

INSPECTION REPORT

BARTONS INFANT SCHOOL

Bognor regis

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique Reference Number: 125922

Inspection Number: 188047

Headteacher: Mrs Jan Myers

Reporting inspector: Geoff Burgess
23708

Dates of inspection: 16th to 19th November 1999

UNDER OFSTED CONTRACT NUMBER: 707870

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Romney Broadwalk North Berstead Bognor Regis West Sussex
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Geoff Longlands
Date of previous inspection:	February 1996

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	Science	Attendance
	Geography: History	Teaching
	Music	Leadership and management
Frances Hurd, Lay Inspector		Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development
		Support and guidance
		Partnership with parents
Denise Franklin	Mathematics	Attitudes, behaviour & social development
	Art: Design Technology	Curriculum & assessment
	SEN	
David Smith	English	Efficiency
	Information Technology	Staffing, accommodation & resources
	Physical Education	Equal opportunities

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REPORT CONTENTS

Paragraph

MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well
Where the school has weaknesses
How the school has improved since the last inspection
Standards in subjects
Quality of teaching
Other aspects of the school
The parents' views of the school

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

INTRODUCTION

1 - 4

Characteristics of the school
Key indicators

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

5 - 11

Attainment and progress
Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
Attendance

Quality of education provided

12 - 33

Teaching
The curriculum and assessment
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
Partnership with parents and the community

The management and efficiency of the school

34 - 47

Leadership and management
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
The efficiency of the school

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

Areas of learning for children under five

48 - 56

English, mathematics and science

57 - 74

Other subjects or courses

75 - 101

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence	102
Data and indicators	103

MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

Bartons Infant School does almost everything well and many things very well. These include:

- Boys and girls work very hard, enjoy their lessons and are making good progress throughout the school
- Pupils' good behaviour and moral development have a very high priority and they behave very well
- It makes very good provision for pupils' social development and they are growing into very sensible and responsible citizens
- All relationships are very good
- More than a fifth of teaching is very good with a further three fifths good
- Detailed and focussed planning ensures that it provides a very broad, rich and relevant curriculum with very good attention to pupils' spiritual and cultural development
- Excellent arrangements for assessing pupils' achievements provide detailed information which teachers use extremely well to monitor pupils' progress and personal development
- It keeps a very close eye on all its pupils and ensures their safety and welfare
- Parents are kept very well informed and are given every encouragement to involve themselves in the life of the school
- Very good arrangements for the professional development of all staff combined with excellent monitoring and support have substantially improved the contribution that teaching and ancillary staff have been able to make
- All resources are used very effectively and the school is very efficiently run
- It has an excellent ethos and provides a very good environment for staff and pupils to achieve high standards
- The headteacher, well supported by the staff and governors provides excellent leadership.

§ **Where the school has weaknesses**

- Bartons Infant School has no significant weaknesses

The school has numerous strengths and no significant weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how some minor areas for improvement identified during the inspection are to be tackled. The plan will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Few improvements took place as a result of the last inspection but the school has been transformed since the arrival of the new headteacher. In a remarkably short time, all the outstanding issues from the last report have been addressed and the school is now achieving high standards in almost every facet of its work. The efforts of the whole school community have been focussed on improving pupils' opportunities to learn, the expertise of all staff and the fabric of the school. Staff and governors have all been actively involved in the process and great progress has been made in the quality of teaching and all aspects of planning and monitoring. Standards in all subjects are improving from the reception classes up and staff and pupils now all believe that anything is possible. Given the vision and outstanding leadership of the head, the hard work and positive attitudes of the staff and the support and encouragement of the governing body, there is every reason to believe that the school will build on the excellent foundations laid to enable its pupils to achieve the highest standards.

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> A
			<i>above average</i> B
			<i>average</i> C
			<i>below average</i> D
			<i>well below average</i> E
English	C	B	
Mathematics	C	B	
Science	C	B	

The information shows, for example, that standards in reading are average nationally and better when compared with similar schools. Boys and girls are making good progress throughout the school in almost all subjects and achieving higher standards in each year group than these results would indicate. Given current progress pupils should achieve even better results in this year's standardised tests and tasks, especially in reading and writing and when compared with similar schools. Standards in information technology and religious education are sound. Four-year-olds are well on the way to achieving their learning outcomes and in all other subjects five, six and seven year olds are working at the appropriate levels with many doing even better.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 – 7 years
English	Good	Very good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science		Good
Information Technology		Satisfactory
Religious education		Good
Other subjects	Good	Good

All teaching is at least satisfactory with 63 per cent good and 21 per cent very good.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Boys and girls are expected to behave appropriately and the very good behaviour achieved is a significant factor in their good progress.
Attendance	Attendance is good and the school has instituted procedures to

Ethos*	ensure that little time is lost to lateness or poor attendance. Excellent; the whole school community is united in its commitment to the highest standards in all it does. All efforts are focussed on pupils' learning and both adults and children have a very positive work ethos.
Leadership and management	Excellent; the contribution which the new head has made to the enormous improvements in the school over the past year cannot be overestimated. Other staff and governors have followed her example and leaders and managers in all areas of the school have become very effective and influential. Monitoring and improvement have become a way of life and the school's aims the test of all its actions.
Curriculum	Staff have worked extremely hard to develop a very good curriculum for all children. Very good planning procedures ensure that work is stimulating, relevant and provides progressive challenge for pupils of all abilities. This is supported by the use of detailed, accurate information provided by excellent assessment and monitoring procedures
Pupils with special educational needs	Good; procedures for identifying, supporting and monitoring the progress of pupils who find learning difficult are much improved.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	The planned curriculum is enriched by very good provision for the development of pupils' spiritual awareness, moral judgement, social skills and appreciation of the richness of their own and other cultures
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Substantial improvements in the fabric of the school, the focus on enhancing the professional skills of all staff and the rationalising and reorganisation of resources have resulted in good overall accommodation, staff and resources
Value for money	Given the very high quality of the education it provides, the very high personal standards achieved by the children, the very efficient way its resources are deployed, the good progress being made and the phenomenal improvements made in the past year, the school provides very good value for money.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
I. If you have a problem or a question, it is easy to get it sorted out	
II. Their children enjoy going to school	
III. The school encourages parents to play an active part in its life	
IV. It tries hard to tell parents what their children are doing in school	
V. It keeps parents well informed about their child(ren)'s progress	
VI. Pupils achieve good standards of work	
VII. Behaviour is good	
VIII. All the teachers are very approachable	
IX. The head and staff are very supportive	
X. It gets pupils involved with lots of activities apart from lessons	

Inspectors strongly agree with all parents' positive views. All parents spoken to were very appreciative of the work of the school and were very pleased with the recent improvements. They were especially appreciative of the welcome and support they receive from all staff when compared with difficulties experienced in the recent past.

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KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

There are no key issues for the school to address but, in the context of its many strengths, the following minor points for improvement should be considered as the basis for an action plan.

- ¶ 16 - In one classroom, the arrangements do not encourage pupils to take some responsibility for their own learning
- ¶ 13 - Some individual education plans lack precision
- ¶ 52 - Role play is underdeveloped as a means of learning for four year olds
- ¶ 60 - By the time they leave the school, most pupils do not use joined handwriting
- ¶ 75,78 - Current provision for information and control technology, especially the hardware and software, inhibits pupils' capacity to reach standards achieved in other subjects

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Bartons School is a six class infant school serving an area to the north of Bognor Regis in the parish of Berstead. It serves an area of mixed housing including housing association and privately owned property and its pupils have a variety of backgrounds. Most pupils come from the village and the surrounding area, some from out of catchment. Its buildings date from the seventies but have recently been very creatively upgraded. The school has had a very stable staff for many years with the first changes for eleven years coming last year with the retirement of the head and the deputy head. At the time of the inspection, one class was being taken by a temporary teacher.

1.

2. One hundred and sixty three children are on roll aged between four and seven years, two of whom are descended from ethnic minorities. Forty-four four year old children all started school on a staggered basis in September, a few of them in a class with year one pupils. Twenty eight pupils have been identified as having special needs, one of whom has a statement, an average number and 34 are eligible for free school meals. Many more boys than girls are on roll. Attainment on entry to the reception class is a little below that which is found in most schools.

2.

3. The school aims to provide a caring environment in which children begin to grow intellectually, emotionally, physically and spiritually. In order to achieve this it aims to create a welcoming, happy, safe and purposeful environment; promote self-discipline, honesty, tolerance, fairness and respect, develop lively enquiring minds and excel in all it does. Among its priorities, the school intends to:

- develop monitoring procedures to improve standards and demonstrate school effectiveness
- further develop early years provision to raise standards
- raise standards of writing and spelling, especially with boys
- raise standards of numeracy, especially from National Curriculum Level 1 to Level 2
- ensure progression of skills for staff and children in information and control technology
- ensure the progression of science skills and knowledge within the school

1. Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	41	26	67

4. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	29	33	32
	Girls	21	24	24
	Total	50	57	56
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	(84) 75	(95) 86	(86) 84
	National	(80) 85	(81) 86	(84) 90

4. Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	27	31	37
	Girls	19	21	23
	Total	46	52	60
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	(79) 68	(85) 78	(95) 90
	National	(81) 85	(85) 85	(86) 90

1

1 Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through		%
Authorised	School	4.9
Absence	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised	School	0.7
Absence	National comparative data	0.5

1

1 Exclusions

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

1 Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
Very good or better		21
Satisfactory or better		100
Less than satisfactory		0

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

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

1 EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

1

Attainment and progress

1.The results of the most recent statutory assessments show that at the age of seven, the average National Curriculum test levels are close to the national average for reading, writing and mathematics. Standards achieved are above average when compared with similar schools. Overall science results by teacher assessment were above average when compared with all schools. In all aspects of each subject the number achieving higher levels is similar to the overall picture.

2. Standards observed in year two during the inspection show that, in all the core subjects, attainments are, if anything a little better than might be expected from the above results. All are at least at the top end of the average band nationally, with standards in writing and science above. The numbers likely to achieve level three are above average. Most pupils are currently making good progress throughout the school in each of the core subjects. Many pupils start school with underdeveloped speaking skills and the school makes a conscious and successful effort to ensure that these develop steadily through the school. Standards in literacy are improving through the thoughtful application of the literacy strategy and are better than might be expected, which enhances progress in several other subjects. Very well planned provision for individual reading in addition to the literacy hour ensures that the benefits of group reading help to improve standards. Numeracy skills are sound and good attention is given to encouraging pupils to use skills learned in mathematics in other work.

3.Four year olds are making good progress in the other areas of learning and, from a slightly below average base, most will have achieved all the desired outcomes before they are five. Standards in information technology are close to national expectations in year two with progress accelerating throughout the school with current improvements in provision. In all other subjects standards are appropriate for the ages of the pupils with examples of even higher standards where individual teachers have particular expertise in a subject, Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Targets on individual education plans are specific and evidence of progress can be seen in the review of each target. Boys and girls make similar progress through the school but boys' attainments in reading and writing are a little lower than girls'.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

4.Pupils' response to learning is very good. They have very positive attitudes to their work, concentrating well, trying hard to please and persevering with tasks. Boys and girls listen with interest to their teachers and to one another and are keen to contribute to discussions. They enjoy the close contact of adults such as when they share books or play games. All are proud of their work and achievements and enjoy sharing their successes. In the reception classes, children are secure, happy and settle well into school routines. They listen carefully, behave well and show an interest in

all aspects of their work. Four year olds develop good relationships with adults and other children.

5. Behaviour is very good in all areas of school life. Pupils are polite and friendly and they show respect and care for the school and its environment. They have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong, know the school rules and codes of conduct well and take care to abide by them. Lapses in behaviour are rare, no evidence of bullying or harassment were observed and the school has had no exclusions.

6. Relationships throughout the school are very constructive, supportive, relaxed and friendly and are a real strength of the school. The pupils respond well to the very good models provided by all adults in the school. They care about one another and often ask about children who are upset or hurt. Boys and girls share resources and patiently wait to take turns when playing games. Pupils undertake duties and responsibilities proudly, willingly and reliably. In classes they help with routine jobs such as taking messages and returning the registers to the office and year two pupils carry out additional tasks such as preparing the hall for assemblies, giving out hymn sheets and controlling the compact disc player, conscientiously. They give good support to a range of charities in the school locality and in the wider community. Through art, music and religious education, they are learning to show respect for a range of cultural traditions. In their topic work on the senses they discuss and empathise with the problems experienced by people with impaired senses such as the deaf and the blind.

10. **Attendance**

7. Levels of attendance have been consistently close to the national average for several years with some unauthorised absences. A little unpunctuality was noted but all pupils enjoy school and very little time is lost to absence or lateness.

11. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

11. **Teaching**

8. All teaching in the school is at least satisfactory with more than three-fifths good and a fifth very good. During the inspection week, a year one class was being taken successfully by a temporary teacher for the third week following other temporary teachers in a serial absence. Among the permanent staff present, nearly nine-tenths of lessons are at least good with nearly a quarter very good in all three year groups, The teaching of English is very good through the school's thoughtful and creative application of the literacy strategy. Since a third of lessons were reported to have had 'some shortcomings' in the last inspection, this represents a substantial improvement by essentially the same staff, All of the 'shortcomings' have been addressed and, in most cases, the area is now a strength.

9. Several factors are common to all good teaching in each year group. Lesson plans are very good being based on well developed medium term plans to ensure cohesion and relevance and the excellent assessment procedures to provide a good match and sufficient challenge for the range of ages and abilities. This was well shown in a very good history lesson where the school's museum and library were used as a stimulus and resource to enable more able pupils to research food technology, the middle group to compare artefacts associated with food with their modern-day counterparts and the less able to closely observe and describe some.

10. In this lesson, as in all the better lessons, the teacher established very good work habits and high

expectations for pupils' output and behaviour. Pupils making a bag for three apples in a very good design technology lesson used a wide range of tools and materials of their own choice sensibly and safely. Readily accessible resources and focussed support meant that all pupils not only completed the task confidently but could talk animatedly about their thoughtful and very individual designs. The activity was very well used as a focussed assessment task with all adults using observation sheets to note what pupils could and could not do against specific targets.

11. A vital ingredient of all good lessons as above, is the very well planned use of well-briefed extra adults to enhance pupils' learning, especially in the area of special needs. With the core provided by the very professional contribution made by teaching assistants, the impact of the work of the many volunteers including governors, students, support agencies and the head in her teaching role, is crucial to the high quality of the learning environment and the standards achieved. This is especially the case in the reception classes where the 'extra' adults enables the teacher to focus her attention on specific groups or individuals such as when using floor tiles outside to order numbers to twenty. In group work, very well prepared helpers ensure that young children stay focussed on learning objectives and consolidate their learning through talk. A good example of this was a volunteer governor working with pupils playing outside with large apparatus.

12. The impact of all three factors is very evident in a younger class where careful planning, well established procedures and the constructive use of available support enables the teacher to provide suitable and challenging activities. This class contains reception children, who are given the opportunity for structured outside play and several challenging pupils who are well behaved and interested in their work. However, a temporary teacher has taken over a class where resources have not been well organised, few extra adults are evident and pupils have not been trained to take responsibility for their work and behaviour. As a result, they are much more dependant and less confident and progress has not been as good.

The curriculum and assessment

13. The curriculum for children under five is very good. It is broad and balanced, very well planned and relevant to the needs and interests of the children. It is soundly based on first hand experience that takes good account of the nationally agreed areas of learning for young children. A very clear policy for the early years and a suitable scheme of work is well used. Reception class teachers work and plan closely together and this ensures good continuity of experience for the youngest children in the school. A comprehensively resourced and often used outdoor area ensures that the physical and social development of four year olds is very well addressed.

14. In Key Stage 1, the curriculum is very broad, well balanced and relevant. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are covered in depth. Time spent on literacy and numeracy is well planned with pupils experiencing a very good range of appropriate, practical activities. Pupils benefit from very good provision for their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Health, drugs and sex education are addressed appropriately for children of this age. The curriculum for pupils with special needs is very well planned and their learning needs are carefully identified and set out in individual education plans. Their progress is regularly reviewed and targets are generally clear and achievable although some would benefit from being more precise. The school provides equal access and opportunity for all to learn and make progress

15. Pupils' learning is enriched through a wide variety of visits and visitors. These are related creatively to the topics being studied and have recently included trips to the local shops as part of topic work on food, visits to a farm and the local bakery and visits from representatives of the local service providers, artists and musicians. Pupils also benefit from the opportunity to learn to play the

recorder and other instruments.

16. Teachers have worked very hard over the past year to improve the quality of their planning. All subjects now have clear curriculum policies and up to date, detailed schemes of work. The long and medium term planning provides an excellent foundation for the daily planning which is consistently good with all teachers clearly identifying learning objectives and targets for their lessons. This is having a very positive impact on the curriculum ensuring coverage and progression, and making a significant contribution to raising standards.

17. Assessment procedures throughout the school are outstanding. Very good use is made of baseline assessment to inform early planning and excellent systems are in place to ensure that assessment is on going and well used to inform planning. Teachers and support staff make regular focussed observations of children, assessing their progress and development against specific objectives and criteria. Every pupils' profile is regularly updated with information relating to significant milestones in their development. Termly assessment tasks in subjects such as design and technology enable progress in all subjects to be monitored carefully. Excellent portfolios for every subject are meticulously kept and beautifully presented. These value and celebrate pupils' work and set high standards and goals. Work in the portfolios is carefully annotated and clearly shows progression and continuity. The school knows its pupils very well and ensures that tasks are well matched to their learning needs. Clear longer term targets are set for every child and all work hard to ensure that these are achieved.

21. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

18. Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children is very good and a strength of the school. The last inspection report noted that the school contributed less to pupils' spiritual and cultural development than for their moral and social development. Religious education (RE), art and music needed review with the improvement of provision of RE a key issue. Children did not have enough opportunity for independent enquiry or to take some responsibility. They had limited opportunities to learn about other cultures through geography and history.

19. None of these comments still apply. The stated aim of the school is to 'provide a caring environment in which children begin to grow intellectually, emotionally, physically and spiritually'. Its ability to provide this secure haven for children who in many cases come from difficult backgrounds is recognised by parents and instinctively understood by the children themselves. The school explicitly seeks to offer more than just physical security and the delivery of the National Curriculum. Thus assemblies, whilst always fulfilling statutory requirements, also seek to increase the children's ability to reflect on their experiences and to learn to express those reflections publicly, in words, pictures or drama. Provision for religious education is now very good and while basically Christian in nature, also includes a strong multicultural element. This year the children have learnt about the Hindu festival of Diwali as well as the Chinese New Year in assemblies, with colourful displays in each case.

20. The school's ethos pervades every aspect of its life and adults within the school community work together to provide excellent role models. A simple code of conduct, displayed in all classrooms and agreed with the children for the current year, is well understood by older pupils. Children are given clear guidance on what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Parents are asked to cooperate in this by not swearing in the playground or allowing their children to 'abuse the gardens of our neighbours' on the way to school. The school's high standards are appreciated by parents, who feel overwhelmingly that its values have positive effects on their children and reported instances where difficult behaviour has been improved by its influence.

21. Staff encourage children to work happily on their own and to accept small responsibilities and duties. Even four-year-olds in their first term in school move confidently about the classroom, finding the items they need without help and working independently. Year one pupils help to wipe the tables after dinner, and year two pupils take turns to be 'helpers' in the playground, looking after reception children. All three year groups regularly present assemblies to the rest of the school. They quickly learn to respect school property and tidy up well when asked.

22. The broad and well-planned Curriculum gives good scope for pupils to begin to understand both their own culture and that of others. Good use is made of the village of Bersted itself, older local people and facilities such as the Weald and Downland Museum to give the children an understanding of the recent past. The school's collection of kitchen bygones and other items donated by parents and grandparents aroused great interest and will be maintained as a permanent resource. Children are unlikely to be exposed to many multicultural influences in this area and the school takes every opportunity to broaden their experience. A Caribbean story was used to illustrate a mathematics lesson, musical instruments from different cultures have been used and festivals from other faiths celebrated in assemblies. It is particularly impressive to see the way that multicultural elements are not used as a 'bolt on' addition, but form essential parts of an extraordinarily well-integrated curriculum.

26.

26. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

23. Support, guidance and pupil welfare are central to the school's ethos and it provides them all to a very good standard. The last inspection report noted that relationships between staff and pupils were good and children felt secure and happy. Children's achievements were recognised. The school had appropriate procedures in place to deal with health & safety and child protection issues. Induction of reception children was good and the school liaised well with local playgroups, as well as with the receiving junior school.

24. The records kept on each child are well designed and maintained and very good use is made of them. All staff constantly monitor behaviour and children's personal development as well as their academic progress. The work of the classroom assistants makes a major contribution to this process. All staff and any adults regularly visiting the school are given full briefing on child protection issues. The school is fully aware of its responsibilities in this area and fully discharges them. Health and safety procedures are good and clearly understood by all staff. Registration procedures fulfil statutory requirements and are often used as a basis for simple calculations. Absences are closely monitored and all registration data is recorded using a software package.

25. However, the school's concern for its pupils goes beyond procedural matters. Its initiatives, in conjunction with various outside agencies, to provide support for the families of its children, are very greatly appreciated both by the families concerned and by its partner agencies. Its 'drop-in' health clinic for parents and children's 'early morning club' have both been warmly received. The staff genuinely care about all the children and know them and their families well. Parents, many of whom are daunted by officialdom, find the staff welcoming, sympathetic and helpful. The numbers of parents helping in school has steadily increased over the last year. Liaison with pre-school providers is very good: one of the reception class teachers will visit all of them at least once a year. All reception children make pre-school visits to school, and one of the reception class teachers will visit them at home. The head of the associated junior school states that the transition is handled well and that the children are academically and emotionally well-prepared to move on.

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

29.

30. The school's partnership with parents is very good. Its catchment area includes 'The Trees' estate, which has many problems, including drug abuse and violence. A high proportion of children come from one-parent families and two to four children a term are on the 'at risk' register. The school is a member of the 'Trees Project' which is a consortium of many agencies including the social services, police and local council, all working together to try to improve matters on the estate. Bartons School offers a 'drop-in' health clinic where parents can consult the school nurse and the local health visitor. This provides an essential point of contact for families under stress, who can then be offered help by the most appropriate agency. It also runs an 'early morning club' where parents can leave their children before school starts, thus enabling them to get to work on time. Should funding permit, it is intended to offer a similar service for after school hours, ideally in a purpose-built 'parents room'. The school is running a course showing parents how to help their child learn to read and has begun to offer some adult literacy teaching as well.

26. Parents and other members of the community are given every encouragement to come into school to help and the number doing so has risen steadily over the past year. They are given good briefing and support on whatever tasks they undertake. A good number were seen in school during the inspection. Until recently, the headteacher played a major role in running the 'Friends of Bartons'. Volunteers have now taken over more of this responsibility. The 'Friends' have made a significant contribution through fund-raising and through organising school events. A barbecue with line-dancing was particularly well-supported and appreciated. Home/school reading diaries are well maintained on either side and each child is provided with a 'Bartons' reading book carry case.

27. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. Annual reports now not only fulfil statutory requirements but are written in clear and lively language which make teachers' knowledge of the children apparent. Families are kept fully informed of their children's progress. A number of curriculum workshops attracted a good proportion of parents who feel well-informed by the school. Special needs support is now very good and techniques for identifying and supporting these children have been greatly improved with much better use made of classroom assistants in the process.

28. Partnership with the wider community is good. Liaison with pre-school providers and the receiving junior school is very good as are links with the local church which is used as a learning resource as well as a place of worship on special occasions. The vicar regularly takes assemblies at school. Some elderly local residents help in school and have been invited to talk to the children about their experiences on topics such as domestic life and the Second World War. The school has established and made good use of links with the local supermarket branch within the current topic of 'Food'. It regularly raises funds for charities such as Children in Need.

33. **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

33. **Leadership and management**

29. The leadership and management of the school are excellent. It is hard to imagine what more could have been done over the past twelve months to make the school better than it is today, a happy, thriving, high-class provider for young children. Everyone present during the inspection has worked incredibly hard and taken on board a whole new way of working. Levels of professionalism, leadership, responsibility and confidence have increased almost beyond recognition and the staff team now constitutes a very powerful force for good. The governing body is providing every bit of support and encouragement it can in practical and moral terms and governors themselves are becoming ever more efficient and effective in their group and individual roles. Bartons School has an excellent ethos to match its clearly stated aims based on a widely shared commitment to the highest

standards for both staff and pupils.

30. Since September 1st 1998, the head teacher has, in her own optimistic, pragmatic and determined way, been responsible for managing a quiet revolution in the development of the school. She provides very effective and positive leadership and has worked closely with the staff and the governing body to put in place policies and procedures to improve planning and decision making. Every issue from the last inspection has been addressed and weaknesses have become strengths. No aspect of the school has been ignored and every opportunity taken to make the most of its human and physical resources. Links with parents and the local community are very good. The headteacher's contribution to the present very healthy state of the school is outstanding.

31. Governors are very supportive and committed to the school, many visiting on a regular basis. They now have a well-defined and understood structure of committees and individual responsibilities and a clear programme related to the priorities identified in the school development plan, Many bring considerable expertise to the governing body and all are very keen for the school to succeed. They are taking their new monitoring role very seriously visiting regularly and receiving feedback from staff on the effectiveness of various current policy developments. As individuals and as a body they know their school and their responsibilities very well. The special needs governor is very supportive and is a regular visitor to the school. She has a clear view of provision in the school and reports regularly to the governing body on special needs issues.

32. All teaching staff have subject and other responsibilities that are clearly laid out in job descriptions. Everyone in the school fully understands his or her respective role and is committed to fulfilling it and in constantly improving. Staff manage their responsibilities very effectively and are very conscientious. The special needs coordinator has managed the development of her area well and promotes good relationships within the school. Monitoring and evaluation have high priorities in the school community with the lead taken by the head who keeps a very close watch on what is happening in the school. Standards, classroom practice and the effectiveness of policies and procedures are kept under review by responsible staff and governors. Individual members of staff are encouraged to think about their own performance through professional interviews and professional development through in-service training has a high priority.

33. The new head's clearly structured and very practical school development plan created a very challenging planned agenda for developments in the medium term. It is a comprehensive document covering the whole range of aspects in the life of the school but focussing on the key aim of improving standards. Of necessity, it was mainly generated by the head to provide a clear and specific agenda for urgent action, The governing body monitored its application and evaluated its effectiveness and the action plan to follow the inspection will give everyone the opportunity to be more involved in the process of drawing up the next plan to include longer term targets.

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

34. The school employs a satisfactory number of hard working and suitably trained teachers who are appropriately qualified to teach the age range and have a balance of expertise to meet the demands of delivering the curriculum. Teachers have clear responsibilities and plan together. A generous number of learning support staff work conscientiously with the children.

35. Weaknesses identified in enhancing the professional development of the staff by their involvement in managing the curriculum have been significantly improved since the appointment of

the new headteacher. Procedures for the professional development of teaching staff are very good with strategies in place for the induction of new and newly qualified teachers. All teachers have curriculum responsibilities and job descriptions are in place. The headteacher carries out a programme of continuous staff development.

36. Classrooms are arranged in a single storey building and include a library and group room used for music and other activities. The hall is spacious and adequate hard standing and grassed areas are used for physical education. Secure areas for under-fives and the adventure playground are imaginatively developed and of high quality. The accommodation in the school is good.

37. Resources in the school are good. The national strategies for English and mathematics have resulted in an improvement in resources in these areas. A good stock of up to date reading books and a well presented library of reference books have been assembled and the school has sufficient consumable materials to deliver the curriculum. The history museum presents an effective way of displaying artefacts. All resources are systematically organised, well stored and accessible

42. **The efficiency of the school**

38. The overall financial planning to support the school's educational development is very good. Since the appointment of the present headteacher, coordinators have been empowered to develop their curriculum roles by formulating realistic and well-costed development plans that are regularly evaluated. The lack of such clearly defined roles was a weakness identified in the last inspection. The headteacher, governors and teachers now have a successful formula for budget planning that supports a broad and balanced curriculum as well as raising standards. A recent rise in pupil numbers against a previous steadily declining roll means the headteacher and governing body are now in a position to take a long term strategic view of future expenditure beyond 2000.

39. Very good use is made of the school's teaching and non-teaching staff, with excellent use of teaching assistants. Continuous professional development of teachers and the induction of new and newly qualified teachers are strengths of the school. The school is arranging for coordinators to monitor the teaching of their subjects and the headteacher monitors teaching and all areas of the curriculum systematically. Teaching assistants and special needs support staff are very well briefed and professional in their dealings with pupils. Their expertise and contribution is much appreciated. The school secretaries deal with a wide range of duties and ensure that the daily routines are run easily and unobtrusively. They provide a welcoming atmosphere to the school and contribute strongly to the school's friendly, caring ethos. The caretaker and cleaning staff are efficient and diligent in the maintenance and supervision of the site. Lunchtime supervisors make a positive contribution to the good behaviour and social development of the pupils.

40. Accommodation and learning resources are very well used. The areas for the children under-five and the adventure playground are particularly well planned to enable small groups of children to take advantage of the range of large play equipment. School accommodation is attractive and well used throughout the day. The group room is used constructively for music and other activities and the hall for assemblies, physical education and lunch. However, the hall is often empty and more use could be made of the space it provides in other areas of the curriculum. Effective use is made of the large stock of books particularly those used to deliver the literacy hour. Generous levels of resourcing ensure that subjects that have a high consumable requirement, such as art, are well supported and this contributes significantly to the quality of work throughout the school.

41. Financial controls in the school are of a very good standard and well supported by the local

authority. The headteacher and school bursar have a good understanding of the school's finances which ensures a constant awareness of the position against the budget. Regular definitive returns are provided for the headteacher to take to the finance committee. A full report is presented to each meeting of the governing body. The recent audit found no areas of concern and grants received for specific purposes are used as intended. Internal audits of all funds are carried out.

42. Very good use is made of staff, accommodation and learning resources. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below the national average, they make good progress, have very good standards of behaviour and achieve improving levels of attainment in national tests. The school provides a very high quality education, notably in its teaching. Given the enormous improvement since the last inspection, the school provides very good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

47. AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

43. Children start school in the September of the academic year in which they become five. Currently there are two classes of reception children, one of which has the youngest four year olds in it. Another class has reception and year one children. At the time of the inspection, 44 children were still four, the majority of these being in the two reception classes.

44. Four year olds enter a very supportive and caring environment which is bright attractive and well organised. The school has a very good relationship with other pre-school providers in the neighbourhood, A well established induction programme ensures that positive relationships are quickly forged with parents and carers through home visits, meetings and informal daily contact. Baseline assessment indicates that attainment overall at entry is a little below average. With good teaching and a curriculum relevant to the needs and interests of the children and soundly based on first hand experience, children make good progress and most achieve the nationally agreed learning outcomes by the time they are five.

Personal and Social Development

45. Boys and girls come happily to school and settle well into daily routines, carrying out tasks such as selecting activities, taking messages and tidying up responsibly and reliably. They are friendly and enjoy talking to adults, responding well to opportunities provided for them to show initiative and to make choices and decisions. Almost without exception they behave very well, listen carefully to adults and to other children, taking turns and sharing resources without fuss. They strive hard to please. Four year olds clearly understand the difference between right and wrong and are learning to respect the needs of others. They have made a very good start in establishing firm, trusting relationships.

Language and literacy

46. Children under five, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in language and literacy. At entry to school a significant number have poor speaking skills but, through sensitive, well planned adult support and purposeful activities they are learning to speak clearly. Many confidently raise their own comments and questions during discussions. They listen attentively to stories, to adults and one another and enjoy specific listening challenges such as listening to and identifying sounds on a "Sound Walk " around the school grounds. The children have positive attitudes to books. They handle them carefully and know that pictures and words carry meaning. Most understand some of the conventions and language associated with books; for example they understand 'page' 'cover' 'title' and they know that print is read from left to right. They retell familiar stories such as Three Bears and Little Red Riding Hood when using props in the sand or as a whole class role play activity. Some children already read a simple text and recognise letters by their name and sound.

47. Most children write their names and a number are making good first attempts at recording their ideas and experiences through writing. Both reception classes have a role play area set up as the kitchen of a home but there is scope to further develop the play in these areas to provide more opportunities for children to practice and develop the skills of reading and writing.

Mathematics

48. Children's progress in developing their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding is good and sometimes very good. They enjoy mathematical activities and most confidently count up

to and back from ten, recognise and name basic shapes and sort and classify using simple criteria, such as size, colour and shape. Children's interest in mathematics is stimulated by a wide range of relevant, practical activities. For example, they sort their teddy bears according to size, learning the names and properties of shapes through 'Thomas the Tank Engine' related activities, comparing the weight and measurement of toys, and investigating the concept of full and empty through water play. Practical activities are nearly always supported by a well-briefed adult whose skilful intervention and encouragement enables the children to make good progress in this area. Very good use is made of number rhymes, counting games and songs to extend and reinforce children's learning.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

49. Children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The foundations of history are well laid in the reception classes through the daily use of language associated with the passage of time such as changing the date and recalling the immediate past. They make very good progress in developing their understanding of the wider world in which they live through visits made around the school and in the local community. A recent visit to a local farm provided a stimulus for a wide range of work that included making plans of the farm, studying the animals and learning about the daily routines and work involved. The current topic on the senses has initiated some very good work related to food with children exploring and describing the changes that occur when making jelly and mixing dough after a visit from a local baker. Children do well when making and designing models such as robots and musical instruments. Their cutting and gluing skills are developing soundly and they enjoy using construction kits to build and create models and environments. Most children are confident in using the computer and have good control when using the mouse to play simple games and draw pictures.

Creative development

50. Four year olds know a good repertoire of nursery rhymes and songs which they sing tunefully. They enjoy listening to music and playing percussion instruments and are beginning to recognise high and low sounds and maintain a steady beat. Most are making good progress in drawing, painting, collage and modelling with materials such as dough, clay and recycled materials. They are learning to mix colours when painting and to look carefully at objects such as musical instruments when drawing. Boys and girls have plenty of opportunities to paint freely and select tools and equipment for themselves.

Physical development

51. The very well resourced, well used and carefully developed outdoor areas ensure that the children make good progress with the development of their physical skills, They have daily planned time to test and challenge their physical skills and are well supported by parents, classroom helpers and other volunteers when playing in the outside area. Each class also has regular planned time in the school hall for more formal physical education lessons. In these they are successfully developing specific skills such as controlling travelling movements, jumping and climbing and gaining in their awareness of space. They have many good opportunities to develop their manipulative skills when they paint, write, draw, glue, stick, put together and take apart construction equipment and use table top toys and jigsaws.

56. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

56. **English**

52. The 1999 national assessment test results for seven-year-olds in reading and writing are in line with the national average. In comparison with pupils from similar schools results are above the

national average. The results over the last three years show no significant trends against national standards with girls doing a little better than boys in reading and writing. Levels of attainment from lesson observations during the inspection confirm that standards in English are in line with national expectations in reading, while slightly above national standards in writing. Pupils' progress over time in all aspects of English, including pupils with special educational needs, is good. Pupil progress during lessons is mainly good as a direct result of clearly focused teaching based on the National Literacy Strategy.

53. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. They enter school with lower than average standards and make good progress. In the literacy hour shared text work, pupils are attentive and interested in answering questions. Teachers encourage them to extend their vocabulary and to speak in more complex sentences. In a lesson on making party food pupils gave clear answers and could sequence events, such as in making a sandwich. Teachers place a strong emphasis on the development of speaking and listening. In doing so, they plan activities in various group sizes, to provide opportunities for pupils to ask and answer questions, express opinions, describe events and predict outcomes. In developing listening skills, pupils respond to a range of stimuli such as poems and nursery rhymes, complex instructions, word games and using puppets. Teaching assistants often act as scribes in recording pupil progress and detailed assessment records are maintained,

54. Most achieve standards in reading in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and their progress is good. The school has promoted the value and enjoyment of books very effectively and pupils clearly gain pleasure from them. A well-resourced library area is an attractive feature of the entrance to the school. Most pupils read texts from a wide selection of appropriate reading schemes with a satisfactory level of accuracy and understanding. Shared reading as a class using common text from, for example, a big book and guided reading in small ability groups, teaches the necessary skills of reading. It also enhances pupils' enjoyment of reading and focuses on such terms as author, illustrator, title, fiction and non-fiction. More able pupils in a year two reading group, read short plays with individuals or pairs taking parts. All pupils try to read with expression and are heard to read regularly in school and at home.

55. Good progress in writing leads to attainment levels slightly above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils show an increasing fluency in the range and style of their writing as they progress through the school. In their writing, pupils structure work well, use a balance of accurate or phonetically plausible spelling, punctuate sentences well and write increasingly complex sentences. Year one pupils identify capital letters at the start of sentences and names. They put fruit in alphabetical order and write words to describe the fruit. Year two pupils looking at non-fiction writing discuss a range of writing activities in planning a party. They write invitations, recipes and the rules of party games. Writing structures are well developed and pupils know how to use a high frequency word card, their own wordbooks and dictionaries. The presentation of their work is good, with due care taken in letter formation. However, the majority of pupils by the end of Key Stage 1 do not write in joined handwriting, an issue that the school plans to address.

56. Pupils enjoy English and are keen to talk about their work. Their attitudes to learning are consistently good and they show good levels of sustained concentration. All behave very well, are courteous to each other and enjoy very good relationships with each other and all adults who help them with their work. Pupils co-operate very well during shared tasks such as group reading.

57. Teachers plan their lessons very well, based on the Literacy Strategy framework for teaching. They understand the learning objectives and provide high quality oral work with pupils' contributions being encouraged and extended. Lessons are brisk, expectations are high and teachers apply the school's policy consistently. The very effective use of teaching assistants and well-briefed helpers contributes significantly to pupils' achievements. Teaching is very good.

58. The English coordinator has made a very strong contribution to the development of the subject and she and the headteacher monitor both the planning and the teaching. Detailed policies, guidance and procedures support the National Literacy Strategy framework. Assessment procedures are excellent, with detailed pupil assessment, levelled and annotated portfolios of work and a regular English audit. These ongoing assessment procedures are used effectively to inform planning and to predict future levels of attainment for each pupil. Resources for English are generally good and those to support literacy are very good. The National Literacy Strategy has made a very significant impact on the standards of literacy in the school and teachers use every opportunity in their planning to use these skills across the curriculum. In the current topic on food, for example, year two pupils think of adjectives to describe the textures of fruits.

63. **Mathematics**

59. On entry to school the mathematical knowledge and understanding of most pupils is below average. Pupils make good progress throughout their reception year and on entry to Key Stage 1 have achieved the nationally agreed learning outcomes for children of this age. Throughout the key stage, they continue to make good progress. By the time they are seven, they are achieving standards in line with the national average with some attainment that is a little above. In 1999 the number of boys and girls achieving level two or above in the standard assessment tasks was average when compared with schools nationally, but above average, when compared with pupils from a similar background. Inspection findings indicate that standards are improving in mathematics and more pupils are forecast to achieve higher standards in next year's tests.

60. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and occasionally very good progress, in all areas of their mathematical development. The majority of year one pupils confidently add, subtract, read, count and write numbers to ten. Some are working with numbers beyond this. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils know that a digit's position and use determine its value and use this to identify and order numbers correctly. They show confidence and accuracy in recognising and continuing number patterns, including odd and even numbers. Pupils are developing sound mental strategies in number work and most can explain their understanding and how they have arrived at an answer, using the appropriate mathematical vocabulary.

61. Boys and girls have consistently good attitudes to their work. Most respond particularly well to practical activities and to the regular opportunities provided for them to apply their mathematical skills and knowledge in games and other relevant situations. They are well motivated, work hard and behave well in lessons. Pupils work well together, sharing resources and taking turns when playing games. They help one another when appropriate and try hard to please and take pride in their work.

62. Teaching is mainly good and sometimes very good. Lessons are well planned with the clear learning objectives often shared with the pupils. Tasks are relevant, motivating and well matched to pupils' abilities. Numeracy hours, mathematical games and practical sessions are carefully organised with good support from suitably briefed adult helpers and skilful classroom assistants who make a significant and valued contribution to pupils' progress. Teachers use questions well to assess pupils' understanding and to move their thinking and learning on. Day to day routines such as registration are well used by teachers for mental mathematics and good opportunities are provided for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other curriculum areas to support topic work. In the topic on food, children weigh the ingredients for making pizzas, take fifty pence to the shop to spend, weigh, sort and count fruit and vegetables. Information technology is consistently well used to support pupils' learning. The planning and support for children with special educational needs is good. Assessment procedures are very well developed. Teachers record pupils' progress meticulously and regularly plan and carry out assessment tasks to inform their planning. Classroom

assistants make pertinent notes on pupils' response during numeracy sessions and these are well used to record significant milestones in development and to plan the next stage of learning. Most classrooms have attractive, well-organised mathematics areas and many displays celebrate and value pupils' work in the subject.

63. The mathematics coordinator is currently absent from school and her role is being temporarily filled by the head teacher. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well introduced and is being regularly monitored by the head teacher. An excellent portfolio of work at appropriate levels for each year group sets standards and goals for mathematics and clearly shows coverage of the curriculum, continuity and progression. Precise targets have been set for the development of the subject and for improving the attainment of all pupils. The school is successfully meeting its targets to raise standards in the subject. Resources are good. They are attractively presented, well stored in most classrooms and readily accessible to both pupils and adults.

68. **Science**

64. Pupils' attainment when they leave the school at the age of seven is better than that found in most schools as is suggested by the most recent statutory assessment results at the end of Key Stage 1 which are above average. They are making good progress throughout the school.

65. Teachers use a topic based approach largely determined by the requirements of the science scheme of work and involving cross-curricular issues. This includes elements of the national scheme as the core of its work in a two-year rolling programme. The programme of study is covered systematically and coverage and continuity are ensured in the mixed age classes. Food is the current topic and the three lessons observed showed how teachers use the topic to ensure that the work is relevant to the pupils concerned while developing scientific knowledge, understanding and methods. Younger pupils started the week by using their sense of smell to describe and identify various foodstuffs which they then record in a variety of ways appropriate to their abilities. At the end of the week they showed the rest of the school what they had been doing and followed this up by analysing what, in their lunchboxes, was healthy or not for their teeth. This they tallied and entered onto a database. An older class conducted a whole class investigation on what happens to various foodstuffs such as chocolate and bread when it is heated up. Pupils showed that they were well able to make reasonable predictions, describe what happened and some to generalise about the results.

66. From the evidence of past work especially in the outstanding school portfolio, pupils in all classes are covering the required elements of the science curriculum. In conversation, pupils are very happy to show how well they remember and understand this work. Boys and girls of all ages are making good progress in developing and using their powers of observation and description and older pupils are beginning to learn the principles involved in conducting experiments and investigations at their own level.

67. Pupils enjoy their work in science and are confident in approaching tasks set and in explaining what they are doing. They work well together when doing experiments. Boys and girls are attentive and observant when required and self-reliant and responsible when working without direct supervision, They relate well to each other and usually behave sensibly,

68. All teaching is good. Work is well planned to meet the requirements of the subject and the needs of the mixed age groups where necessary. Most teachers have sufficient knowledge of the particular areas being taught and use clear explanations and incisive questioning to stimulate thought and initiate activities. Activities are well prepared and organised, clearly explained and available support is very well used to encourage and prompt pupils in their work.

69. Science teaching is well supported by a good policy and a scheme of work incorporating many of the Qualifications and Curriculum Agency (QCA) units and the subject meets statutory requirements. The science programme of study was the primary consideration when deciding the whole school topic cycle and the scheme of work is strictly adhered to. The coordinator checks medium term plans regularly to monitor coverage and has just started classroom monitoring. Two specific activities emphasising investigational skills are included each term, one of which is purely for monitoring purposes. This work is assessed and matched to National Curriculum levels with further assessments where appropriate. Since all classes are following the same topic, this provides a good overview of achievements across the school. These are supported by an outstanding portfolio of work which shows the types of activities undertaken and the levels these indicate. The coordinator is an enthusiast for the subject and has attended in-service courses to develop her expertise and knowledge. She has worked hard to develop the subject, rewriting the policy and developing the scheme of work. Resources have been audited and supplemented to match the agreed topics, They are now sufficient to meet the requirements of the curriculum and are well stored and maintained to make them freely available to staff and pupils.

74. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

74. Information and Control Technology

70. During the inspection, no formal lessons on information technology (ICT) were observed though teachers used ICT in lessons and pupils were working independently at computers in classrooms. Judgements are based on these observations, scrutiny of work, pupils' ICT diaries, the school ICT portfolio, plus discussion with pupils and staff. Since the last inspection, the school has significantly improved its provision for ICT. Improvements in planning, assessments, recording and teacher expertise have had a positive impact on the development of the subject. As a result, standards of attainment are close to those expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school.

71. Children in the reception classes make a good start. They understand the basic keyboard for writing activities and learn the beginning of mouse control. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use computers to write, change, save and print out their work with some adult help. They programme a 'Roamer' to follow a set pathway and use simple graphics and data handling programmes effectively to illustrate their work. In their topic on food, pupils use a programme to produce graphs to show where families shop and which are children's favourite fruits. Year one pupils, in considering healthy teeth in science, look at the contents of their packed lunch boxes and enter the class data. Year two pupils combine graphics and text to print the front page of 'Picnic News'. Year one pupils re-design a village by dragging different parts to re-assemble a 3-D view and years one and two pupils design a house in their topic on homes.

72. Pupils enjoy their information technology sessions, are well motivated and have positive attitudes. They sustain concentration and persevere when work is difficult. Pupils work well together, supporting each other in small groups. They take a pride in their diaries and care of the equipment.

73. Teachers, in their planning, identify the skills to be taught and use these skills to communicate the information in topic work. The coordinator has identified a suitable programme of computer skills that are incorporated into the weekly planning sheets to improve coverage and progression, often supporting topic work. This is already raising standards particularly in communicating ideas when writing stories and creating pictures but there is a lack of modelling programmes that, for example, explore an adventure game to find out the consequences of making different decisions. The school

has recently purchased its first PC and two more will be in school in the next month. The development of ICT is a clear priority on the school development plan.

78. Religious Education

74. Provision for religious education was a key issue in the last inspection report. It is now very good with well-planned lessons based securely on the local agreed syllabus, much higher expectations and good evidence, especially in the excellent portfolio, of much higher standards. The subject now enriches the school's curriculum and makes a strong contribution to pupil's cultural, moral and spiritual development.

75. The lessons for the term are centred round the idea of special people. These include Ruth and Naomi, Philip the disciple, pupil's own friends and in the lesson observed, the local priest. He, in his pastoral role and as a governor, is a frequent visitor and has spoken to the class about what he does as a religious leader. All children have a good background of bible stories. Older pupils in year two begin to recognise the message behind the stories Jesus told and develop an appreciation of how such messages are still relevant to present day life. Pupils are confident to discuss moral and environmental issues. They are making good progress in understanding the beliefs of those who follow the Christian faith and the key events in the Christian calendar. Most are making good progress in understanding some beliefs and ceremonies associated with some of the world religions notably Judaism and Hinduism. Good evidence of this can be found in the portfolio and in displays around the school.

76. Response in lessons is good. Pupils are attentive and make thoughtful contributions. They value each others contributions and older pupils have a mature approach to moral issues. Pupils settle quickly to tasks and work sensibly in groups.

77. The quality of teaching overall is good. Lessons are well planned and resources appropriately organised. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and display a sensitive approach to the subject. Questioning is good and teachers value pupils' contributions to discussions. The headteacher as coordinator, monitors planning effectively and, as an enthusiast, has built up the profile of the subject and ensured that it more than meets the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. Resources are good and the school makes good use of the local church as an additional resource.

Art and Design Technology

78. Pupils make good progress in art and achieve standards appropriate for their age although some work in the school art portfolio is of a higher standard and a little above that expected from pupils of a similar age. Attractive displays in classrooms and shared areas and a meticulously maintained art portfolio celebrate and value pupils' work in the subject. They are gaining in their knowledge of other artists through looking at work by painters such as Cezanne and producing carefully created pastel pictures in the style of his paintings. Staff provide good opportunities for pupils to learn about the art of other cultures and through a visiting artist have studied aboriginal art and created their own aboriginal designs and patterns with fabric dyes and wax.

79. Boys and girls work with a variety of media and techniques. Many good examples of work with textiles include weaving with a variety of materials, tie and dye work and work of a high standard using fabric and thread. All pupils look carefully at artifacts and produce well observed pencil drawings of such things as old kitchen utensils, musical instruments and fruit. From the earliest age,

children are taught the skills of colour mixing which they use well when producing their own paintings. Pupils have ample opportunity to work with clay, dough and to produce three-dimensional designs and models. Children in the reception classes model and decorate the initial letter of their name in clay; pupils in years one and two make good papier mâché models of fruit and a very impressive imaginative work of art has been created by a group of pupils with wire, paint and paper. Pupils enjoy art and are very proud of their work.

80. In the two lessons observed teaching was good. Lessons are well planned with clearly taught techniques, well explained tasks and resources well organised and used. Teachers know the subject and make good links with the topic being studied and other curriculum areas. A good example of this was the lesson relating observational drawings of old and new kitchen utensils, to the topic on food and the history lesson which had preceded it. Teachers celebrate pupils' work in art by displaying work attractively to represent a variety of skills and techniques. The school art portfolio is an excellent record of pupils' achievement in art. It is carefully maintained and well annotated and sets standards and goals for the subject. An art scheme of work has recently been developed which clearly identifies a progression of skills. This is helping teachers with their planning and having a positive impact on the subject.

Design Technology

81. Only one lesson was observed in design and technology but from this lesson, scrutiny of previous work, work on display and teachers' planning, attainment is judged to be appropriate for the ages of the pupils involved. Progress is good. In the reception classes, five year olds make good progress when they select suitable materials to make models of robots, musical instruments and wheeled vehicles. They demonstrate a sound ability to use simple tools such as scissors, staplers and hole punches safely and appropriately. When working with construction kits they show that they are able to generate their own ideas and create their own designs.

82. Years one and two pupils undertake very specific design tasks such as designing and making a bag to carry three apples. They make very good progress, selecting confidently from a range of tools, materials and techniques and are well able to explain their choices. Many reflect on their designs and suggest improvements. All pupils have regular opportunity to cook and have recently made their own individual pizzas, jam and fruit salads as part of their topic on food. Pupils enjoy designing and making tasks. They persevere when they encounter problems, patiently share equipment and are proud of their finished work.

83. Teaching in the one lesson observed had a number of very good features. The lesson was very well planned, resources well organised and pupils encouraged to be independent and thoughtful about their work. The task of designing and making a bag for apples was well used for assessment purposes. Both the teacher and her helpers assessed children's progress against design and technology targets and objectives during the lesson, This is good practise and a regular feature of all teachers' planning for the subject. Teachers keep careful records of pupils' work in the subject and have recently started to compile a portfolio to show progression and coverage in each year. Design and technology tasks are carefully planned as part of topic work and are made very relevant to the pupils' interests and experience.

Geography and History

84. Long term plans for these two subjects show that they are planned within whole school themes such as the current topic on food, but with specific geographical or historical objectives. From the scrutiny of work completed over the year, the excellent portfolios and from the evidence of the few

lessons observed during the inspection and current work, standards in both subjects are generally appropriate for the ages of the pupils involved,

85. Year one pupils using a road map of the area around the school showed that they understood the concept of the map, identified features such as the school and could trace a suitable route from their homes to school. Older pupils described the similarities and differences between utensils used with food from the past with their present day counterparts. Higher achievers went on to use the library to research the way food was prepared in days gone by. They had previously traced their route to the shops and learned about the way bananas find their way from the Caribbean to the shop.

86. All pupils observed thoroughly enjoy their work in the humanities and work hard at their varied tasks. The younger pupils work well together discussing their maps. They ask and answer questions confidently and are very attentive. Older pupils are enthusiastic about the tasks they are set, answered questions confidently and were very willing to volunteer suggestions about possible uses. Behaviour is always good even when pupils are working unsupervised or with parental help some distance from the class area.

87. All teaching observed was at least good and the lesson using the school's museum was very good. In this class, the confidence and expertise of the teacher and the clarity of the objectives means that every pupil gains a great deal of understanding and insight into the use of artefacts and reference materials to investigate the past. In the younger class, the teacher has a good positive relationship with her charges. Work set is well matched to learning objectives and appropriately matched to the needs of the class. The quality of questioning and prompting to draw out pupils' own experiences is good.

88. The coordinators are very knowledgeable about these subjects and they have worked very hard to put in place policies and schemes of work to match the agreed approach. In each subject, what is taught has an emphasis on the appropriate skills and teachers use group assessment sheets to record whether pupils have achieved targets set. Planning and outcomes are monitored and classroom monitoring is planned to start in 2000. Resources are in good supply and very accessible with the new school museum a notable example.

93. **Music**

89. Attainment in music is generally in line with that expected of pupils of a similar age. All elements of the subject are given due importance and music makes a significant contribution to the life of the school. Pupils in year two learn the recorder and some pupils receive tuition with chosen instruments from a peripatetic teacher.

90. Pupils sing well. In whole school singing practice even the youngest sing songs from memory and enjoy performing to an audience. In a year two lesson pupils move in response to musical stimuli and recognise silences as a 'rest' in the 'Camel ride' song, and when singing they sing with expression. Pupils use 'The First Musicians' in the literacy project to develop understanding of timbre and pitch as well as the use of appropriate untuned percussion to illustrate the text. The making of their own musical instruments enhances their understanding of sound,

91. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in all aspects of music. Pupils in the recorder groups and those receiving tuition from visiting music teachers, make very good progress in performing on their instruments. Music provides a great deal of enjoyment and satisfaction for many children and all are enthusiastic about making their contribution. They

listen attentively and make interesting comments on the music they hear. All use technical vocabulary at their own level, know the names of a wide range of percussion instruments and recognise the sounds of instruments. They enjoy musical events such as musicians visiting the school and performing individually with instruments.

92. Teaching standards are good. Pupils are well managed and teachers conduct lessons with energy and a very positive approach. They have good subject knowledge based on the commercial scheme that the school follows, and activities are well prepared. Assessment of pupils' progress is a feature of good teaching. Music lessons take place in a specialist room with a good range of resources readily available.

Physical Education

93. Evidence based on gymnastics and dance lessons, teachers' planning and discussion with staff suggests that progress in physical education (PE) is satisfactory and that pupils' attainments are broadly appropriate for their age.

94. In gymnastics pupils show awareness of space and travel in different directions using feet and hands, being aware of the number of balance points. In jumping they understand the importance of using their knees to control their speed and distance. In dance, year one pupils respond to the theme of weather, while year two pupils work on a series of lessons based on the consistency of food linked to their topic, dancing to the properties of syrup.

95. Pupils usually try hard, listen attentively and show enjoyment in their PE lessons. They are very enthusiastic and work well individually and in pairs, performing confidently to the class when asked. In dance they respond positively to instruction accompanying the music. In all lessons they take out and put away the apparatus quickly and sensibly and they are aware of safety procedures. Through working together, PE makes a good contribution to pupils' social development.

96. The overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a generally good knowledge and understanding of the subject and are aware of the need for pupils to warm up and cool down. Planning from the school's commercial scheme of work ensures at least good progress from one year to the next. Their questioning, for example when looking at an individual performance contributes to improving standards. The main difference between satisfactory and good lessons is in the pace of the lesson and the amount of physical activity the pupils undertake. Teachers manage the pupils well and are appropriately changed for lessons.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

101. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

97. Four inspectors spent a total of twelve days inspecting the work of the school. They made a total of 43 observations of lessons, or parts of lessons, or other work with pupils, over a total of 29 hours and 15 minutes. They scrutinised a complete sample of work of about 12 per cent of the pupils in the school, heard a similar number read and spoke to many more about their work. Inspectors held discussions with members of the teaching and non-teaching staff, and governors. All available school policies, registers and teachers' plans and records were examined, as were governors' minutes and reports to parents. A meeting attended by nine parents was held to hear their views about the work of the school and 44 responded to a questionnaire

98.DATA AND INDICATORS

103. 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 – Y2	163	1	28	34

103. Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y2)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	23.3

103. Education support staff (YR – Y2)

Total number of education support staff:	6
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	130

Average class size:	27.2
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103. Financial data

Financial year:	1998-9
	£
Total Income	339407
Total Expenditure	327983
Expenditure per pupil	1832
Balance brought forward from previous year	700
Balance carried forward to next year	12124

103. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 163

Number of questionnaires returned: 44

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	57	43			
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	68	32			
The school handles complaints from parents well	22	66	12		
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	33	65	2		
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	41	57	2		
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	27	66	7		
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	31	55	14		
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	28	67	3	3	
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	33	63	5		
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	26	62	12		
My child(ren) like(s) school	59	41			

103. Other issues raised by parents

No issues were raised by parents