, standards in English, mathematics and science fell in 1998 but rose again in 1999, even though a significant proportion of pupils had special educational needs which affected the test results, especially in English. Boys' performance is again below that of girls' in 1998 but the gap has drawn closer in 1999.
4. The school analyses well the results of baseline assessment and of national tests and assessments by gender has begun to use the information well to set targets in order to further raise standards of attainment.
5. In the classroom attainment of the majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average national standards in English, mathematics and science. In English, most pupils, by the age of seven, have a wide vocabulary and speak clearly and listen attentively. In reading, most pupils read from a range of texts with increasing accuracy and expression. They use a range of strategies to help them read

unfamiliar words. In writing, most pupils use punctuation such as capitals, full stops, question and speech marks accurately, and write using a joined, legible script. Pupils develop their literacy skills well in most other subjects except information technology.

6. In mathematics, by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a sound grasp of number concepts. They calculate numbers to 100 easily and recognise two- and three-dimensional shapes. By age eleven, they add and subtract numbers using thousands, decimal fractions and symmetry. In science in Key Stage 1, pupils classify foods, know which foods constitute a healthy diet and understand the forces of pushing and pulling. By Year 6, they accurately describe which foods are needed by the body to sustain a healthy life and understand some of the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol. Presentation skills are tidy in all subjects.
7. Pupils make good progress in both key stages in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, art and music. They make satisfactory progress in geography and religious education and unsatisfactory progress in information technology in both key stages. In Key Stage 1, in history pupils make satisfactory progress and in Key Stage 2, they make good progress.
8. In information and communications technology attainment is below national expectations by the end of both key stages and pupils do not make the progress that they should. This is due to, until recently, equipment being outdated and pupils not being taught sufficiently or equipment used adequately to support learning in other subjects of the curriculum. With the introduction of the new computer suite, standards have begun to rise.
9. In religious education, pupils by the end of both key stages, make satisfactory progress in relation to the targets identified by the locally agreed syllabus and most reach the required standard of attainment. By the age of seven, most pupils understand about special times and places. They are familiar with the stories of Christmas and Easter and are aware of festivals from other faiths such as Divali. By age eleven, pupils understand how different religions impact upon peoples' lives and the festivals celebrated by different religious faiths.
10. Pupils with below or above average attainment and those with special educational needs make good progress across the whole school, as work is set which suits their different intellectual needs.

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

11. Children under five soon learn the school rules and participate satisfactorily in routines such as assembly, lunchtimes and playtimes. Their behaviour is good and most dress and undress independently, however several children find it difficult to concentrate and become bored and restless during long lessons times.
12. Pupils in both key stages have very positive attitudes to their studies, the school and to each other and this is a significant strength of the school. Pupils' motivation is very good and they sustain interest in their work, maintaining enthusiasm and dedication. Pupils with special educational needs are well motivated and enjoy their work. The listening skills of the majority of pupils are good and they are attentive in all learning environments, including assemblies. Pupils take pride in their work and

their own learning and take care to present their work well. They have a high respect for their own property, the property of others and the environment of the school.

13. Pupils' behaviour is good; both in lessons and as they move around the school. They provide a welcoming, friendly approach to visitors and are eager to offer assistance. There are high expectations of behaviour that are clear and supported by all staff. Sensible and agreed rules are displayed in classes and pupils respect these. In the playground, pupils mostly respond well to each other and use the dining hall and other areas in a well-ordered manner. Pupils are courteous, polite and trustworthy, as demonstrated when two pupils were allowed to practice their musical instruments unsupervised. Parents are pleased by the behaviour of the pupils.
14. Relationships in the school are very good and this is another significant strength. Pupils play and work happily together and the interaction with members of staff is warm and supportive. Pupils and staff treat each other with mutual respect. Incidents of bullying are rare and children clearly feel comfortable and enjoy their time in school free from tensions.
15. The personal development of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good. Most pupils acquire positive values and a personal moral code for behaviour. They participate effectively in the life of the school. For example, pupils from each class serve on the school council and their recommendations for improvement to the playground have been used to good effect. Pupils respond well in completing helpful tasks they are given and as they go through the school they confidently take on extra responsibilities. The pupils learn to co-operate well with each other and are happily engaged in all activities both at work and play.
16. The high standards of attitudes and behaviour are a strong reflection of the ethos of the school.

22. **Attendance**

17. Attendance is good and is better than the national average. There is negligible unauthorised absence. There are no major attendance problems. A consistent time for the closure of registers is maintained. Pupils are generally punctual in their attendance enabling lessons to start on time. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

23. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

23. **Teaching**

The quality of teaching is good, overall, and this contributes strongly to the high standards attained by the majority of pupils. This has improved since the last inspection. In 94 per cent of lessons teaching is at least satisfactory or better. In 72 per cent of lessons teaching is good or better and in 22 per cent of lessons teaching is very good. Very good or excellent teaching occurred in English, music, design and technology, science, art, mathematics and religious education. In a small proportion of lessons teaching is unsatisfactory. These occurred in the teaching of children

under five and Year 1, where the very wide spread of ability and ages puts a high demand on the teachers. There is a higher proportion of good teaching in Key Stage 2 than in the rest of the school, because work is better planned to suit the needs of the different abilities within the class.

18. The teaching of children who are under five is satisfactory overall, but ranges from good in literacy and numeracy to unsatisfactory in physical and creative development. There are weaknesses in understanding and planning to meet the needs of these young children and to develop their independent learning skills. Often teaching is over directed and this affects the progress the children make as they are not given the opportunity to learn through investigative learning. Planning does not follow the recommended areas of learning for children under five but is based upon the National Curriculum and this is not appropriate for the younger children. Lessons are at times too long for the youngest children to sustain concentration
19. In Key Stage 1, teaching is good in 67 per cent of lessons, and very good in 17 per cent of lessons. Where teaching and planning did not meet the needs of all pupils within the class in a minority of lessons, the teaching is unsatisfactory. In these lessons too long is spent on introductory activities which reduces the amount of time available for practical activities and which in turn reduces the amount of time towards the end of the lesson when learning is consolidated. This causes the rate of pupils' progress to fall away. In a few lessons, teachers do not set sufficiently challenging activities for pupils of different ages.
20. In Key Stage 2, teaching is never less than satisfactory, it is very good in 29 per cent of lessons and good in 86 per cent of lessons. Occasionally, in music, teaching is excellent. Where teaching is very good, teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can do and very good subject knowledge, which they use well to support pupils' progress. Good teaching is characterised by lessons which have a good pace and where pupils are encouraged to work with speed and thoroughness. When this happens, for example in literacy and music, in the upper part of Key Stage 2, it has a beneficial effect upon the rate of pupils' progress. In addition, where good teaching takes place, teachers have a very clear view of all the pupils' learning objectives and work is set which meets the specific needs of all the pupils.
21. Teachers' own knowledge of the full range of the curriculum subjects is generally secure, but is better in Key Stage 2 than in the rest of the school. However, there are weaknesses in some teachers' understanding of information technology in both key stages. Teachers are keenly aware of the needs of those pupils with special educational needs and support them well. They work well with special needs teachers and support staff and manage their time very effectively. Teachers often have high expectations of what pupils can do and they generally use time and resources well, especially in literacy and numeracy lessons.
22. Lesson planning is good and consistent across the school. Teachers have a clear view of what is to be learnt during lessons and how the activity will develop. In the best lessons, teachers' planning ensures that pupils of differing ages and levels of attainment have work that is suitable for them. A particular strength is the way that teachers emphasise key areas of literacy and numeracy in lessons and the use of appropriate technical language. For example, in science lessons pupils are often asked to explain their reasoning when solving a problem or planning an experiment



and are encouraged to use the correct terminology.

23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils are taught in small groups and individually. Sometimes they are withdrawn to the library in accordance with individual education plans. As well as good teaching of specific strategies to improve skills, emphasis is appropriately placed on increasing confidence and self-esteem. Pupils are involved in setting and reviewing their own targets. Pupils with statements are well supported with specific teaching and with support assistants in class.
24. Teachers' management of pupils is good. Their methods and organisation of lessons are often dictated by the design of the building. In most lessons, teachers effectively divide lessons into three distinct elements of introduction, pupils' activity and conclusion. Teachers' day-to-day assessment of pupils' progress is often good and consistent across the school. Information gained from assessment is used well to support future learning, particularly in Key Stage 2. This information helps to ensure that pupils are provided with suitable work and that they make appropriate progress. Marking is good, generally up-to-date and often helps pupils to improve their work.
25. Homework is used effectively and has a beneficial effect on pupils' progress. The school has recently reviewed the system whereby pupils have homework. As pupils move through the school, the quantity of homework increases so that pupils are prepared for their next secondary education. Most parents' comments were generally complimentary about the procedures for homework adopted by the school and felt that homework helps develop pupils' research skills. A small proportion of parents felt that pupils should not receive homework since their children had been at school all day, but inspectors do not agree with this view.
32. **The curriculum and assessment**
26. There is a programme of activities for children under five which includes the recommended areas of learning. However, planning is based on National Curriculum requirements and this is not appropriate for the younger children as it limits the progress that some children make. In addition, learning objectives are not sufficiently clear and activities are not always appropriately matched to the children's needs. There is limited provision for outdoor play and this provides insufficient opportunities for challenging children's physical skills and lacks stimulating visual resources to promote creativity.
27. Curriculum provision for pupils in both key stages is satisfactory. The curriculum includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education, sex education and drugs awareness, and meets statutory requirements except in information technology. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. Taught time is above that recommended at Key Stage 1 and in line at Key Stage 2. The school has made sensible adjustments to allow for the present increased emphasis on literacy and numeracy whilst enabling each subject, except for information technology, to receive sufficient curriculum time in order to maintain breadth and balance.
28. Planning of the curriculum is good and ensures all areas of the National Curriculum

are covered. There is a sound long-term overview which gives satisfactory continuity across both key stages and successfully supports medium-term planning. Policies are in place for all subjects and there are useful schemes of work in place for most subjects. All staff are involved in the planning process and good long-, medium- and short-term plans are in place for all subjects based on a yearly planning cycle, except for history, geography, science and information technology which are based on a two-year cycle at Key Stage 1 and four-year cycle at Key Stage 2. Learning objectives and match of work to pupils' attainment are clearly identified.

29. The curriculum effectively promotes the pupils' personal, social, moral and physical development. Provision for homework across the school is unsatisfactory as there is an inconsistent approach throughout both key stages. Where it is supported by parents, it enhances the pupils' education still further.
30. There is a sound range of local visits and visitors to further extend the curriculum. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good and a strength of the school. These activities are open to both boys and girls and are well supported. A residential visit is provided for older pupils to participate in adventurous activities and develop personal and social skills.
31. Provision for equal opportunities at the school is satisfactory at Key Stage 2 but unsatisfactory for the under-fives and at Key Stage 1 as younger Year 2 pupils do not receive the same curriculum as the older Year 2 pupils, who receive a Key Stage 2 curriculum, and this impacts on the progress they make. Support staff work well with special educational needs pupils to allow them access to the full curriculum.
32. Overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and most make good progress. The school's procedures meet the guidelines of the Code of Practice. There is efficient early identification of pupils with special educational needs using assessment materials, teachers' referrals and parental concerns. Good records of pupils' progress and tasks are kept by the special needs co-ordinator. Individual education plans are sufficiently detailed and focused. Copies are kept by class teachers and are used effectively to plan work. Reviews are held termly or earlier, if the need arises and this is satisfactory.
33. The school's system for assessing and recording pupils' attainment in National Curriculum subjects, although lacking a consistent approach in most subjects, is satisfactory and currently under review with the introduction of the revised curriculum. Assessments for reading take place regularly and the results are used to identify pupils with special needs and lower achievement. These along with the results of other tests have been used effectively during the past two years to track pupil progress. The use of assessment information to inform pupils' learning on a day-to-day basis is unsatisfactory for children who are under five but good in both key stages.
34. Pupils' work is marked on a regular basis, although marking doesn't always set targets for the pupils to improve the quality of their work. Parents receive an annual progress report, which gives satisfactory details of progress in National Curriculum subjects and meets national requirements in most subjects, except in design and technology and information technology which are combined.
35. Since the last inspection there have been good developments in curriculum

monitoring and planning. Assessment procedures have been improved with the introduction and use of non-statutory tests in Key Stage 2. Pupil tracking and target setting has also been successfully introduced to monitor pupil progress and set targets.

#### **42. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

36. The provision that the school makes for the pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Provision for moral and cultural development is good. The provision for social development is very good.

37. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development. The school has a Christian ethos and assemblies mostly provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to reflect on their Christian faith as well as the needs of others. The school meets fully the requirements for collective worship. Leaders of local churches visit the school and pupils frequently visit the local churches in return and this supports their spiritual development. Pupils are appropriately encouraged to have a sense of wonder in the world, as for example when pupils expressed surprise and wonder when examining historical artefacts. Religious education makes a satisfactory contribution to spiritual development through its study of different faiths and festivals.

38. The provision for pupils' moral development is good and is a strength of the school. Moral development is strongly promoted through the caring ethos that is built upon respect for each other. The school and class rules supported by the effective use of badges and stickers to reward good behaviour, is adhered to consistently by all staff.

39. Behaviour contacts between school and parents effectively enhance the consistency of rules of behaviour. Stories and discussions promote moral values effectively so that from an early age pupils have a clear understanding of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and they are able to distinguish right from wrong. As good behaviour is built upon praise and reward, rather than sanction, pupils' self esteem is high. All staff in the school provide good role models, fostering positive values such as fairness, honesty and respect.

40. The school provides very well for pupils' moral development and this is a considerable strength of the school. Teachers demonstrate clearly a respect for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, and take every opportunity to encourage them towards a positive self-image. There are many instances where pupils are encouraged to work together towards a common aim. For example, pupils are elected to serve on the school council and their agreed recommendations are acted upon. All pupils are encouraged to take on responsibility that increases as they go through the school. For example, older pupils have been trained to become school librarians. Participating in the many extra-curricular activities is effective in developing the pupils' social skills and building confidence in relationships. Pupils' sense of citizenship and awareness of the wider community is greatly enriched by their frequent participation in local events. They learn to show concern for others less fortunate for themselves by launching many fund-raising events. Pupils are encouraged to use their own initiative wherever possible, as when a group of pupils sold cakes they had baked to raise money for people in Kosovo.

41. The provision for cultural development is good and is another strength of the school.

Pupils develop a good understanding of their own culture and heritage through subjects such as art and history, when they visit local places of interest and welcome visitors to the school. The school successfully plans for pupils to have opportunities through the curriculum to learn about other cultures, their religious practices and their way of life. For example, in music, pupils were learning to listen to and appreciate rhythms and music from around the world. As a result of the planned provision, pupils are developing a good awareness of the richness and diversity of other cultures.

42. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development has been maintained since the time of the last inspection. The provision for social development has been improved.

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

43. The school is a caring community and overall makes satisfactory provision for pupils' support, guidance and welfare. There is good pastoral care and pupil welfare. This is provided collectively by the headteacher and class teachers. There are satisfactory procedures for promoting attendance. The good procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour and the good provision for pupils with special educational needs are strengths.

44. There is good, comprehensive pastoral care provided by all staff who have good knowledge of individual pupils. Within a caring environment they provide good support which is acknowledged and valued by parents. Some parents have been concerned with the arrangements for the induction of new pupils, but these have recently improved and are now satisfactory. There is good liaison with the local play-group and nursery. There are good transfer arrangements to the secondary school and pupils are prepared well for the next stage of education.

45. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. They are supported well in all areas of the school. External agencies are used well and regularly to the benefit of the pupils. The school provides good support and guidance which assist pupils' progress and their confidence.

46. The school has a well-structured approach to behaviour and discipline. There is good monitoring of behaviour with good supporting procedures which are conscientiously applied by all staff. Good behaviour is well promoted and rewarded; for example the system of report books. The staff provide excellent role models and the school's successful approach to discipline is demonstrated by the generally good behaviour of pupils in and around the school.

47. Attendance is satisfactorily monitored with effective supporting procedures. There is good liaison with the education welfare service. Overall there is satisfactory monitoring of academic progress. Monitoring in individual year groups is good, particularly in English, mathematics and science, but there is a general lack of coordination across the whole school. Monitoring of information technology is unsatisfactory. Monitoring of the progress of pupils under five is unsatisfactory as work is at times not suited to the younger children. Monitoring of the progress of pupils with special educational needs is very good.

48. There is good monitoring of personal development. The school's pastoral arrangements provided by class teachers are good. Pupils are provided with opportunities to exercise responsibility. For example, older pupils helping in the library, helping young pupils at break and lunch times and organising their own bring and buy stall for the Blue Peter appeal. The recently established School Council involves pupils from all year groups and helps to enhance their self-confidence and social skills.
49. Previously, bullying has been a problem and the school has successfully raised awareness of it. It is now well understood by pupils within the supportive environment. The school has effective arrangements for dealing with it and individual incidents are rigorously investigated and effectively resolved. No oppressive behaviour or bullying was observed during the inspection.
50. The school has a good, comprehensive child protection policy of its own with good supporting procedures. There is a designated staff coordinator who has been appropriately trained. All staff are aware of the appropriate procedures to be followed and there is good liaison with external agencies.
51. Generally, the school maintains a healthy and safe environment and has adopted a good health and safety policy. Appropriate risk assessments are carried out.
52. There are good arrangements for the care of pupils who are taken ill at school with a number of members of staff fully qualified in first aid to carry out systematic procedures. There is an appropriately maintained accident book. The arrangements for the supervision of pupils at break times and lunch periods are good.

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

53. The school values its partnership with parents and has good relationships with them. Communication between the two is good. There is satisfactory involvement of parents in the school and the education of their children. There are good links with the wider community. Overall, the school's partnership with parents and the community is a strength.
54. The school communicates with parents on a frequent basis. Overall, the quality of information is good. Letters are sent to parents at least weekly. These are augmented each term with a booklet which sets out attractive information on what the pupils have been doing. The readable school prospectus is good, but does not contain all the information required on special educational needs. The annual report from the governors to parents is generally informative. The school has recently undertaken a survey of parents' views by a questionnaire, the results of which were generally positive. The school has used these results appropriately to make further improvements.
55. Some parents wish to have more information about the provision curriculum. Though some information is included in the prospectus and the termly booklet, curriculum-related information is fragmented. However, there are three opportunities for formal consultation during the year. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss academic and personal development targets at the spring-term meeting. These targets are then reviewed at the summer-term meeting which is very well supported by parents. The school also arranges curricular-related meetings for parents, for example on literacy. There have also been courses on basic literacy to improve parents' skills in helping their children.
56. The annual reports to parents are satisfactory. They provide information on all subjects except that design and technology and information technology are not reported on separately. The reports include descriptive information on the subjects covered during the year, but do not always state what pupils know, understand and can do. They do not generally include indications of further development required.
57. There is good communication with parents of pupils with special educational needs who are kept informed of annual reviews and about the stage on the Code of Practice SEN Register at which their child should be placed. They are invited to attend and participate in meetings with school staff and outside agencies.
58. Some parents expressed concerns in the questionnaires about homework. Although there are systematic arrangements in individual classes, the practical application of the homework policy on a whole-school basis may not have been fully explained to parents. The school has an open approach to parents and staff are readily accessible. The school receives good support from parents, who in turn feel that they are welcomed in the school. Parents are encouraged to assist in the school and a number do so, for example with activities such as assisting with reading and art. Parents give good support to school activities. There is regular and effective fundraising providing valuable support to the school for the purchase of equipment. The school's good links with the community are a strength. There are good links with the local churches and ministers regularly visit to take assemblies. Effective use is made of the immediate local environment and community, for example with history

and geography project work. Visits which widen pupils' perspectives are used as learning resources linked to curriculum topics, for example Chester in connection with the Romans. Older pupils visit Arthog Residential Centre. There are good links with local businesses, the police, old people's homes and the health service. The link with the Chamber of Commerce has resulted in sponsorship for the school newspaper prepared by older pupils. The school regularly supports charities, such as NSPCC and Help the Aged. There are also regular visitors, for example a Caribbean dance group, an environmental artist and a 'Roman legionary'.

## 65. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

### 65. Leadership and management

59. The headteacher and governing body provide strong and effective leadership, and this is a strength. The headteacher is a visionary leader and strongly influences the life of the school. She works closely with the governing body which is well informed, supportive and committed to raising standards. The governing body and the senior management team support and guide staff and pupils well, although the governing body is less involved with monitoring the standards of teaching and learning. The school has a very positive ethos, which is nurtured by the headteacher and governing body and there is a commitment to achieving high standards of learning for all pupils throughout the school. The school's aims, values and policies are fully reflected in its work. The governors are confident in the staff of the school, and this confidence is shared by parents, who are encouraged to become involved and who find the management approachable. The development plan is very comprehensive, detailed, realistic and forward-looking and links well to the school budget and shows how the school measures its success.
60. Since the last inspection report, the school has maintained its very good ethos. The high standards of attainment have improved or have been maintained, though there is still work to be done to raise attainment in information technology further. The quality of teaching has improved, and is particularly evident in using teachers' expertise, particularly at the upper part of Key Stage 2.
61. The headteacher, senior management team and co-ordinators monitor teaching and the quality of the curriculum very well. This is particularly strong where the new strategies for literacy and numeracy have been introduced. Weaknesses in the curriculum for children under five have been identified, as have the limitations of library facilities and the impact this has on attainment. Finances and the school development plan are monitored closely through the governing body, both are evaluated and reviewed regularly. Priorities are altered as the needs of the school change and this is a strength.
62. The special educational needs co-ordinators manage this area well. There is good support from the designated governor for special educational needs who has undergone relevant training. Special educational needs support staff are organised well and systems are effective, and the staff work very hard to accommodate this area within the restricted space.
63. There is a strong commitment to achieving equal opportunities for all pupils and,

apart from in the reception where the younger children do not receive a curriculum relevant to their needs, and in Year 2 where some pupils do not receive the same curricular opportunity as their peers, this is achieved and the curriculum meets the pupils' needs.

64. The governing body meets in full its statutory obligations, except that the information technology curriculum is not fully taught and information regarding disabled pupils is limited in the annual report.

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

65. The school is well staffed and there are sufficiently qualified and experienced teachers to effectively teach the National Curriculum. This was the case at the previous inspection. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of all subjects of the curriculum, apart from information technology and the curriculum for children under five. In these two areas, the lack of understanding of some teachers is affecting progress. There are ample support staff who, although lacking in specific qualifications, are very experienced and offer most effective support. They work closely with teachers and contribute directly to pupils' progress. The administrative and caretaking staff and mealtime assistants are dedicated and industrious and play a significant part in pupils' welfare and personal development.

66. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are unsatisfactory overall because the formal appraisal system does not meet statutory requirements. However, informal appraisal is effectively linked to regular reviews of job descriptions which inform the work of all staff. Arrangements for staff development are good and are linked both with the needs of the school development plan and, in so far as financial constraints will allow, with the individual needs of teachers. There is evidence that staff development has been effective in raising levels of attainment in the school. For example, staff have recently been involved in literacy training and as a result pupils are beginning to make good progress in the subject.

67. The school is accommodated in a well-maintained main building and has the use of a demountable classroom. As stated in the previous inspection, the general environment is welcoming, stimulating and respected by staff and pupils alike. Art displays effectively enrich the learning environment. Externally, pupils enjoy good facilities. The hard-play area, adventure playground and large playing field provide well for vigorous play and for opportunities for sitting quietly with friends. Recently, the school has initiated improvements to enhance the hard play area, resulting in improved behaviour in the playground. Internally, there is a large hall and classrooms of a reasonable size for the effective delivery of the curriculum. The school has recently converted a room to a computer suite and this is beginning to have a positive effect on progress in information technology. However, the library is too small for a class to use it effectively, the school is aware of this however, and that this is beginning to adversely effect progress in library skills. There is also inadequate space for pupils with special educational needs to receive effective support away from their class and accommodation for special educational needs is unsatisfactory. It is through the best endeavors of teachers and support staff that these pupils continue to make good progress.



68. The school has sufficient resources for the effective delivery of the curriculum. Resources are good in information technology, where recently new computers have been obtained, and are now sufficient in number. In science, art, design and technology and music resources are good. Resources for mathematics, physical education and history are satisfactory. The quality of resources for English is good. Although there is insufficient space in the library for fiction as well as non-fiction books, individual classes are well supplied with a good number of fiction books chosen from a stock in the fiction cupboard. A visiting library is used well to provide further access to a wide range of books for all pupils. Good use is made of a local resource centre to borrow historical artefacts. Resources in geography are unsatisfactory, due to the lack of sufficient compasses and large maps. The lack of large outdoor play toys inhibits the development of physical skills for children under five. Good resources of high quality are in place to support pupils with special educational needs. Throughout the school, most resources are in good condition and are handled safely and with care by the pupils.

**75. The efficiency of the school**

69. The headteacher and administrative assistant manage the day-to-day financial procedures of the school effectively, and sound use is made of information and communication technology for this purpose. The school development plan shows clear direction for the school with realistic targets and appropriate funding. Planning for the budget is good, carefully carried out before the beginning of the financial year, and effectively involves the staff and the governing body. The full governing body approves the annual budget, and the headteacher and administrative assistant monitor the budget effectively and produce regular reports for the finance committee and governing body. The finance committee meets regularly and is involved in monitoring the budget and presents findings to the full governing body meetings. The school currently has an estimated small percentage over-spend and has identified ways of overcoming this problem for the future. Funds are effectively allocated to provide support to those pupils identified as having special educational needs. Funds allocated through specific grants are spent appropriately.

70. Overall, the use of teaching and support staff is satisfactory. Effective use is made of staff subject expertise in physical education and information technology in the upper part of Key Stage 2. However, on a few occasions non-teaching staff are not always used effectively.

71. The school administrative assistant works in an efficient, calm and professional way and supports the school's work well. Site staff are efficient and effective in ensuring the smooth running and cleanliness of the school.

72. Good use is made of the buildings, outside areas and most learning resources. However, the library is not used effectively and insufficient use is made of computer hardware and software and the newly established computer room.

73. Financial controls and school administration are satisfactory. The day to day financial management and administration are good. However, there is a weakness in that not all financial procedures are written down and some are unclear. The school's administrative and financial systems were audited in September 1999, and

most of the recommendations from this audit have been, or are in the process of being addressed. The school's voluntary funds are audited regularly and presented annually to the governing body.

74. The funding available to the school is above average for a school of this size and is used effectively. Taking into account the circumstances of the pupils, the good attainment and progress, the good teaching and very good attitudes and relationships with the community, very good range of extra-curricular activities and provision for pupils' social development, the school provides good value for money. This is not the same as the last inspection when the school was judged to be very good value for money. However, this judgement was made using different criteria.

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

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

75. Children are admitted to the reception class in the term in which they are five. Although most children have attended nursery or playgroup, approximately one third of children receive no pre-school education. Children under five share a class with older reception and Year 1 pupils. On entry to the school attainment, although variable, is mostly below that which would be expected for children of this age. In the reception class, children make sound progress in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. By the time they are five they have achieved the expected standards in these areas of learning. Progress in personal and social development, creative education and physical education is unsatisfactory. At the age of five, attainment remains below average in these areas.
76. The school is aware that the curriculum is not firmly based on the six areas of learning promoting the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children of this age and has prioritised the improvement of the curriculum in the school development plan. At present, activities are mostly based on the National Curriculum, which, although suitable for the more able children, places too great a demand on those who are less able. There are insufficient opportunities for children to participate in purposeful play and to choose their own activities. Some timetabled periods, such as one hour for history, are inappropriately long for such young children.

#### ***Language and literacy***

77. Children make sound progress in language and literacy and by the time they are five the majority achieve the levels expected. They mostly listen for sustained periods and respond appropriately to adults' instructions. The majority are able to express themselves clearly and join in enthusiastically with stories, rhymes and songs. Children have begun the school's reading scheme and enjoy taking books home to share with adults. Higher attaining children are beginning to recognise a few simple words and can recognise and name most letter sounds. When playing a fishing game, lower attaining children were able to identify a few letters and place them by the correct picture. In writing, children are beginning to hold pencils correctly as they copy under their teachers' writing. Higher attaining children write their own names unaided and attempt to write letters or strings of letters to represent words, as when they write a list of who is likely to visit 'Albert's House' in the role play area.
78. The teaching of literacy is good. The use of support staff during literacy hour makes a strong contribution to the children making good progress. Appropriate activities are presented which suit the children's different abilities. Good use is made of learning resources to motivate the children, as for example when the imaginative use of a puppet fired them with enthusiasm. Support staff are used well to assist the progress of lower attaining children.

#### ***Mathematics***

79. The majority of children achieve the expected levels, although a significant minority do not attain the desirable outcomes in this area of learning by the time they are five.

80. Most children can identify, write and sequence numbers to ten. They are beginning to count on and count back. Scrutiny of children's work shows that they are able to use cubes to measure objects and can state which are longer or shorter. Lower attaining children are unable to count reliably to ten. They are unsure of the main colours and unable to identify or name the common shapes.
81. Teaching is satisfactory, particularly when support staff are used effectively to support the younger and less able children. For example, a small group of children made sound progress when working with a member of the support staff to identify different shapes and find similar shapes in a 'feely' bag. Resources are used well, and work is generally matched to the different abilities of the children.

### ***Personal and social development***

Children make unsatisfactory progress in social development and attainment is below expectations at the age of five. Most children participate satisfactorily in the school routines, such as assemblies and playtimes. Behaviour is good. With help the majority of children dress and undress themselves for physical education and take care of their belongings. However, a significant number of children find it difficult to concentrate on one task, rapidly becoming restless and inattentive. These same children experience difficulty in learning to work and play together by sharing and taking turns.

82. The teacher provides limited opportunity for children to develop independence and use their initiative. Teaching is unsatisfactory in that the way the curriculum is presented to the children frequently denies them the opportunity to make their own choice of practical activity. Satisfactory measures have been introduced to support children on entry to the school and good relationships have been established between teachers, support staff and children.

### ***Knowledge and understanding of the world***

83. By the time they are five, most children attain the levels expected and make satisfactory progress in this area, which includes scientific, technological, geographical and historical learning. Children use visits to local places of interest to successfully enhance their learning in this area. For example, on a visit to the local park children observed how play equipment moved and drew pictures of their observations. The majority of children demonstrate a growing understanding of electricity as they draw items that require electricity to work. Higher attaining children are beginning to understand an electrical circuit. Children are developing an understanding of times past as they examine toys that were played with long ago. The majority of children are becoming familiar with the computer keyboard and are learning to direct the mouse.
84. Teaching is satisfactory, with the planning of a range of tasks that are linked to a suitable topic. Resources are relevant and used satisfactorily to enhance learning. Pupils are well managed. However, on occasion the opportunity is lost for extending learning. This happens, for example, when children are given insufficient opportunity to experiment for themselves.

### ***Creative development***

85. By the age of five, children's attainments in creative development are below expectations for their age group. Children are below average in their exploratory and creative skills and techniques are insufficiently developed. For example, children are unable to apply paint to rollers or to print without assistance. Children enjoy singing and most join in with enthusiasm. They are becoming familiar with a range of percussion instruments. Higher attaining children can clap in time to rhythms and songs. There was no opportunity to observe the children in role-play during the inspection.
86. The teaching of creative development is unsatisfactory. Tasks provided are frequently too difficult for the children to work independently and they are provided with insufficient opportunity for practical experience with a selection of tools and a wide variety of media.

### ***Physical development***

87. Attainment in physical development is below that expected for children of this age. Children are developing their skills in handling pencils, paintbrushes and scissors and demonstrate increasing balance and co-ordination in their dance lesson in the school hall. Most children move confidently and show an awareness of space. They jump, run and twist as they move in response to percussion instruments and are able to take large or small steps according to the teacher's instructions. Higher attaining children make up a simple sequence of movements in pairs.
88. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. The lack of a secure play area inhibits progress and there is insufficient outdoor equipment to support the development of co-ordination and balance. Although children are given extra opportunity to use the school playground for physical activity, progress is limited due to the lack of planning for the specific development of skills during this period.

### **96. THE CORE SUBJECTS**

#### **96. English**

89. Pupils' attainment in English is above average at the end of both key stages.
90. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for reading, seven-year-old pupils achieved standards that were above the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 was well above average and the percentage reaching the higher Level 3 was above the national average. The performance of pupils in writing was well above average. The percentage of pupils reaching both Level 2 and Level 3 was well above average. Standards in the 1999 tests were higher than those achieved by the school in 1997 or 1998. In comparison with schools that have pupils from similar backgrounds, 1999 Key Stage 1 test results were above average in reading and well above average in writing.
91. Eleven-year-old pupils achieved standards that were in line with the national average in the 1999 statutory tests. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 was below average, but the percentage reaching the higher Level 5 was above

average. In comparison with similar schools, Key Stage 2 National Curriculum test results were average. Girls performed better than boys in writing. Test results were affected by the high number of pupils with special educational needs and the inspection found that overall standards in English at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average for the current cohort of pupils.

92. The detailed whole-school planning and teaching of the literacy hour and the quality of English work during these lessons have had a positive impact on speaking and listening, reading and writing. By the time pupils leave school, the majority read and write with fluency and are very well prepared for secondary school. Pupils are able to apply their English skills very effectively in other areas of the curriculum, for example when discussing how to improve designs in design and technology.
93. Inspection findings indicate that speaking and listening skills are above average at the age of seven and eleven, which is the same as the findings of the previous inspection. At Key Stage 1, pupils listen attentively and respond appropriately. For example, as some pupils presented their written work to the class, other pupils made sensitive evaluations of their work. Pupils give well-considered answers to questions. Most state their views clearly, using a rapidly increasing vocabulary. At Key Stage 2, pupils are articulate and confident speakers. They thoughtfully develop their ideas, expressing themselves cogently through a sophisticated vocabulary. For example, in science, Year 6 pupils explained competently which sandwich fillings are the healthiest to use.
94. Pupils attain good standards of reading at the age of seven and eleven, which is again the same as the findings of the previous inspection. Seven-year-old pupils are competent readers for their age. They read both fiction and non-fiction books with expression and understanding. Almost all pupils are able to explain plots and retell stories in sequence. Higher attaining pupils are able to talk about their favourite books, giving reasons for their preference. Pupils have begun to understand the purpose of contents and index pages, but are unsure of how to use them. Eleven-year-old pupils read a range of texts, including poetry and plays. All pupils talk well about the books they are reading and why they enjoy certain authors. They confidently explain the school library's classification system to find information and use their reading skills well to evaluate and interpret various texts.
95. Standards of writing remain good at both key stages. At the age of seven, pupils write in sentences for a variety of purposes, such as instructions on how to build a model car, or details of their holiday. Spelling and punctuation are good. Almost all pupils write legibly with correct use of full stops and capital letters. Higher attaining pupils correctly spell words of more than one syllable and are beginning to use commas and apostrophes to punctuate their work. At the age of eleven, pupils write in complex sentences and effectively adapt the style of their writing and language to suit different purposes; for example when producing posters giving instructions for the use of a computer. They plan and redraft their work to improve their writing. Pupils write fluently and develop a clear and legible cursive handwriting style. Most spell complex words correctly and are beginning to use punctuation, including exclamation marks and inverted commas accurately. Pieces of extended writing have clearly defined paragraphs. Older pupils clearly think of themselves as writers, applying their writing skills with confidence and enthusiasm in other areas of the curriculum.
96. Pupils of all abilities make good progress through both key stages in all aspects of

English. Speaking and listening skills develop well through a range of discussion, especially in literacy hour. Class presentations and drama situations make a significant contribution to improving skills in speaking and listening. Children make good progress in their reading through the wide selection of challenging books. Older pupils regularly complete reading reviews, which enhances their progress in understanding and knowledge of authors and a variety of texts. Most pupils regularly read at home with their parents and this liaison between home and school contributes directly to the progress made in reading. Recently the position of the school library has been changed. The room where it is presently situated is too small for pupils to work in and this is beginning to have an adverse effect on progress in the acquisition of information retrieval skills. The school has correctly identified weaknesses in writing, particularly in the attainment of boys at the end Key Stage 2. Pupils are less sure of using the computer to draft or edit work. Changes that have been implemented as a result are already beginning to have a beneficial effect on attainment. For example, handwriting and spelling schemes of work now ensure that there is a consistent approach to the development of these skills, which is having a positive impact on progress throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs receive close support and make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans.

97. Pupils enjoy their lessons and behave well. All pupils respond positively to the structure and organisation of the literacy hour. They participate fully in class discussions and answer questions sensibly. The majority of pupils work independently and collaborate effectively in groups or pairs if required. The majority of pupils settle quickly and quietly to their work, concentrating well until the task is complete. They frequently demonstrate an enthusiasm for the subject, as when Year 6 pupils were using reference books to extract information on a famous footballer.
98. The quality of teaching is never less than good, and in Key Stage 2 it is sometimes very good. All teachers are confident in their knowledge of the subject. They set high expectations of work and behaviour. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace and are well planned with tasks that are suitably challenging for all pupils. The contribution of support staff is good and effectively organised so that pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, are well supported. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils, frequently offering praise and encouragement to raise self-esteem and increase progress. The marking of pupils' work is consistent and is frequently used to suggest ways of making further progress. Where teaching is very good, questioning is used extremely well to extend knowledge and the lesson is conducted in a stimulating manner that motivates all pupils.
99. The English co-ordinator provides effective leadership and management of the subject. The policies are informative and well constructed and long and medium term plans are detailed and appropriate. All staff have received individual observations and guidance on the literacy hour and this has led to consistency and consolidation of good practice. The analyses of periodic, standard and national tests are used well to identify strengths and weaknesses and therefore inform planning to meet the needs of all pupils. Whole-school and individual targets are set which are realistic and linked to national standards.
100. Overall the resources for the teaching of English are good and they are used well. However, the library area is too small and because of this is insufficiently used.

108. **Mathematics**

101. From inspection evidence, most pupils attain standards above that expected nationally by the end of both key stages.
102. The end of Key Stage 1 results in the National Curriculum tests for 1999 show that the proportion of pupils reaching Level 2 or above to be below the national average, but those attaining the higher level was close to the national average. Compared to similar schools, results at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that pupils achieve well below average. However, the small number of pupils in the cohort and number of pupils taking the tests means that the school's performance compared with national statistics may not be reliable. Over the past three years, the school has maintained standards slightly below the national average. The results of the tests in 1999 show very good improvement over the previous year at the end of both key stages. At the end of Key Stage 1 those pupils achieving Level 2 or above are well above average, and those achieving the higher levels above average. Compared to similar schools attainment was well above average and the number of pupils attaining the higher level are average. At the end of Key Stage 2, test results show the number of pupils achieving Level 4 and above and the higher levels to be above average. When compared to similar schools, the attainment is above average. The school has made provision for raising attainment over the past two years by introducing pupil monitoring and tracking.
103. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are attaining above average standards in number. They recognise odd and even numbers and devise strategies to add tens and units. They count forwards and backwards in tens using a number square, order numbers, and complete number sequences and patterns. They make good progress in addition and subtraction using numbers up to a hundred and using money. Pupils of higher ability successfully calculate using hundreds, tens and units and are beginning to grasp place value. They undertake simple sharing activities and build two, three and five times tables using repeated addition. Most recognise halves and quarters in number and area. They collect information by tallying and draw and interpret simple bar charts of hair colour. There is good progress in shape, space and measures and standards are above average. Most have a good knowledge of common two-dimensional shapes and measure using centimetres and metres. They balance cotton reels using non-standard measures and measure in cups and litres. They know the days of the week and the months.
104. By the end of Key Stage 2, the current cohort of pupils' attainment is above average compared with that found nationally. Most pupils add and subtract numbers using thousands and undertake multiplication and division using two-and three-digit numbers. They solve money problems using the four rules and understand place value to multiply and divide numbers by 10 and 100. They understand inverse operations and probability. They have a good understanding of equivalent and decimal fractions and calculate fractional parts. They understand line and rotational symmetry and, more able pupils, translation. They have a good understanding of three-dimensional shapes and their properties and the relationship between the radius and circumference of a circle, with more able pupils successfully choosing equipment and materials to solve a problem.
105. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. Younger pupils count forwards and backwards and add to 20, read and write the numbers involved and write number



sentences. Year 2 pupils are beginning to recognise and order numbers to 100. They recognise the number in words and are beginning to have a sound understanding of place value using hundreds, tens and units boards, using equipment to build numbers. Most pupils recognise odd and even numbers and devise strategies to add tens and units. Pupils become more competent at measuring using standard and non-standard units. Their understanding of two- and three-dimensional shapes and lines of symmetry improves.

106. Pupils make good progress by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils of Year 3 add tens and units to 100 and devise strategies. They count forwards and backwards by 10s and recognise and name two- and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils of Year 4 count on in 2s, 3s, 5s and 10s, and read and write whole numbers to 1000. Most are developing a sound understanding of place value and are confident in adding 1, 10 and 100 to a number. Year 5 pupils recognise equivalent fractions and understand improper fractions. They devise their own strategies to solve problems. Year 6 pupils identify equivalent fractions and find fractional parts of numbers and amounts. Pupils recognise acute, obtuse and reflex angles and line and rotational symmetry, with more able pupils, understanding translation. Most understand the relationship between the radius and circumference of a circle and more able pupils' use this knowledge to successfully solve a problem choosing the equipment to use. At the end of the key stage, most pupils set out their work clearly and neatly and are making good progress in applying mathematics in new situations and applications.
107. From lesson observations, there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls in both key stages. The progress of those pupils with special needs and lower ability is good as their needs are identified and activities matched to their needs.
108. Most pupils have positive attitudes to numeracy. They listen well to explanations and instructions, show interest in what they have to do, are keen to join in question and answer sessions and sustain interest, sometimes for long periods. Most co-operate well, share information and respond positively when in group or paired tasks. Most behave well and remain on task even when not directly supervised. The presentation of work at the end of Key Stage 2 is good but is less well developed or monitored at the lower end.
109. Numeracy is soundly developed in other areas of the curriculum. For example, graphs are produced in science and time lines are used effectively in history.
110. In lessons seen, teaching is good overall in both key stages although one unsatisfactory lesson was seen. Most teachers have a good knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy and most have high expectations. The quality of weekly and daily planning is good. Learning objectives are clear and effectively shared with pupils at the start of lessons, which is good practice. Activities are usually matched to the needs of pupils. Teachers use a good range of teaching methods, organise activities well and manage pupils effectively. Most teachers use resources effectively and these are readily available. Most teachers use questioning well to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding and use day-to-day assessment procedures to plan effective activities to challenge pupils. However, homework is not set on a regular basis or used effectively to extend and consolidate pupils' knowledge, understanding and learning. Marking procedures, although often providing supportive comments, do not always set targets for improvement. There is very limited and inconsistent use

of information technology to support and extend knowledge and understanding especially in data handling and skill practice. There is insufficient emphasis on activities to encourage pupils to use and apply knowledge in problem-solving situations. A strength is most teachers' development and promotion of strategies for mental mathematics and the use of resources for teacher demonstration and pupils' practical work. The addressing of pupils' learning deficiencies highlighted by optional tests and pupil tracking and targeting is having the effect of improving all levels of progress. The recent introduction of setting by ability in the upper part of Key Stage 2 ensures activities are more closely matched to the needs of the pupils.

111. Mathematics is currently a feature of the school development plan with the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the policy has recently been reviewed, and a new scheme of work is being developed to ensure that progression and continuity of learning exists between classes and key stages especially in mixed aged classes.. Long and medium term planning is based on the National Numeracy Strategy to ensure progression in learning. Planning takes place in key stage units and there is satisfactory monitoring of medium-term planning by co-ordinators. Weekly plans are effectively monitored by the headteacher. There is some monitoring of teaching and learning to share good practice and raise standards. Assessment is inconsistent in practice and currently there are no whole-school assessment and recording procedures in place, although this is under review. A baseline assessment takes place on entry to Key Stage 1 to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding and this information is being used effectively to assist in tracking pupils' progress. Non-statutory assessment materials are used well to monitor and track pupil progress in Key Stage 2. Resources are both adequate and accessible in classrooms and used appropriately. There are effective displays in classrooms and corridors that further enhance the subject. Since the last inspection pupils' attainment and quality of teaching have improved.
119. **Science**
112. Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is well above average and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school.
113. The standards attained in the 1999 teacher assessments for Key Stage 1 and 1999 national tests for Key Stage 2 show that standards are well above average, and these standards have remained constant over the past three years.
114. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understand how to make a test fair by keeping some of the conditions constant, for example both feet on the floor when testing body pressure. They accurately record, using tables and charts, whether arm length affects the amount of pressure exerted. They accurately state the sources of sound and light. They know that sound can be made in a variety of ways and correctly relate light becoming dimmer or brighter by recording changes in power. Workbooks record how to sort natural and processed materials and which are attracted to magnets. Pupils accurately record the life cycle of plants and animals. Pupils in Year 1/2, when rolling a toy car down a ramp on to various materials to test out friction, hypothesise on which surface the car will go the furthest and state why they think this is so at the end of the experiment.

115. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know that when planning a scientific investigation, variables may change and constants remain fixed. They make predictions and give very good scientific reasons for their thinking, often using correct vocabulary when describing the workings of the digestive system. They have a thorough understanding of which foods constitute a healthy diet and what harmful effects smoking and drugs have on the body. Most successfully classify animals and categorise plants accurately. Their understanding of the movement of earth to give night and day and seasons is accurate. The majority of pupils pick out patterns and make good hypotheses. Year 5 pupils understand the need for a balanced diet and correctly name different types of food, for example fats, carbohydrates and proteins. They successfully apply their knowledge to practical work, for example when planning a balanced diet.
116. Pupils have a broad knowledge of all elements of the subject, and have many opportunities to engage in independent enquiry and to extend their investigational skills. Pupils' knowledge of scientific vocabulary is good; this is encouraged by the teachers' good use and explanation of relevant words. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and are presented with tasks appropriate to their needs.
117. The subject makes a sound contribution to pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils' recording, observing and measuring are carried out with care and accuracy. Insufficient use of computers for research or exploring significantly hampers their skills in research. At both key stages, pupils handle equipment safely.
118. Pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of topics related to living things, materials and physical processes. Pupils develop a growing appreciation of how to perform a fair test and increase their understanding of key investigational skills as they advance through the school. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in relation to their individual targets. Since the last inspection standards have remained constant.
1. Pupils show very good levels of concentration and perseverance and have good attitudes to science, clearly enjoying their work. They behave well inside the classroom. They work well in mixed gender groups and offer sensible, constructive ideas in class discussions. They settle very well to written tasks and handle science equipment carefully. Pupils can be relied on to work responsibly, even when not directly supervised by a teacher.
  2. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge, understanding and enthusiasm, which they convey to their pupils. Lessons are clearly planned and well matched to pupils' differing abilities. Teachers use very good questioning techniques, using precise scientific vocabulary to make pupils think very carefully about their answers. They often use specific language and the opportunities they provide to develop pupils' language in discussion times enable pupils to use technical vocabulary very well. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and trust them to behave well in investigations where they are not directly supervised all of the time. Lessons are well paced and teachers have clear and realistic expectations of what they want pupils to complete in a given time.
  3. The subject co-ordinator's role in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection, since pupils' work is sampled and lessons are

observed to judge the progressions of skills and quality of work. The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides a stimulating range of experiments and scientific activities.

#### 129. **Information communication technology**

4. Information technology does not currently meet statutory requirements. There is insufficient opportunity for pupils to use computers and they do not receive access to all areas of the National Curriculum.
5. Standards of attainment in information technology are below national expectations by the end of both key stages. Pupils do not have access to the full range of communicating, monitoring and modelling activities and insufficient time is spent on the subject. During the inspection information technology was rarely used, in classrooms even though computers were switched on.
6. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have limited knowledge of the keyboard and use of word processing skills, for example changing font and using the computer appropriately to further develop reading and writing activities. Pupils have limited understanding of how to enter information, to sort and classify data, or to investigate aspects of real or imagined situations when using simulation and decision-making programs. Few pupils are able to store or retrieve information or print out their own work unaided. Their knowledge and awareness of the benefits of using information technology in the wider world is unsatisfactory.
7. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils word process simple text. There is no evidence of pupils having had experience of using an art package or screen turtle. There are few examples of activities such as designing questionnaires and printing out histograms and pie charts. There is little evidence of information technology being used widely in art or music or of data handling in subjects such as mathematics and science. Many pupils lack confidence when using the keyboard or when saving and retrieving work and not all are yet competent in turning the computer on or can confidently log on and off independently. Few are able to change font, colour and size of text successfully unaided, or to add and find stored information. Their use of decision-making opportunities with the aid of simulations and the use of CD-Roms to discover and retrieve information is unsatisfactory. They have a limited awareness of the use of information technology and control in the wider world such as in supermarkets, banking and in home appliances.
8. By the end of both key stages, progress is unsatisfactory although the rate of progress varies within the key stage and is dependent on teacher knowledge where it is good, confidence and understanding. Most pupils do not have sufficient access to computers except a once a week session in the computer suite and this affects the progress they make. There is no difference in the progress of pupils of different gender, race or background although those pupils who have regular access to a computer at home show more confidence. Pupils with special educational needs make unsatisfactory progress because they do not receive the necessary support or have sufficient access.
9. When pupils are given the opportunity, their response to using information

technology is good in both key stages. The very recently introduced computer suite is new and exciting and pupils are well motivated. They work soundly in small groups and show respect for each other and the equipment. They have positive attitudes and show good concentration and perseverance in their activities.

10. The quality of teaching in the computer suite is satisfactory but there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement in classrooms where very few instances of specific teaching were observed. In the computer suite pupils work in pairs or small groups and there is satisfactory teacher intervention. It is clear some teachers lack confidence and expertise in the subject and that the full potential of information technology to support other areas of the curriculum has not yet been fully realised. Computers in the classrooms were not always being used and opportunities for the teaching of information technology were not fully utilised. This severely affects the rate of pupils' progress. Discussions with pupils about their previous work showed that in the past they have not been offered a sufficient range of experiences and that, overall, teaching has been unsatisfactory.
11. The school has identified information technology as a feature of the school development plan. This identifies the need to continue to improve staff knowledge, understanding and confidence. The school has only very recently opened the computer suite with ten networked modern computers and staff are not yet competent or confident in their use. The key stage co-ordinators do not fully manage the subject as there are insufficient opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning to share good practice. However, the Key Stage 2 co-ordinator uses subject expertise effectively to teach classes in the upper part of the school. There is a recently reviewed sound policy but this does not currently reflect practice in the school. The school has recognised the need to update the scheme of work in line with recommendations and resources within the school. Whilst teachers include brief details in the weekly planning, they do not sufficiently define how the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding will be organised and managed to promote progression as pupils move through the school. Some teachers monitor computer usage but comprehensive assessment procedures are not yet in place and little use is made of assessment to monitor pupils' progress through key learning outcomes and to inform planning for future learning. This affects pupils' progress, as tasks do not build on prior knowledge and understanding. Teachers record pupils' progress annually through the end of year report but there is no indication of attainment. The report does not separate information technology and design and technology and this is a weakness.
12. The school is equipped with a good range of modern networked hardware in the computer suite including scanner and digital camera and eight notebooks for independent use. However, there is currently only one printer and this restricts printing output of pupils' work. The computer room has good potential for raising standards but the school needs to carefully consider how to use this room effectively and overcome the unhealthy overly warm environment. Most computers in classrooms lack effectiveness because they are old and incompatible with computers in the suite and have limited printing facilities. The school is currently undertaking a review of the range of software available to effectively support other areas of the curriculum. Other resources, for example tape recorders, televisions with video recorders and calculators, are satisfactory. There is an effective computer club for older pupils held twice weekly during the lunchtime which further enhances the subject and is used to produce a magazine.

13. Since the last inspection, pupils' attainment has not been maintained. This is due to staff changes, demands of the curriculum and staff knowledge and understanding. The very recently introduced computer suite of modern networked computers gives the potential to raise attainment and improve progress.

139. **Religious education**

14. Few lessons were observed but it is clear from discussions with pupils and teachers, from planning and from looking at pupils' work, that attainment at ages seven and eleven is broadly average when compared to expectations in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils in both key stages make satisfactory progress.

15. Pupils in Year 2 make suitable suggestions in response to Christian stories and develop their knowledge and understanding of other faiths. They use specialist terms, such as 'parable', with accuracy. They take part in a discussion about being a friend and make appropriate suggestions about being kind.

16. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils know the importance of the cross to Christians and understand some of the other symbols in a church. Year 5 pupils recognise the differences in the Christmas story when comparing texts from The Gospels. Year 4 pupils recognise the significance and symbolism of The Christingle for Christians and that Advent is a time to get ready for Jesus' birth. Year 6 pupils understand how different religions impact upon peoples' lives and that religion may also cause conflict in the world. Most pupils understand the significance of the Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter and also that the time leading up to Easter is called Lent and that it relates to Jesus' time of temptation in the wilderness.

17. Pupils enjoy religious education. They make sensible suggestions and ask thoughtful questions of their teachers. When making Christingles for example, pupils assisted each other well, helping to hold together the various materials. Pupils have high expectations for presentation of work.

18. From looking at a small number of lessons, from teachers' planning and from discussions with teachers, it is clear that teaching is satisfactory across both key stages. Work is marked, often giving constructive comments and, at times, suggestions on how pupils can improve their work.

19. The curriculum is planned in line with the locally agreed syllabus, and a long-term overview is in place. The curriculum makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development and effective use is made of religious education to enhance whole-school assemblies; this aspect is very well developed. Resources for religious education are adequate and are readily accessible to all.

145. **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

145. **Art**

20. Standards of art throughout the school are above the expected standard for the

ages of the pupils. These high standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

21. In Key Stage 1, pupils work with considerable confidence in a range of media that includes paint, textiles and clay. They work very effectively with a local artist as they use natural objects to produce collages representing colour and shape in the environment. Pupils understand the principles of printing and carry out a range of activities that develop from simple string prints to printing on fabric. Teachers give them a variety of opportunities to work in different media, for example they work well in clay to produce clay tiles of people playing.
22. In Key Stage 2 pupils develop their observational skills well. Pencils and charcoal are used effectively to demonstrate form and shading, as for example in a pencil drawing of a camera. Sketchbooks are used well to practice techniques, such as colour mixing.
23. Across the school, pupils of all ages make good progress in art. Progress is enhanced by the school's commitment to the subject. For example, pupils are given the opportunity to belong to the school art club and to work with visiting artists and sculptors. Pupils in both key stages encounter the work of European artists. Their effective attempts to emulate the work of these artists, for example painting in the style of Modigliani, demonstrate their increasing skill. As children go through the school they learn to sensitively discuss their feelings and opinions on each other's work and become aware of techniques to improve and refine their work. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and make good progress.
24. Pupils enjoy art and respond readily to the opportunities it provides for them to express themselves. They apply themselves with concentration, often becoming completely engrossed in what they are doing. Pupils work well collaboratively, discussing each other's work sensitively, sharing and taking turns to use equipment. All pupils use equipment safely and sensibly and take great pride in their finished work.
25. Too few lessons were observed during the inspection to be able to make a reliable judgement on the quality of teaching.

#### 151. **Design and technology**

26. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. Discussion and looking at pupils' work, and photographic evidence provides sufficient evidence to judge that pupils are making good progress throughout both key stages. Pupils have an understanding of what is involved in design. They know that products have to be suitable for a specific use. With guidance and support, pupils plan their work and use simple tools to cut and shape a limited range of materials. The older pupils have a better understanding of the subject, particularly in relation to control mechanisms and techniques for strengthening structures. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils design and make simple things such as puppets and wheeled vehicles using axles to support their design. They test the final design to see if it is suitable and suggest modifications to the original design. They use a variety of materials in making and joining, for example in Roman shields. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils make more complex items such as Victorian toys with moving parts. They have a

good understanding of using cams, pulleys and gears to aid movement and interest. They develop the skill of carefully labelling diagrams and listing the resources needed. Most evaluate and make very good comments for improving the models, and say clearly any difficulties encountered and how they changed their designs to overcome these.

27. All pupils enjoy this subject and talk enthusiastically about design and technology. They like designing and making things and discussing their work.
28. There are good links to numeracy through measuring materials and accurately drawing diagrams. Resources for design and technology are good. Standards have remained constant since the last inspection.

#### 154. **Geography**

29. During the inspection week no geography lessons were observed at Key Stage 1 and the subject does not feature on the timetable in Key Stage 2 this term. Judgements are made from scrutiny of pupils' work in books and on display, discussion with pupils and teachers, scrutiny of recorded evidence and examining planning.
30. The majority of pupils in all attainment groups make sound progress in developing their geographical knowledge, understanding and skills. No significant difference was observed in the progress made by boys and girls or those pupils having special educational needs. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn about their locality from first hand experience through visits to various places such as playgrounds in Bishop's Castle and Telford. They develop elementary planning and map skills by drawing a map of the playground and plans of the play parks.
31. From scrutiny of work and planning, pupils make at least satisfactory progress by the end of Key Stage 2. They make effective use of land-use maps and note differences over time and look at different farming methods. They study river development and features associated with rivers such as waterfalls, erosion and deposition, meanders and ox-bow lakes. They make an in-depth study of St Lucia including transport, land use, climate and agriculture. In the context of the tropics they learn about tropical storms, volcanoes and environmental change.
32. Pupils have a positive attitude to geography and say they enjoy their lessons. Work in books is well presented and usually neat.
33. It is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching, but from looking at planning, talking to pupils and teachers, it is at least satisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge, planning shows clear learning objectives and good use is made of resources.
34. There is a thorough and effective policy which has been recently reviewed. The school has adopted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority publication as the main planning document and tried hard to address the problem of mixed aged classes by planning a careful programme of work. At Key Stage 1, geography is taught through a thematic approach with history and science, based on a two-year



cycle with each class tackling the same study units but at an appropriate level. At Key Stage 2 all classes study the same study units on a four-year cycle. Joint planning is undertaken by key stage teachers to ensure continuity and progression. Planning is monitored at the beginning of term by the co-ordinator and during the term at key stage meetings, and on a weekly basis by the headteacher. Assessment procedures have recently been introduced and consist of end of unit assessments, but there is currently no consistent approach although this is under consideration. As a means of raising awareness of the world and events affecting it, the school has effectively introduced a 'Where in the World' board in the hall displaying items of news and where they are happening on a world map. There is a need to update resources and purchase essential large-scale maps and compasses. Good use is made of the local area to support learning and for older pupils to undertake map work during a residential visit.

## 160. **History**

35. Pupils' progress in knowledge, understanding and skills relating to history is satisfactory across both key stages. Pupils of all attainment levels, including those with special needs, broaden their understanding of historical concepts including that of chronology as they move through the key stages.
36. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn the way children occupied themselves in the past by using photographs and asking older people. They talk about their favourite toy, what toys grandparents played with, and why toys are different today. This gives them an understanding of changes over time. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding relating to features of past societies through studies of the Romans. They look at the reasons for the Roman invasion of Britain and extend their knowledge with a visit to the Roman museum at Chester. They examine Roman artifacts and make decisions as to what they were and how they were used. They learn about the life styles of the Celts and Vikings and link this with activities in art and design and technology. By examining different texts about Boudicca, they understand that reports and opinions of historical events can differ. Using artefacts, pictures, photographs and interviews, they learn about the lives of their grandparents through studying Britain since 1930, comparing past lifestyles with their own. They make effective use of timelines to grasp an understanding of the passing of time. By the end of the key stage, most pupils have a sound understanding of how people lived in the past and can give sound reasons for the differences between how people live now and how they lived in the past.
37. Pupils' attitudes are positive and most enjoy their lessons. Most persevere with their learning and show interest and enthusiasm. They demonstrate curiosity in activities relating to the past and handle resources carefully. Most listen attentively and respond to teachers' instructions. They work well individually and together sharing ideas. Behaviour is usually good.
38. Not enough lessons were observed during the inspection to give a judgement on the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1. However, from talking to pupils and teachers, scrutiny of work and displays, and looking at planning, teachers have sound subject knowledge. From work scrutiny not all activities have sufficient levels of challenge in them to meet all pupils' needs, with pupils of different ability undertaking similar activities.

39. At Key Stage 2 teaching is good and sometimes very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and identify clear learning objectives in planning. Teachers have high expectations and use time and resources well. Most make good use of questioning to assess pupils, knowledge and understanding.
40. There is a useful policy and long-term plan on a two-year cycle at Key Stage 1 and four-year cycle at Key Stage 2, which outlines coverage of the Programmes of Study. The school tries hard to address the problem of mixed aged classes to provide progression in skills and knowledge. Teachers plan together in key stages and this planning and progress during the term is monitored by the co-ordinator at key stage meetings. The school has this term adopted Qualifications and Curriculum Authority documentation for the subject and the scheme of work is under review. The co-ordinator provides good support to colleagues and manages the subject well. Although teachers make assessment, there is a consistent approach which has been identified by the school for action. Good links are made to other subjects such as literacy, art and design and technology. Effective use is made of the strategies for literacy to support the development of history. Older pupils use their note-writing skills to compare different versions of Boudicca. They apply numeracy skill to sequencing activities and developing time lines. The use of information technology to support the subject is, however, unsatisfactory, although subject-specific software is limited. Learning resources are satisfactory and there is a sound range which is supplemented, when required, by using the Museum Service. Good use is made of the local area and visits to museums such as the Roman Museum at Chester, Iron Bridge Museum and Blists Hill.

## **Music**

41. Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in the mastery of new skills and the consolidation of known ones. By the time they are seven, pupils sing an increasing repertoire of songs tunefully and enthusiastically. They are increasingly familiar with musical vocabulary and are aware of rhythm and pitch. They use hand signals to follow the rise and fall of musical sounds effectively and play percussion instruments with control. A number of pupils read simple notation accurately when playing the recorder.
42. By the age of eleven, pupils show an increasing knowledge of musical notation and compose their own simple tunes, using tuned and untuned instruments. Pupils record their compositions accurately using pictorial and sometimes standard notation. They sing well and adapt the volume and tone appropriately to suit the mood and pace of the music. Pupils are familiar with music in a variety of forms and compose and play competently in class and in end of term concerts and assemblies. Pupils understand how pitch can change the effect of mood in music. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 relate their own compositions to music from other countries, for example when comparing music from the Caribbean or India. Pupils appreciate the need to have a conductor and perform competently in several parts, fitting their own into the whole performance. They use correct musical vocabulary and many use these confidently, for example ostinato, staccato and legato. The pupils in the school orchestra show a high level of competence for their ages, playing clarinet and flute to tunes such as 'Society Boogie'.
43. Pupils show great enjoyment and pride in making music; they are very enthusiastic and are eager to show their skills to visitors in school. They sing and play with

commitment, concentrating hard to improve the quality of their performance. Pupils are confident in their own abilities and concentrate on practising and improving their skills. Many older pupils are keen to join the recorder groups and school orchestra, which perform in assemblies and public events.

44. The quality of teaching is very good with aspects that are excellent, where subject knowledge is very good. Where teaching is excellent, pupils are constantly challenged to learn, achieve and improve their knowledge and performance. Teachers show a very high level of commitment to improving their pupils' knowledge, as in recorder groups and orchestra practice. Subject knowledge is very secure, lesson plans are followed with care and ensure that listening skills, appreciation of music and performance are balanced in the lessons.
45. Music plays an important part in the life of the school and makes a significant contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. The music co-ordinator contributes significantly to raising the standards of attainment in music throughout the school, and provides effective leadership and support to teachers through training and organising resources. A good range of visitors and visits enrich the music curriculum. The visiting teachers of strings, woodwind and brass contribute to raising the standard of music throughout the school. Accommodation is satisfactory and there is a satisfactory range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments available centrally. Standards have remained constant since the last inspection.

### **Physical education**

46. Pupils' progress in physical education is satisfactory across both key stages.
47. Youngest pupils begin to express themselves developing different expressive movements and moving slowly and quickly. They learn to follow instructions as they carry out activities. Pupils' progress in body awareness and control increases as they move through the school developing greater power over exercises and movements. Older Year 2 pupils listen well to instructions. They move in different ways to music, changing pace and direction with increasing expression. They make good use of space with a developing awareness of others. They are given the opportunity to review their own performance and that of others. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils are given a range of opportunities to practice and further develop skills and competencies they have learnt in gymnastics and dance. Year 6 pupils successfully link together a sequence of movements in symmetrical and asymmetrical positions. They complete movements with a well-controlled ending. As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils develop ball skills and an awareness of the need for rules and fair play and good sporting behaviour in games lessons. They develop throwing and catching skills and ball control. They learn to find and use space and move swiftly with the ball when practicing dribbling skills in football. The progress of those pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. There is no difference between the progress of boys and girls. However, Year 2 pupils do not have equality of opportunity as older Year 2 pupils receive a Key Stage 2 curriculum with greater emphasis on skills development.
48. Pupils of all ages enjoy physical education lessons and dress appropriately. Older Key Stage 2 pupils particularly enjoy the elements of competition and fair play built

into their lessons. Behaviour is satisfactory and often good and most show good concentration and persistence. They share ideas and resources well, both in small and large groups. In both key stages most pupils show a quick response to commands and instructions.

49. No swimming lessons were seen during the inspection. Swimming provision is provided over a twelve-week period. Key stage 1 swim for 12 weeks during the summer term. Key stage 2 swim for 6 weeks at the beginning of the autumn term and 6 weeks during the summer term. Although the school does not maintain records, it reports that approximately three-quarters can swim 25 metres by the end of Key Stage 2.
50. The quality of teaching across the school is satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers have secure knowledge of the physical education curriculum. Planning is sound and all teachers wear appropriate clothing. Pace of lessons is usually brisk and each lesson is preceded by an appropriate warm-up activity. However, in some lessons, pupils are given insufficient opportunities to improve performance and refine skills. Most activities are well managed and expectations of attainment and discipline are sound.
51. The curriculum for physical education is broad and balanced and this shows an improvement since the last inspection. There is a recently updated sound policy and useful risk assessment sheet. Long-term planning provides a suitable framework for progression of knowledge and skills. This is supported with a thorough scheme of work which gives effective support for progression of skills in gymnastics, dance and games. Teachers plan effectively together in key stages to ensure continuity and progression and this is effectively monitored by the curriculum co-ordinator and discussed in staff meetings. The co-ordinator has no release time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning to share good practice and raise attainment and this is a weakness. New initiatives using Top-play and Top-sport materials have been introduced by the co-ordinator and suitable training provided for all staff which has improved teachers' knowledge. Although some teachers make assessments at the end of a unit of work, recording and assessment procedures to monitor pupil progress and raise attainment are inconsistent. This has been recognised by the school as an area for development. The school hall is equipped with an appropriate range of climbing and other large apparatus. There is a satisfactory range of small apparatus centrally stored and readily accessible in an outside shed although some of this needs replacing and adding to. Facilities for hard surface and field games are good and allow teachers to plan a wide range of games and athletics activities. Provision for swimming, using a local sports centre swimming baths, is good with all pupils having a six-week period during the summer term. The school offers a range of sporting opportunities within the planned curriculum which includes football, netball, rugby, hockey, cricket, rounders and cross country. Extra-curricular provision includes football, netball, rounders, cricket and athletics during the summer. Good use is made of a residential visit for older pupils to participate in challenging activities and outdoor pursuits such as abseiling, rock climbing, orienteering and raft building.
52. Since the last inspection progress in the subject has been satisfactory. The school has developed the curriculum to ensure balance, continuity and progression and introduced a residential visit. There have been good improvements in the provision of small apparatus with involvement in Top-play and Top-sport initiatives and training for staff to use the equipment safely and effectively.

## 178. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### 178. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

53. A team of four inspectors including a lay inspector spent a total of 14 inspector days at the school.

54. The team considered a range of evidence. It included:

- the observation of 54 lessons or part lessons;
- the observation of literacy and numeracy lessons;
- the observation of acts of worship and hymn practices;
- listening to 13 per cent of pupils read from their reading books or own work;
- the scrutiny of pupils' previous and current written work;
- discussion with pupils, staff, governors and parents;
- scrutiny of teachers' plans and policy documents;
- checking the attendance registers, records of pupils' progress and reports;
- examination of the budget and other financial data;
- the views expressed by seven parents who attended the meeting for parents; and
- analysis of the responses to the 25 questionnaires completed by parents were taken into account during the inspection.

## DATA AND

### INDICATORS

- Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR - Y6	144	8	45	19

- Teachers and classes**

- Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	7.40
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	19.46

- Education support staff (YR - Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	9
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	91

Average class size:	24
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- Financial data**

<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>	Financial year:	1998/1999
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	£
Total Income	269953
Total Expenditure	271353
Expenditure per pupil	1695.96
Balance brought forward from previous year	6330
Balance carried forward to next year	4930

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

100

Number of questionnaires returned:

25

### Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	48	40	8	0	4
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	48	44	0	4	4
The school handles complaints from parents well	29	46	12	8	4
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	25	37	21	17	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	32	32	16	16	4
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	28	60	0	8	4
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	52	44	0	4	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	32	36	12	16	4
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	44	40	4	8	4
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	32	52	4	8	4
My child(ren) like(s) school	32	52	8	4	4