

INSPECTION REPORT

Ripponden Primary School
Ripponden

LEA area: Calderdale

Unique Reference Number: 107514

Inspection Number: 188164

Head teacher: Mr D Brier

Reporting inspector: Mr D Maddocks

Dates of inspection: 20 – 24 September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706863

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

Type of control: County

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr M Smith J.P.

Date of previous inspection: May 1996

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A Pullan	Science Art Music Physical education	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development The curriculum and assessment Staffing

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- It achieves very high standards in the national tests for 7 and 11 year olds.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average.
- The head teacher provides good pastoral leadership.
- The quality of teaching in Year 6 is very good.
- Good teaching was seen in every classroom.
- It has a positive ethos that reflects the school's commitment to valuing pupils for themselves, as well as their achievements.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is very good.
- The provision for pupils' social development is excellent.
- A wide range of art activities is offered to pupils.
- A very wide range of extra-curricular opportunities is provided for pupils, particularly with regard to sporting activities.
- The school makes very good use of the local area, visits and visitors to the school to extend and enrich the curriculum.
- Pupils' relationships with adults and other pupils are very good.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is very good.
- Parents are encouraged to become involved in their children's learning.
- The school's aims are implemented well.
- The governing body is very supportive and involved in the day-to-day life of the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in the life of the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school.

Where the school has weaknesses

- Standards in information technology are below average.
- Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to explore the practical aspects of science and mathematics, partly because resources need improving.
- Staff do not have a shared understanding of the way in which the school should develop.
- The curriculum is not planned, monitored or evaluated sufficiently and, as a result, the school cannot guarantee that pupils are provided with learning opportunities in an appropriate sequence that builds upon their previous learning.
- Teachers do not clearly identify what they expect pupils to have learnt by the end of a lesson or sequence of lessons.
- There are no clear links between teachers' assessment of what pupils know, understand and can do and their planning for future lessons.
- The governing body is not effectively monitoring the school's curriculum.
- Teachers' professional development needs are not being fully met.
- Arrangements for pupils' departure at the end of the day are not satisfactory.
- After breaks, some lessons do not start on time.

The school has more strengths than weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses 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

The school has made a number of improvements since the last inspection. The planning and provision for pupils under the age of five has improved. The school's induction programme for new teachers has been reviewed and improved. The Governor's Annual Report to Parents and the School Prospectus now meet legal requirements. An equal opportunities policy has been implemented and girls and boys are now fully integrated and work well with each other. The school has implemented strategies to deal with disruptive pupils and, as a result, pupils' behaviour has improved although a small number of boys still occasionally disrupt lessons.

Procedures have been established to monitor curriculum planning and its implementation in the classroom. However, these procedures have not yet been fully implemented and, as a result, the school has not formally identified or dealt with the inconsistencies that exist in the planning or implementation of the curriculum throughout the school.

The school has made a number of improvements in its provision for information technology. Information technology is used in many curriculum areas and there is more hardware and software in the school. A new co-ordinator has been appointed and staff training has taken place. However, standards in information technology are still too low and the full National Curriculum programmes of study are not yet taught.

The school has made satisfactory progress in the three years since the last inspection although aspects of some of the key issues need to improve further. The school has the capacity to continue to improve. It has set realistic targets in English, mathematics and science and a scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that they are likely to meet these targets.

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	
English	B	C	well above average	A
Mathematics	A	A	above average	B
Science	A	C	average	C
			below average	D
			well below average	E

The information shows that standards in English were above average, while standards in mathematics and science were well above average when compared with other schools nationally. When compared with schools that have a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards in English and science were average, while standards in mathematics were well above average. The English and mathematics results were similar to those gained in the 1998 tests. However, the science results were significantly better.

When children enter the reception class, their language, personal and social skills are above average for children of this age, although the full ability range is represented. Children make good progress in the reception class and, by the age of five, most children are working above the levels expected of this age. Pupils make steady progress in Key Stage 1 and, by the end of Year 2, standards in English, mathematics and science are above average, although standards in information technology are just below average. Standards in religious education are average. The results of the latest 1999 tests for seven year olds confirm inspectors' judgements and show a slight improvement over the good 1998 test results. Pupils continue to make steady progress at the start of Key Stage 2, and good progress towards the end of the key stage, particularly in Year 6. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average. Pupils are well prepared for the end of key stage tests. Standards in religious education are average, but standards in information technology are below average.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory, often good
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory, often good
Science		Satisfactory	Good
Information technology		Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence
Religious education		Good	Good
Other subjects	Good	Satisfactory, sometimes good	Satisfactory, sometimes good

Teaching was at least satisfactory in 99 per cent of lessons. It was good in 41 per cent of lessons and very good or better in a further 13 per cent. Less than satisfactory teaching was seen in only 1 per cent of lessons. Good teaching is seen in all classes but the quality of teaching in the reception class is consistently good. In Year 6, the teaching is often very good. English, mathematics and science are taught well, and pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are developed well. Too few information technology lessons were seen to make judgements about the quality of teaching. Teaching of religious education is 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	Pupils' behaviour is very good.
Attendance	Very good; Pupils arrive at school on time and start working the moment they arrive in class. However, after breaks lessons do not always start on time.
Ethos*	There is a positive ethos in the school. Staff are committed to high standards. Attitudes to learning are good and relationships in the school are very good, although this varies from class to class.
Leadership and management	The head teacher provides strong pastoral leadership. However, staff do not have a clear shared understanding of the way in which the school should develop and co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in planning and monitoring their curriculum areas. The governing body is very supportive, is involved at an early stage in making decisions that affect the school's development, but is not yet effectively monitoring curriculum development.
Curriculum	With the exception of information technology, the school's curriculum is broad and balanced. However, there is no clear curriculum plan that takes account of the mixed age classes. As a result, the school cannot guarantee that pupils will not unnecessarily repeat work from one year to the other or that pupils are provided with learning opportunities in an appropriate sequence that builds upon their previous learning.
Special educational needs	The school makes good provision and they make good progress throughout the school.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Overall, the school's provision is very good and results in the school's positive ethos. The provision for pupils' social development is excellent.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Staff are committed and very hard working. Resources in the school range from inadequate to over-generous. The school makes good use of its buildings although some classrooms are cramped.
Value for money	The school provides 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school. • They find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems. • The school gives them a clear understanding of what their children are taught. • The school keeps them well informed about their children's progress. • Their children achieve good standards of work. • The school encourages children to become involved in more than just their daily lessons. • The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children. • The school achieves high standards of behaviour. • Their children like coming to school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school does not give them a clear understanding of what their children are taught. • The school does not keep them well informed about their children's progress. • The provision made for information technology. • Arrangements at the end of the school day. • The policy of changing shoes before entering or leaving the school's buildings.

Inspector's judgements support the very positive comments made by parents. The school provides an appropriate range of information about what pupils are being taught and the progress they have made. The school's provision for information technology has improved since the last inspection but still needs to improve. Arrangements for pupils leaving the school at the end of the school day are not satisfactory and the policy of changing shoes at the start and end of breaks causes congestion and means some lessons do not start promptly.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

To further improve the standards of work and learning of the pupils, the governing body, head teacher and staff should:

- (a) raise attainment in information technology by the ages of seven and 11 by:
 - producing and implementing a scheme of work that clearly identifies what pupils should know, understand and be able to do by the end of each year;
 - improve teachers' knowledge and understanding of information technology;
 - improving the resources available to support the teaching of information technology;
 - providing pupils in Key Stage 2 with opportunities to model, monitor, measure and control the physical environment.
(paragraph 22, 42 - 44, 91, 142 - 147)

- (b) improve the school's planning of the curriculum to provide a more systematic development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in order to:
 - make sure that the planning of the curriculum takes more account of the mixed age nature of the school's classes;
 - introduce pupils to the skills they need in an appropriate and logical sequence as they move through the school;
 - identify precisely what teachers expect pupils of different abilities to learn by the end of a lesson or sequence of lessons;
 - identify opportunities to assess whether pupils have learnt what they were expected to;
 - make use of the results of these assessments to help plan the next stage of pupils' learning.
(paragraphs 38, 42 - 45, 49, 50 - 52, 102, 122, 127, 131, 136, 141, 147, 152, 156)

- (c) set a clearer educational direction for the school by:
 - identifying a manageable number of priorities in the school development plan;
 - identifying measurable targets linked to these priorities;

- establishing a programme of regular professional development for teachers linked to the school's priorities;
- making the role of subject co-ordinators more meaningful in the management of their curriculum area;
- involving the governing body more effectively in monitoring the school's curriculum.
(paragraphs 67 – 68, 70 – 71, 73, 76, 84)

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

- Ensure that lessons start promptly after breaks.
(paragraphs 39, 85)
- Improve the arrangements for dismissing pupils at the end of the school day.
(paragraph 63)
- Improve the school's resources, particularly for practical subjects.
(paragraphs 80, 104, 113, 122, 147, 152, 156)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1 Ripponden Primary School is a smaller than average school with 170 pupils on roll and roughly equal numbers of boys and girls. Children enter the reception class in the autumn term of the academic year in which they have their fifth birthday. Most children have received pre-school education before starting at the school. At the time of the inspection only one child in the reception class was five years old. When they start at the school, children have a wide range of skills; most are above average in terms of their social and language skills although their mathematical skills are typical for their age. Overall, attainment on entry to the school is above average.

2 Ripponden Primary School is situated in the village of Ripponden, to the west of Halifax in West Yorkshire. Pupils come from the village and from outlying smaller villages. Pupils come from a very wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. Many children come from advantaged home backgrounds while others come from homes where no adults are in full time employment. The housing in the area varies from large detached houses to council housing. Fewer than one in twenty pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is well below the national average. Approximately one in four pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, and one in ten have their own individual educational plans. Three pupils have statements of special educational need. Currently, no pupils come from minority ethnic groups.

3 The school's stated aim is "to provide a high quality learning environment in which every child has equal opportunity and can achieve their maximum potential. To achieve this aim, the school encourages working partnerships between staff, pupils, governors, parents, community, local authority and outside agencies. We aim to provide a broad, balanced curriculum that fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum and caters for the physical, moral and social development of pupils. This provision will give each child a solid foundation of knowledge, understanding, skills and experience on which to build later in life. The school sets high standards in terms of academic achievement, discipline and social skills."

4 The school's development plan for 1999 to 2000 identifies 44 developments with 24 identified as priorities. The school identified the following as its main priorities:

- to implement the literacy hour;
- to implement the numeracy hour;
- to prepare for the new curriculum in September 2000;
- to improve the quality of information technology provision in the school;
- to implement a home/school contract.

5 The school was first inspected in May 1996. The key issues of that inspection report can be summarised as: "To further improve and the quality of education and the standards of achievement, the governing body, head teacher and staff should:

- examine the planning and provision for pupils under the age of five;
- offer more opportunity for pupils to develop information technology skills across the curriculum;
- establish procedures for monitoring curriculum planning and its implementation in the classroom;
- consider strategies for dealing with the minority of disruptive pupils, including early recognition of their need for support;
- discuss the implications of the separation of boys and girls for activities;
- address all of the statutory requirements in the Governor's Annual Report to Parents and the School Prospectus;
- consider the effectiveness of its induction programme for new teachers."

Key indicators

6 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	10	15	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	8	8	9
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	23	23	24
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	92% (94%)	92% (94%)	96% (97%)
	National	82% (80%)	83% (81%)	87% (84%)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	23	24	24
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	92% (94%)	96% (97%)	96% (97%)
	National	82% (81%)	86% (85%)	87% (86%)

7 Attainment at Key Stage 2²

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	15	15	30

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	11	13	14
	Girls	12	14	14
	Total	23	27	28
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	77% (80%)	90% (72%)	93% (56%)
	National	70% (65%)	69% (59%)	78% (69%)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	8	9	11
	Girls	10	11	12
	Total	18	20	23
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	60% (52%)	66% (60%)	80% (72%)
	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

8 Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:

		%
Authorised Absence	School	3.1
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.2
	National comparative data	0.5

9 Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

10 Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	13
Satisfactory or better	99
Less than satisfactory	1

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

11 When children enter the reception class, they have a wide range of skills; most are above average in terms of their social and language skills although their mathematical skills are typical for their age. Overall, their attainment is above average for children of this age, although the full ability range is represented. Children make steady progress in the reception class. By the age of five, most children are above the levels expected in language and literacy, mathematics and their personal development. Their knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative and physical development is average.

12 Pupils make steady progress in Key Stage 1 and, by the end of Year 2, standards in English and mathematics are well above average, while standards in science are above what is expected of seven year olds. However, standards in information technology are just below that level. Standards in religious education match the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

13 In the 1999 national tests for seven year olds, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well above average when compared with other schools nationally. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was also well above average. The results of teachers' assessments in science were above average, although the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels were well above average. These results were similar to those gained in the 1998. When the results of the 1999 tests are compared with schools that have a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards in reading were above average and standards in writing and mathematics were well above average.

14 Overall, pupils make steady progress in Key Stage 2. The rate of progress improves in Years 5 and 6 and, by the end of Year 6, standards in English and science are above what is expected of 11 year olds. Standards in mathematics are well above average although standards in information technology are below what is expected of 11 year olds. Standards in religious education match the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus.

15 In the 1999 national tests for 11 year olds, standards in English and mathematics were well above average, while standards in science were above average when compared with other schools nationally. When compared with schools that have a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards in English and science were average and standards in mathematics were well above average.

16 In Key Stage 1, pupils make steady progress in developing their reading, and speaking and listening skills and good progress in developing their writing skills. They listen carefully to their teachers and to each other and contribute maturely in class discussions. By the end of Year 2, they speak clearly, for example when reading from "The Three Little Wolves and The Big Bad Pig". Most pupils read silently, independently and for pleasure. Pupils' writing develops well and most use capital letters and full stops correctly. When writing they form letters correctly and common words are spelt correctly. Most pupils' writing is clear and neat with some pupils using a cursive, joined up style. Pupils' work is well presented, and they take pride in writing neatly.

17 In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make steady progress in developing their reading skills, and good progress in developing their writing. Pupils respond very well to the planned opportunities for expressing feelings, voicing opinions and describing events; for example pupils in Year 4 fluently discussed the differences between characters from the novel that they were studying. Pupils read from a range of fiction and non-fiction books and, by the end of Year 6, most pupils are confident, fluent readers who enjoy reading a wide range of books. Pupils' writing is well organised. Pupils write in a range of styles, pay good attention to punctuation and employ specific techniques such as the use of similes and alliteration. A strength of older pupils' writing is their ability to formulate clear and logical argument.

18 In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematics. By the end of Year 2, pupils' mathematical vocabulary has been developed well. Pupils' knowledge of numbers is good and they know the properties of a number of two-dimensional

shapes. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a good understanding of place value, and can add and subtract hundreds, tens and units. Higher attaining pupils have a good understanding three-dimensional shapes and know the meaning of the words “face”, “edge” and “vertices”.

19 Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2. Lessons start with mental arithmetic sessions. Pupils’ ability to handle numbers is developed well, for example lower attaining pupils in Year 4 explained that doubling 9 was “the same as doubling 10 to make 20, then subtract 2”. Higher attaining pupils in the same class explained halving 39 by saying “half of 30 is 15, half of 8 is 4; 15 and 4 is 19 and doubling 20 gives 40 so the answer must be half way between 19 and 20”. By the end of Year 6, pupils use formulae to calculate areas and volumes, multiply decimals confidently, calculate factors and multiples of numbers and calculate pie charts. However, pupils tend to rely on teachers when investigating mathematics practically and their ability to apply their knowledge to new problems is not as good as their knowledge and understanding of mathematics.

20 In Key Stage 1, pupils make steady progress in developing their scientific knowledge, skills and understanding. They are aware that seeds need light and water to grow and carry out investigations to prove this. Pupils name the simple parts of the plant, such as leaf, root, stem and flower and recognise various materials such as glass, wood, plastic and brick and match them to a list of describing words such as “strong”, “bendy”, “hard” or “see through”. By the end of Year 2, pupils know that some foods are better for them than others and that certain foods are beneficial to particular parts of the body, for example, milk is good for teeth and bones.

21 In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make steady progress in developing their scientific knowledge, skills and understanding. Younger pupils describe different methods of seed dispersal and know that seeds need to spread away from the tree. They identify parts of a plant and know that heating or cooling changes some materials. Pupils understand the importance of fair testing and try to apply it in their experiments, for example when testing how high a ball will bounce when dropped. Older pupils identify the parts of a plant and know the conditions necessary for successful germination. They recognise the phases of the moon and understand the orbits of the sun, earth and moon. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of science. For example, they draw electrical circuits using symbols and understand how shadows and reflections are made.

22 In Key Stage 1, pupils make steady progress in learning to use information technology to communicate information. By the end of Year 2, pupils use art programs and the simple features of a word processor. This aspect of pupils’ attainment in information technology matches the levels expected for their age. However, pupils rarely use information technology to handle data by using simple databases or presenting information in graphs and charts. As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils make steady progress in developing their word processing and presentation skills. By the end of Year 6, pupils have sound skills in this aspect of information technology. However, pupils do not make sufficient progress in other aspects of information technology. They do not make sufficient use of databases to handle information, and do not learn to model, monitor or control events sufficiently well. As a result, by the end of Year 6 they do not reach the levels expected for their age.

23 In religious education, pupils make steady progress. Younger pupils are aware that different people have different places of worship and celebrate their beliefs in a wide range of festivals. Their knowledge of Christianity and Bible stories is good and they describe many of the symbols and artefacts related to Easter and Christmas celebrations. Older pupils have a good knowledge of world religions and explain how and where their followers pray, whom is their god and who founded their religion. Pupils in Year 6 discuss Christian beliefs and traditions; for example pupils wrote good accounts of what Easter meant to them.

24 In art, pupils make good progress, particularly in developing their drawing and painting skills. They use a wide variety of materials and techniques to good effect and study the style of a number of famous artists, discussing their styles in simple terms. Pupils also compare style, colour and form of artists from different cultures. For example, they recognise the difference between western and eastern art.

25 In design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education, pupils make steady progress in developing their knowledge, understanding and skills.

26 Pupils' literacy skills are developed well in the literacy hour and are also developed in other subjects. Teachers promote literacy skills effectively across the curriculum. For example, in mathematics, science and design and technology, pupils are taught technical vocabulary well. Pupils enjoy using their developing literacy skills to support their learning in geography, history and religious education. In many lessons, speaking, listening and comprehension are developed very effectively.

27 Pupils' numeracy skills are effectively developed in mathematics, and there is a good emphasis on mental arithmetic in each lesson. Pupils are encouraged to explain the methods they use to solve these mental problems. Other subjects make useful contributions to developing pupils' numeracy skills, for example pupils produce graphs and charts in science and geography and pupils' measuring skills are developed during some art and design and technology lessons.

28 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school, particularly in English and mathematics. This is mainly brought about by the good quality of teaching and the good level, quality and deployment of the extra support they are given in class and when withdrawn in small groups.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

29 The school has maintained the high standards since the last inspection. In the reception class, children make good progress in developing their personal and social skills. They work and play together well, for example when working in the "farm area". Many children work confidently and develop good relationships with their classmates and adults working in the class. Most children are willing to take turns and share, and respect their classmates' views.

30 In Key Stages 1 and 2, the school places a great deal of emphasis on the development of good attitudes, behaviour and personal development. This emphasis is reflected in the way most adults react to pupils. As a result, pupils enjoy school and have very good attitudes towards learning. Pupils listen well to teachers and are keen to answer questions. They are confident, settle well into new tasks and concentrate on the work they have been given. Pupils work effectively as a group and on their own. They co-operate well with teachers and each other.

31 Most pupils' behaviour is very good. The school has a clear behaviour policy that is implemented well by all staff. Pupils understand and accept the school's system of rewards and sanctions. Despite this there are a very small number of pupils who, despite the best efforts of staff, regularly interrupt lessons. Pupils are polite and show respect for staff and visitors, for example, holding doors open. Pupils move around school in an orderly and sensible manner. They are usually ready to begin work at the beginning of sessions and have consideration for property and the school environment.

32 Pupils relate very well to adults and their classmates. Children under five develop co-operative, sharing attitudes and establish good relationships with each other and adults. In both key stages pupils co-operate effectively in lessons and play well together during playtimes. Throughout the school pupils are encouraged to work hard and care for each other. Such qualities are appropriately rewarded through praise, house points and certificates given at assemblies.

33 Pupil's personal development in the reception class is very good. They clearly enjoy learning and are keen to complete their activities with growing independence and concentration. Older pupils work as monitors carrying out a range of duties, for example, answering the telephone at lunch-time, while the secretary has a break, giving out the registers and announcing the hymn in assembly. They accept this responsibility well.

Attendance

34 Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is very good. High attendance levels have been maintained since the last inspection and remain well above the national average. There is a very low incidence of unauthorised absence. Most pupils arrive at school on time and start working the moment they arrive in their classrooms. Overall, pupils' attendance and punctuality make a positive contribution to the quality of learning in the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

35 The quality of teaching is never less than sound and is often good. Teaching is consistently good in the reception class and very good Years 5 and 6, although good teaching was seen in every class.

36 With the exception of information technology, teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. Teachers' organisation and management of pupils is usually good and they use questions effectively to ensure pupils understand their tasks. However, teachers tend to over-direct pupils during practical activities, particularly in mathematics and science and insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to investigate science independently. Particularly good teaching was seen in those lessons where teachers prompted pupils to think carefully and identify questions that they could then use their research skills to answer rather than relying on the teacher to answer all the questions for them. In such lessons, teachers ask challenging questions to test and promote pupils understanding. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson on time, the teacher said "45 minutes after 10:30 must be 10:75, because 45 and 30 equals 75. That's right isn't it?" which led to an interesting discussion about the fallacy that statement contained.

37 Good teaching is seen when teachers use their specialisms. For example, the school timetable is arranged so that music is be taught by the few teachers who have particular expertise in this subject. Lessons have varied and interesting activities that involve much "hands on" participation by the pupils but have a good balance of listening and activity. Similarly, the teaching of physical education is enhanced by the use of qualified coaches of swimming, rugby and outdoor adventurous activities.

38 Although teachers' planning is adequate to support the structure of their lessons, their planning rarely identifies precisely what they expect pupils of different prior attainment to learn, or how they will formally assess whether their pupils have understood what they have been taught. Teachers use questions well to assess and evaluate what pupils have learnt during their lessons, but do not take the results of assessments into account when planning the next sequence of lessons. This means that pupils do not always make progress at the rate at which they could. In addition, teachers do not always take the differing ages of the pupils in their classes into account and, as a result, pupils sometimes unnecessarily repeat work. Teachers make good use of homework to support their lessons, and link this homework well to the activities planned in lessons.

39 Teachers manage pupils well. They set high expectations of pupils' attitudes and behaviour. This reflects the school's positive focus on personal and social development and contributes well to pupils' very good relationships and behaviour. The move from whole class introductions to group work is quick and seamless. As a result, although some lessons do not start promptly after breaks, there is no time lost within lessons.

40 Classroom assistants and other adult helpers support teachers well. They make positive contributions to the quality of teaching in the school, particularly when supporting pupils with special educational needs.

The curriculum and assessment

41 The curriculum for children under five has improved significantly since the last inspection. It is broad and balanced and is planned appropriately to cover most areas of learning. A high priority is given to the development of children's personal and social skills and there is a clear focus on improving children's language, literacy and mathematical skills.

42 With the exception of information technology, the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that provides opportunities for pupils to make progress. However, the school is not yet teaching the full programme of study for information technology in Key Stage 2, partly because of a shortage of resources, but mainly because pupils are not provided with sufficient opportunities to use computers to model, measure or control the physical environment. Apart from this, the school meets its statutory requirements for teaching the National Curriculum and religious education, which is taught according to the

locally agreed syllabus. Suitable time is given to all subjects and there is an appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics.

43 There are policies in place for all subjects. However, many of these policies have not been reviewed for some time and do not refer to the curriculum now being taught. The school does not yet have up-to-date schemes of work in place for all subjects. However, teachers have started to implement the new national schemes of work for science, design and technology, history, geography and information technology. These provide useful guidance to teachers in these subjects but other subjects, such as music, art and physical education, do not have up to date schemes of work to which teachers can refer. As a result, the school cannot guarantee these subjects are taught in a way that builds upon pupils' previous learning or that aspects of the subject will not be unnecessarily repeated.

44 There is no long-term plan in place that clearly identifies what is to be taught to pupils in each year group. As a result, pupils who remain with the same teacher for more than one year may repeat some work. Teachers' medium term planning is not consistent throughout the school. These plans do not effectively identify how pupils' skills or knowledge will develop and progress throughout the school. This means that some knowledge and skills are unnecessarily repeated whilst others are not taught to a sufficient depth. In science, for example, the naming of the parts of a flower is repeated more often than would be expected whereas there is little development of pupils' practical or investigative skills.

45 The school's short term planning is unsatisfactory. This planning has been improved recently and now clearly identifies the activities to be carried out in a lesson. However, most short-term plans do not identify precisely what the teacher expects the pupils to have learnt by the end of the lesson. Teachers do not clearly identify assessment opportunities in their short-term plans. As a result, teachers do not consistently carry out day-to-day assessment and teachers therefore cannot always use the results of assessment when planning their future lessons. In addition, short-term plans do not identify what pupils capable of higher attainment should be doing in lessons. Consequently, pupils experience a restricted range of learning styles that do not promote practical and investigative work at a level appropriate to their ability, particularly in mathematics and science.

46 The provision made for those few pupils with special educational needs is good. They are given full access to the curriculum and are provided with good levels of support, both in their classrooms and when withdrawn in small groups for extra help, particularly in English and mathematics. The Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs is implemented well and pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage. Support staff work well with teachers to provide work that is well matched to pupils' abilities, however, there is little reference to this in daily planning. All staff understand the procedures for identifying and monitoring the progress of pupils with special educational needs. The individual education plans written for these pupils are useful with clear targets set, particularly in language and literacy. The needs of pupils with statements of special educational need are effectively met.

47 Staff provide an excellent programme of extra-curricular activities, including sport. This is a particular strength of the school. Staff give freely of their time and activities are open to all pupils, including the youngest children in the reception class. Many pupils attend these sessions, which provide valuable experiences and enable staff to share their interests and expertise with pupils. Educational visits and visitors are used very well to extend and enrich the curriculum, for example, a local artist's visit to the school and visits to outdoor pursuits centres were used well to promote art and physical education. Very good use is made of the school's environment and the local area to promote science, art and geography and this enriches the curriculum in these areas.

48 A suitable programme of personal and social education, sex education and drugs awareness is provided. Pupils are prepared well for moving on to the next stage of education. The school has a satisfactory homework policy that meets government recommendations. Home/school agreements are in place and pupils are given increasing amounts of homework as they become older and this homework often entails pupils carrying out research. Pupils are given good opportunities to take on responsibility for their work and to help each other and the school.

49 Children's attainment is assessed and recorded within the first few weeks of starting school in reception. These assessments provide a clear baseline from which learning activities are planned and future

assessments can be measured. The school uses standardised reading and mathematics tests throughout the school. In addition, they use a science test that they have devised themselves. These tests are used effectively to monitor progress and to set targets to raise attainment. However, the content of these tests is not analysed effectively to determine if pupils are finding their work too difficult or too easy and to allow teachers to plan their work accordingly.

50 Teachers assess pupils' attainment informally on a day-to-day basis. The results of these assessments are used to provide individual feedback to pupils about their performance but do not significantly influence planning. Some teachers undertake many assessment tasks throughout the school year. However, these assessments are not used consistently throughout the school and the results are not always used to plan lessons that are well matched to the needs of all pupils. As a result these tasks have little purpose.

51 The results of national tests are recorded and used to set future targets. In addition, the results of formal assessments are clearly recorded. As a result, the school is able to clearly track individual pupils' attainment as they progress through the school. The school does this well and identifies at an early stage those pupils whose attainment is beginning to fall or whose attainment is giving cause for concern and these pupils are targeted for extra help. However, similar types of formal assessment are carried out within weeks of each other. This is time consuming for the teacher and the results of one set of tests are not used. As a result, this test has little purpose.

52 At the end of each year, teachers compile a portfolio of each pupil's work. This work is linked to National Curriculum levels and used to inform the next teacher. However, there are no portfolios of moderated work to which teachers can refer to ensure that they assess pupils' work consistently.

53 Parents are given verbal reports on their child's attainment and progress three times a year. A useful written report is provided at the end of the school year and gives clear information about the progress that has been made.

54 The schools' procedures for assessing and reporting the progress of pupils with special educational needs take account of the code of practice. Parents are invited to reviews at Stage 2 onwards, which means that they are involved in drawing up their child's individual education plan targets.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

55 The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and has continued to be a significant strength of the school since the last inspection. This provision makes a substantial contribution to promoting the school's stated aim of providing "a high quality learning environment in which every child has equal opportunity and can achieve their maximum potential". The school provides a very good ethos that sustains a happy, caring and supportive learning environment. The school provides pupils with many opportunities to enable them to take a full and active role in the community and prepare them for the challenges of adult life.

56 Pupils' spiritual development is promoted well through carefully planned daily assemblies, religious education lessons and other curriculum areas such as art, science and music. In assemblies, pupils are encouraged to consider how they can share with others as well as receive. They are made aware of the plight of people from other communities who experience poverty and, through this, pupils become more appreciative of the opportunities that they have. Throughout the school there is a strong sense of community that actively supports regular reflection on issues that affect pupils' lives; for example in one assembly pupils were asked to reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of asking for help. Pupils are provided with opportunities to examine their own and others' faiths and beliefs as they learn about Christianity and other world religions such as Buddhism and Islam. Poems, prayers and artwork on display reflect the good provision made by teachers and the very positive response of pupils. Pupils' spiritual development is well supported by the contribution of visitors such as members of various religions and the local vicar. The school emphasises the appreciation of the environment and how it can be preserved and developed to give pleasure for all; for example pupils took part in an environment scheme, sponsored by a car manufacturer, to improve their school grounds.

57 The school's behaviour policy has a positive impact on promoting pupils' moral development. It encourages respect, consideration and tolerance and is rooted in and supported by the quality of the relationships between adults and pupils. Staff provide good role models and consistently place a strong emphasis on personal responsibilities. They provide many opportunities to enable pupils to know the difference between right and wrong and allow them to make individual choices that have to be justified. Adults reinforce good behaviour through the effective use of rewards and consequences. Pupils are involved in the making of school and classroom rules and most follow them by demonstrating good standards of personal behaviour, honesty and courtesy. This is most evident in Year 6 where pupils are excellent role models for the rest of the school. Lessons in physical education and personal and social education play a significant part in promoting moral values by teaching the importance of listening to others, abiding by rules, playing fairly and taking responsible decisions. This was demonstrated well in a rugby coaching session taken by visiting coaches. In assemblies pupils are encouraged to reflect on the importance of looking after themselves, other people and property that they value.

58 The provision for pupils' social development is excellent. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, including sport, the arts, and residential trips for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. These activities combine to promote pupils' social development and extend their personal interests and this is reflected in the high level of participation in out of school clubs. The school's ethos encourages pupils to take positions of responsibility and promotes their independence. Pupils are expected to be sensitive and responsive to the needs of others and they demonstrate this by using their initiative to raise money for a number of charities; for example raising funds for Dr Barnardo's, the NSPCC and Action Aid in Mozambique. There are many opportunities to strengthen the positive links between older and younger pupils; for example extracurricular activities such as football coaching attract pupils from the reception class right through to Year 6. The school is a very caring community where all pupils are valued. As a result, their self-esteem is high. There is additional provision for pupils to care for members of their wider community when they entertain senior citizens and share the fruits of the harvest festival with them.

59 The school's provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. It is promoted through the extensive range of visits that are well planned to support many subjects of the curriculum. Pupils' appreciation of different cultures is developed through art, geography, history, music and religious education. A wide range of trips is made, including visits to Bankfield Museum, Skipton Castle, the National Railway Museum and local places of historical significance. These visits provide many opportunities for pupils to learn about the heritage and culture of this country and the local area of the school. The school enjoys the company of visiting music teachers, theatre groups, poets and local historians. Visitors to the school extend pupils' understanding of different religious traditions; for example the local vicar, a practising Buddhist and a member of the Jewish faith have visited the school and explained their religious beliefs. The school makes very good efforts to celebrate the diversity of cultures in and around the community.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

60 The school effectively supports its pupils and continually strives to promote their welfare and it has maintained this position since the last inspection. The head teacher provides strong pastoral leadership and the teaching staff are very caring, approachable and supportive. They are all conscientious and carefully consider individual pupils' needs. All staff have a very good understanding of the school's pastoral and welfare procedures and implement them consistently and conscientiously. Teachers and non-teaching assistants supervise pupils well at break times. Lunchtime supervision is carried out well by experienced supervisors and the quality of this supervision is very good. Good first aid procedures are in place for dealing with minor injuries.

61 The school makes good use of support agencies, non-teaching assistants and parent helpers. The school's non-teaching staff are dedicated to the children they support, are well deployed and provide very good support to teachers and pupils. The support given to one physically disabled pupil is excellent and allows his full integration into almost all curriculum and non-curricular activities. This is appreciated by his parents who recognise that the support given has had a significant impact on his academic and personal development. The school has adopted an assertive behaviour policy that is supplemented by class rules. Behaviour is carefully monitored against the behaviour and anti-bullying policies. Staff and pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes acceptable behaviour, and rewards and sanctions are applied

consistently. Good attendance is actively promoted and carefully monitored. Absences and lateness are correctly recorded, conscientiously followed up and appropriate action is taken to ensure that high levels of attendance are maintained.

62 The head teacher and teachers have a very good understanding of the personal and individual needs of the pupils in their care. They consistently evaluate pupils' progress to make sure that appropriate action is taken to promote continued personal development, although this information is used less effectively to inform their future planning of lessons. Health, sex and drugs education is well planned and dealt with. Procedures are in place for on-going assessment and monitoring pupils' academic attainment and progress, although these procedures are not always followed consistently.

63 Appropriate child protection procedures are in place and adults working in the school have a good awareness of them. There are good procedures for health and safety. These are well known and understood by all staff who consistently demonstrate safe working practice in lessons and around the school. All the required health and safety inspections and checks, including risk assessments, are regularly carried out and properly recorded. However, at the start and end of the school day, parents are allowed to congregate in the narrow corridors and school entrances where children are changing indoor and outdoor footwear. This presents a potential danger of children being knocked over or trodden upon and could impede evacuation of the school in an emergency. Some parents raised concerns about this and inspection evidence supports their concerns. A small number of other potential health and safety hazards were brought to the attention of the head teacher during the inspection and were dealt with promptly.

Partnership with parents and the community

64 Relationships between the school and parents are very good. The school enjoys the support of parents who are encouraged to visit and be involved in their children's education. Many parents help in classrooms and accompany the children on trips. There is a strong and very active parents and friends association that organises events and raises funds for the school. Most parents feel welcome in the school and find it easy to approach the school with complaints or problems to do with their children.

65 Communications between the school and parents are very good. There are regular newsletters and letters home about specific events. There is an informative school brochure and a useful document detailing procedures in the reception class. The governors hold an annual meeting with parents and publish a detailed and informative annual report. The school brochure and the governors' annual report have been improved since the last inspection and now contain all the statutory required information. The annual reports written by teachers are personalised and informative, indicate progress being made, and tell parents what their children understand and can do and set targets for improvement. There are appropriate curriculum information evenings and opportunities for parents to discuss their children's work and progress. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed and fully involved in their children's work. A small number of parents expressed the opinion that the school did not give them a clear understanding of what is taught. Inspection evidence did not support this point of view.

66 The school's work is considerably enriched by its links with parents and the community and these links contribute very well to pupils' personal development. There is an excellent range of social and educational visits, including residential trips, and a good range of visitors to the school. Very good use is made of the local area as a learning resource, for example, in geography, history, science and environmental studies. Local firms have donated money and computer equipment to the school. The school supports and raises money for local and national charities. Teams compete in a variety of local sporting competitions. There is appropriate liaison with the local playgroup and nursery, and good links with the main receiving secondary schools ensures a smooth transition to the pupils' next stage of their education. An after school care club shares the site and some local organisations regularly use the school premises. The school is very much a part of the community that it serves.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

67 The head teacher provides strong pastoral leadership. He has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is committed to maintaining high standards, both in academic and pastoral areas. However, the school does not have a clear educational direction and staff do not have a clear shared understanding of the way in which the school should develop. The school's aims are implemented effectively and have a major impact on the school's positive ethos.

68 Although the head teacher monitors the quality of teaching by observing lessons, and there are plans for co-ordinators to monitor their curriculum areas, at present the school does not have an effective monitoring programme. The monitoring that does take place tends to track what is happening, identifying strengths and weaknesses, but does not always evaluate the results of the monitoring effectively in order to introduce changes. Co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in planning or monitoring their curriculum areas. There is no systematic monitoring or evaluation of planning in place to ensure that the curriculum is taught effectively. The head teacher checks plans monthly but no evaluative feedback is given. They are not reviewed by curriculum co-ordinators. As a result, the planning of the curriculum does not take sufficient account of the mixed age nature of the school's classes and pupils often unnecessarily repeat work in subsequent years.

69 The school has a draft policy for pupils with special educational needs and the provision made for these pupils is good. However, this policy does not fully match the expectations of the Code of Practice and does not match the school's provision. Despite this, staff clearly understand the school's procedures and pupils are identified quickly, accurately and move through the stages of the code of practice appropriately. The recently appointed co-ordinator and the governors with responsibility for this area of the school have a good understanding of special educational needs.

70 The governing body is very supportive, and very committed to the school. Governors are well informed, there is an appropriate committee structure and they are involved in the day-to-day life of the school. The governing body meets all statutory requirements and are involved at an early stage in making decisions that affect the school's development. However, governors rely on the professional expertise of the head teacher and other staff, particularly with regard to the development of the school's curriculum and are not yet strategically involved in monitoring this area of the school.

71 The current school development plan is a useful document that identifies the areas the school wishes to develop. These developments are linked to targets and deadlines; the actions required are identified, as are the personnel responsible for meeting these targets. The resources and funds needed are also identified. However, there are too many developments identified, they are not sufficiently prioritised and the targets set are not always measurable. As a result, it is difficult for the school to recognise how effective they have been in meeting these targets. The school has set realistic and appropriate targets in English, mathematics and science and has the capacity to meet them. The school meets its statutory requirements in all areas of school life.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

72 The school has sufficient qualified staff to teach pupils of primary age. There is a mix of age and experience among the staff that allows for stability whilst permitting fresh ideas to stimulate the school's ethos. Relationships between adults working in the school are good and there is a sense of a school team working towards developing the whole child.

73 Staff training is closely linked to the areas identified in the school development plan, but some staff who have been recently given new areas of responsibility do not have the necessary expertise or training to effectively lead their new areas.

74 Non-teaching staff support teachers well. They are effectively deployed in the school and make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Parent helpers regularly work in school. These helpers are well briefed and clearly understand the roles they have been given. The school is served well by the secretary who is fully involved in the school.

75 The caretaker keeps the school in very good order. Supervisory staffs provide good levels of support and provide positive role models in the dining room and playground.

76 Staff development procedures are unsatisfactory. There are no after school staff development sessions. The training of staff together as a team relies upon designated training days. As a result, a number of areas of development that need whole staff discussion are under-developed, for example planning and assessment. Staff development is linked to the main priorities in the school development plan, primarily literacy, numeracy and information technology. There are limited opportunities for personal development beyond these priorities and, as a consequence, some staff who have recently been given new areas of responsibility do not have the necessary expertise or training to effectively lead their new areas.

77 Procedures for staff appraisal follow the authority guidelines. The school has improved the support it provides newly appointed staff since its inspection. Good procedures are now in place and both newly qualified and recently appointed staff have been inducted well into the school and receive good support from the head teacher and other colleagues.

78 The school provides satisfactory accommodation. Most classrooms, together with shared activity areas, provide sufficient room for pupils to work practically and allow the curriculum to be taught effectively. Two classrooms are small and limit opportunities for practical work. The information technology room is very small and limits the number of pupils who can work in it. The school currently uses a spare classroom for music lessons and group activities. There is an adequate size multi-purpose hall, well equipped as a gymnasium, and a small library. This library has been significantly improved since the previous inspection. There are plenty of rooms and cupboards available for the storage of resources. The school is situated in attractive and spacious grounds. There are hard surfaced play areas and two sports fields. There is no separate safe and secure play area for the under fives but one is planned.

79 The school building is in a good state of repair. It is clean, well looked after and enhanced by attractive displays of pupils' work. There is good provision for pupils with physical disability and good disabled access into and throughout the building.

80 The overall quality and quantity of learning resources are adequate, although they range from inadequate to over-generous. The school has recently improved its range of reading books but there are still many outdated and unsuitable books in the reading scheme. Mathematics resources are adequate although there is a limited range of resources to support practical investigations. Science resources are inadequate, particularly to support practical investigations. The school has recently increased the number of computers but the range of information technology hardware is still insufficient to ensure the National Curriculum programme of study is taught. Art resources are very good but music resources are barely adequate and many instruments are in need of repair or replacement. Resources are satisfactorily managed, accessible and used effectively by teachers and pupils with a balance between classroom-based and centrally held resources.

81 The school makes very good use of external resources, including centres of historical, geographical, scientific and cultural interest. These significantly enrich the school's curriculum and provide many opportunities for learning. Since the last inspection the school library has been re-located and refurbished. It has a good range of reference and fiction books, is very attractively furnished and provides a welcoming environment for independent learning.

The efficiency of the school

82 The day-to-day running of the school is well managed by the head teacher and the school secretary. Staff and pupils have a clear understanding of the school's routines and the school works well on a day-to-day basis. This allows teachers to concentrate on their teaching.

83 The financial control and management of the school's funds are effective and expenditure is monitored regularly by the head teacher and secretary. The governing body is kept very well informed about the state of the school's finances and the finance committee are effective. The most recent audit of the school's finances made a few minor recommendations, which have all been implemented. Since the last

inspection, prudent management has eliminated the school's deficit. The school has managed to reduce its deficit budget, and expenditure now matches income. Funds allocated for pupils with special educational needs are used effectively to provide extra support in classes or to withdraw pupils from the classroom for extra help.

84 The school development plan identifies too many areas for development, and does not effectively prioritise them. Funds are allocated to meet these developments, and these are clearly identified in the plan. The school development plan includes targets and identifies the staff responsible for meeting them, together with clear deadlines. However, the targets are not always easily measurable and, as a result, the school cannot easily monitor its progress and measure how successful it has been in meeting the targets it has set.

85 Teachers and support staff are used effectively to meet the needs of the school. The school makes good use of its buildings for teaching. Breaks and other activities generally start and finish promptly but after breaks lessons do not always start on time. This is caused by the school's decision to make children change from outdoor to indoor footwear and the time taken to do this causes the start of lessons to be delayed.

86 Pupils' attainment on entry to the reception class is above average. They make steady progress throughout the school, and good progress in Years 5 and 6. By the time they leave the school, their attainment in English and mathematics is well above average and their attainment in science is above average. The school's results in the national tests for 11 year olds are good. The school has a positive ethos and its provision for pupils spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is very good. Although there is no clear direction for its future development, the cost of educating a pupil at Ripponden primary school is below the national average. As a result, the school provides good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

87 When children enter the reception class, they have a wide range of skills; most are above average in terms of their social and language skills although their mathematical skills are typical for their age. Overall, their attainment is above average for children of this age, although the full ability range is represented. Children make steady progress in the reception class. By the age of five, most children are above the levels expected in language and literacy, mathematics and their personal development. Their knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative and physical development is average.

88 Children make good progress in developing their personal and social skills. Even at this early stage in the school year, they work and play together well, for example when working in the “farm area”. When they have finished an activity they tidy up. Many children work confidently and develop good relationships with their classmates and adults working in the class. Most children are willing to take turns and share, and respect their classmates’ views. By the age of five, most children are working above the levels expected by this age.

89 Children make steady progress in developing their language and literacy skills. They listen intently when their teacher reads stories such as “Kipper’s Toybox” and follow adults’ instructions well. They are beginning to take turns talking, particularly in class discussions about what they have heard or learnt during lessons. Some children recognise familiar words in books and many know some of the sounds of the letters of the alphabet. Children copy adults’ writing and many can write their names using recognisable letters. By the age of five, children’s literacy skills are above what is expected by this age.

90 Children make good progress in developing their mathematical skills. They count, measure and learn about shape, and use these shapes to explore patterns. Children know a number of rhymes and counting games. Most children can count to 10 using their hands and can join in when the class counts back from 10. Some recognise some of the numbers from 1 to 10. By the age of five, most children are working above the levels expected by this age.

91 There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about the progress children make in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. However, they talk about their families and where they live. When using the computer, children are starting to use the keyboard and mouse confidently. By the age of five, most children are working at the levels expected by this age.

92 Children make steady progress in developing their creative skills by playing together and working on a range of art, construction and music activities. Children know a few rhymes and songs and enjoy singing songs. Children build models using a small range of construction kits and materials. By the age of five, most children are working at the levels expected by this age.

93 Children make steady progress in their physical development. They do not have access to a separate secure outdoor play area but develop sound skills through physical education lessons. For example, children learn to move in different ways and learn to run, jump, and hop. By the age of five, most children are working at the levels expected by this age.

94 The quality of teaching in the reception class is good. The teacher and other adults working in the class work well together. Medium term planning identifies what children should have learnt in each of the areas of learning, while short term planning identifies the activities that children will undertake each day. A range of activities are planned for, from whole class activities to small group and individual work. The teacher has secure knowledge of the under fives curriculum. Children are prepared well for the National Curriculum. Resources to support the teaching of the under fives are adequate although there is an absence of large soft equipment or outdoor equipment. The planning and provision for the under fives has improved significantly since the last inspection.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

95 By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment is well above what is expected of pupils aged seven and 11.

96 In the 1999 national tests for seven year olds, pupils' results were well above the national average and the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was also well above average. In the 1999 national tests for 11 year olds, pupils' results were well above the national average and the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was also well above average.

97 Pupils make steady progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. By the ages of seven and 11, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is well above average. Pupils express themselves clearly and confidently. They listen carefully to their teachers, and to each other, and contribute maturely to group and class discussions. In the literacy hour, pupils listen intently to stories and poems and are very willing to ask and answer questions. In Key Stage 1 opportunities are provided for skills to be developed; for example pupils in Year 2 read aloud confidently and expressively from "The Three Little Wolves and The Big Bad Pig". In Key Stage 2, pupils' skills are developed further and they respond very well to the planned opportunities for expressing feelings, voicing opinions and describing events; for example pupils in Year 4 fluently discussed the differences between characters from the novel that they were studying. A good level of subject specific language is used in some areas of the curriculum; for example, in history and religious education lessons. However, in other subjects opportunities were missed and this restricted the progress of younger pupils. Good use of drama is made to support the development of speaking and listening skills and this positively influences pupils' personal, social and moral development. The school is particularly successful in its annual performances where there is a very high level of pupil participation. The provision of extra-curricular drama is a strength of the school.

98 Pupils make steady progress in developing their reading skills and, by the end of Year 2 the standard of reading is very good with most pupils having a reading age that is well above typical seven year olds. The highest attaining pupils demonstrate a good degree of fluency, expression and understanding when reading. Many of these pupils are already independent readers and have access to a wide range of books. However, although the school has recently purchased very good new reading books, many pupils are still using old and outdated reading books. The school has good procedures for identifying and assessing pupils with reading difficulties and systematically supports such pupils to achieve a good rate of progress. Teachers keep records of pupils' progress and pupils are actively encouraged to take books home. When reading, pupils use picture or contextual clues appropriately, are building a comprehensive sight vocabulary and use their understanding of phonics to attempt unknown words. Most pupils read for pleasure, record the books they read and are listened to regularly at home and at school. In Key stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress, and this progress improves as they get older, particularly in Year 6. By the end of Year 6, the standard of reading is very good and most pupils have a reading age well above that expected of 11 year olds. Pupils read from a range of fiction and non-fiction books. By the end of Year 6, many pupils are fully independent readers and most of these pupils read accurately and fluently with a very good standard of expression. Most pupils read for pleasure, keep a record of the books they read and review them critically taking account of aspects such as character and plot. Pupils are exposed to a wide range of literature and Year 6 pupils could confidently discuss their favourite authors and genres. Pupils have sound information retrieval skills, which are used for the development of research, and independent learning skills.

99 Pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills. By the end of Year 2, the standard of writing is above average and, by the end of Year 6 it is well above average. In Key Stage 1, pupils pay careful attention to their handwriting, punctuation and spelling. They are encouraged to write unaided from an early age and, by the end of Year 2, their writing is clear and neat with some pupils using a cursive, joined up style. However, pupils in Year 1 are given restricted opportunities to write for different purposes and too much emphasis is placed on the writing of "news". Pupils in Year 2 write for a wider range of purposes, adopt a systematic approach to spelling and enjoy opportunities for extended writing. For instance, pupils wrote their own version of "Little Red Riding Hood" and the work of higher attaining pupils was exceptional in its use of expression. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good use of dictionaries, thesauruses and a structured programme to improve their spelling. By the end of Year 6, most pupils plan and redraft

their written work including stories, drama scripts, narrative, poetry and letters. Pupils have a thorough grounding of poetry and some very good examples of poems were seen, particularly the poems about cats by pupils in Year 3. Some written work is of a very high standard; for example pupils in Year 6 compared and contrasted the film and the book "The Call of the Wild". Pupils write in a range of styles, pay good attention to punctuation and employ specific techniques such as the use of similes and alliteration. A strength of older pupils' writing is their ability to formulate clear and logical argument; for example, pupils in Year 6 were very clear as to the reasons for and against parents being able to take children out of school during term time. However, pupils make little use of word-processors to plan, draft or improve their work.

100 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when they are given additional support in classrooms or when working in small groups on structured learning programmes. They meet the targets set out in their individual education plans.

101 Pupils' literacy skills are developed well in the literacy hour and are also developed in other subjects. Teachers promote literacy skills effectively across the curriculum. For example, in mathematics, science and design and technology, pupils are taught technical vocabulary well. Pupils enjoy using their developing literacy skills to support their learning in geography, history and religious education. In many lessons, speaking, listening and comprehension are developed very effectively.

102 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and ranges from satisfactory to very good. Teachers have secure knowledge of English and provide a broad and balanced coverage of speaking and listening, reading and writing. They implement the literacy hour well. Good and very good teaching is seen in lessons that are thoroughly planned with tasks well matched to pupils' needs and taught at a brisk pace. In the very good lessons a range of strategies are used to captivate pupils' interests and build upon the very good relationships between teacher and pupils. In good lessons, teachers have high expectations, give supportive feedback and set targets for pupils to help them make progress. Teaching has a satisfactory balance of class, group and individual work and whole class lessons are enhanced by open questions which encourage pupils to focus on the subject, clarify and extend their thinking and reinforce their knowledge. The additional teaching provided by support assistants is very good and is particularly well targeted to individual pupils. Teachers' evaluations and assessments of individual pupils are not always used well to inform the planning of future lessons. Assessments are much more effective with pupils with special educational needs.

103 Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and almost always respond well to their English lessons. They show interest in their lessons, concentrate for sustained periods of time, participate willingly in discussions and behave very well. Many pupils enjoy whole class reading sessions, where they are enthusiastic and read with good expression. Most pupils work both independently and collaboratively and have very good relationships with each other and their teachers. However, a small minority of pupils are very slow to settle, easily distracted and fidget unnecessarily during whole class work. They are more involved in their work when working on their own or in small groups. Pupils with special educational needs are very receptive to the support they are given and strive to achieve the academic, behavioural and social targets they have been set.

104 The English curriculum is broad, balanced and meets National Curriculum requirements. The literacy hour has been implemented satisfactorily. However, there are no formal procedures for monitoring and evaluating the English curriculum or the quality of teaching. There is a portfolio of work to exemplify standards of attainment in English but whole school procedures for assessment and recording are only just satisfactory. There is a draft policy statement but, as yet, there are no detailed schemes of work to ensure that pupils' experiences are planned to build upon their previous work and skills. Resources are adequate and improving, particularly reading books and support material for the literacy hour, although some reading books are outdated and unsuitable.

Mathematics

105 In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress and, by the end of Year 2, standards in mathematics are well above average. In the 1999 national tests for seven year olds, standards in mathematics were well above average when compared with other schools nationally. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was also well above average. These results were similar to those gained in the 1998. When the

results of the 1999 tests are compared with schools that have a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards in mathematics were well above average.

106 In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress and, by the end of Year 6, standards in mathematics are well above average. In the 1999 national tests for 11 year olds, standards in mathematics were well above average when compared with other schools nationally and the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was also well above average. When compared with schools that have a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards in mathematics were well above average.

107 Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. Most lessons start with a short mental arithmetic session. These are well organised, for example in Year 2 pupils asked to count back from 20 and answer questions such as “What number comes after 17?”. Pupils’ mathematical vocabulary is developed well, and pupils in Year 2 know that “add”, “total”, “increase” and “addition” all describe the same process. Pupils’ knowledge of numbers develops particularly well and they know the properties of a number of two-dimensional shapes. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a good understanding of place value, and can add and subtract hundreds, tens and units. Higher attaining pupils have a good understanding three-dimensional shapes and know the meaning of the words “face”, “edge” and “vertices”.

108 Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2. Lessons start with mental arithmetic sessions; for example pupils in Year 4 were asked to mentally double numbers such as 17. Pupils’ ability to handle numbers is developed well, for example lower attaining pupils in Year 4 explained that doubling 9 was “the same as doubling 10 to make 20, then subtract 2”. Higher attaining pupils in the same class explained halving 39 by saying “half of 30 is 15, half of 8 is 4; 15 and 4 is 19 and doubling 20 gives 40 so the answer must be half way between 19 and 20”. By the end of Year 6, pupils use formulae to calculate areas and volumes, multiply decimals confidently, calculate factors and multiples of numbers and calculate pie charts. However, pupils tend to rely on teachers when investigating mathematics practically and their ability to apply their knowledge to new problems is not as good as their knowledge and understanding of mathematics.

109 Pupils’ numeracy skills are effectively developed in mathematics, and there is a good emphasis on mental arithmetic in each lesson. Pupils are encouraged to explain the methods they use to solve these mental problems. Other subjects make useful contributions to developing pupils’ numeracy skills, for example pupils produce graphs and charts in science and geography and pupils’ measuring skills are developed during some art and design and technology lessons.

110 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils make good progress when they are given additional help and support in class or when withdrawn in small groups. Teachers usually provide work in class that is well matched to the needs of these pupils and they are given good support during lessons. As a result, they respond well.

111 Overall, the quality of mathematics teaching is satisfactory, and is good in Years 5 and 6. Teachers have a secure knowledge of mathematics. Lessons are structured well with a mental arithmetic session at the start, followed by a whole class introduction to the work and then a series of group activities. Most lessons end with a session that allows pupils to review and discuss what they have learnt. In the best lessons, teachers ask challenging questions to test and promote pupils understanding. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on time, the teacher said “45 minutes after 10:30 must be 10:75, because 45 and 30 equals 75. That’s right isn’t it?”. Similarly, in the best lessons, work is well matched to pupils’ prior attainment, for example some Year 6 pupils were given GCSE co-ordinate work and completed it effectively. In most lessons the pace is brisk and pupils are given clear deadlines for completing their work.

112 Pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics. They enjoy lessons, particularly mental arithmetic sessions at the start of lessons. Most pupils behave well and listen carefully to their teacher and classmates. They work well, both individually and when working together on group tasks. They concentrate on their activities and work hard, even when they find the work difficult and the teacher is working with another group.

113 The mathematics curriculum is broad, balanced and meets National Curriculum requirements. It is well managed. The school’s early adoption of the numeracy hour approach has been effective in raising pupils’ attainment, particularly in numeracy. Pupils’ knowledge and understanding are frequently assessed

and the results of these assessments are recorded well. The mathematics curriculum promotes the development of pupils' literacy through opportunities to use appropriate mathematical vocabulary. Resources to support the teaching and learning of mathematics are good and are stored effectively, being very accessible to staff and pupils. However, the range of equipment and materials to support the effective teaching of practical investigations in mathematics could be improved.

Science

114 In Key Stage 1, pupils make steady progress in science and, by the end of Year 2, their attainment is above what is expected of seven year olds. In the national assessments for seven year olds in 1999, pupils' results were in line with the national average although the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was well above the national average.

115 In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make steady progress in most aspects of science. By the end of Year 6, their attainment is above what is expected of 11 year olds. In the national tests for 11 year olds in 1998, pupils' results in science were above the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was also above the national average.

116 In Key Stage 1, pupils make steady progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of science. In Year 1, pupils are aware that seeds need light and water to grow. They carry out investigations to prove this and observe their experiments carefully. They name simple parts of the plant, such as leaf, root, stem and flower and recognise various materials such as glass, wood, plastic and brick and match them to a list of describing words such as "strong", "bendy", "hard" or "see through". In Year 2, pupils know that some foods are better for them than others and that certain foods are beneficial to particular parts of the body, for example, milk is good for teeth and bones.

117 In Key Stage 2, pupils make steady progress. In Year 3, pupils describe different methods of seed dispersal and know that to promote good growth the seeds need to spread away from the tree. They identify parts of a plant and know that heating or cooling changes some materials. They understand the importance of a fair test and try to apply it when testing how high a rubber ball will bounce when dropped onto a variety of surfaces, such as a carpet, tiles or concrete. In Year 4, pupils recognise the main food groups such as fats, sugars, carbohydrates and proteins. They understand that a healthy body requires something from all groups but not in the same quantities. In Year 5, pupils identify parts of a plant and know the conditions necessary for successful germination. They recognise the phases of the moon and understand the orbits of the sun, earth and moon. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of science. For example, they draw the internal organs of the human body and explain their functions. They draw electrical circuits using symbols and understand how shadows and reflections are made.

118 Throughout the school, pupils undertake a limited amount of experiments and investigations and these are over-directed by teachers. For example, in Year 6, pupils investigate how steam condenses when it comes into contact with a colder material. However, they are only able to conduct these experiments with explicit guidance from the teacher. They have limited knowledge as to how to decide what evidence needs collecting, the apparatus needed to collect it or how to explain conclusions scientifically. In addition, pupils have very limited knowledge of the variety of writing and recording forms in science and have great difficulty producing these independently. Information technology is rarely used to produce the results of experiments in the form of graphs or charts.

119 Overall, the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils make good progress especially when they are given additional support and help in class.

120 The quality of teaching in science is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, and good in Key Stage 2. Most teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of science and use time well. Teachers' organisation and management of pupils is good and they use questions effectively to ensure pupils understand their tasks. However, teachers tend to over-direct pupils when investigating science practically and insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to investigate science independently. Good teaching was seen in those lessons where teachers prompted pupils to think carefully and identify questions that they could then use their research skills to answer rather than relying on the teacher to answer all the questions for them.

Although teachers know their pupils well, their short term planning does not clearly identify the skills and knowledge pupils should have gained by the end of the lesson.

121 Pupils have positive attitudes to science and most behave well. They enjoy these lessons, work hard and are enthusiastic, particularly when working on practical tasks. Pupils have good relationships with their classmates and adults working in the class.

122 The science curriculum is broad, balanced and meets national curriculum requirements. The school has recently introduced the new national framework for science. This is a clear scheme of work that provides useful guidance for teachers and ensures that pupils are given work in an appropriate sequence that builds upon their previous work. However, the school has not developed a long-term plan that takes into account the needs of mixed age classes and therefore cannot guarantee that some pupils will not repeat work unnecessarily. Resources to support the teaching of science are inadequate. They are of insufficient quality or quantity to promote independent investigative work by pupils. They are badly organised and contained some hazardous materials. The head teacher immediately removed these.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Art

123 Few art lessons were observed during the inspection. However, sufficient evidence was available through scrutiny of pupils' work, examination of classroom displays and discussions with pupils and teachers to enable judgements to be made.

124 In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in drawing and painting. They use a wide variety of materials and techniques to good effect, for example drawing flowers using pastels on different coloured papers and making pirate faces on paper plates. Pupils study the style of famous artists both past and present and copy their style, such as Frederick Gore's or Van Gogh's use of colour, when creating their own flower drawings. They use a variety of media effectively when studying line and shade, for example portraits are drawn using paint, charcoal, felt pens or coloured pencils to show different effects.

125 In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress. They have a good knowledge of famous artists, recognise their style and realise that artists develop a particular style for effect. For example, pupils study the work of Archimboldo and they way he used everyday objects to create elaborate drawings in contrast to Kandinsky's more simple geometric style. Pupils also compare style, colour and form of artists from different cultures. For example, pupils recognise the difference between western and eastern art. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils produce work of a high standard. Colours are mixed and used well to produce pictures that include shade and tone. Careful observations are made to accurately draw objects such as peacock feathers and cross sections of fruits.

126 Teachers have a good knowledge of art and teach skills and technique effectively. The school timetable is arranged so that many classes are taught by a teacher with particular expertise in this area. Good use is made of visitors to the school, for example a local artist and puppet maker have both helped pupils to produce work in their style. Materials are well prepared and good subjects are chosen which make lessons interesting and well managed. As a result, pupils have very positive attitudes to art. They enjoy art lessons and work with enthusiasm and care.

127 Overall, the art curriculum is broad and balanced. However, there is no scheme of work to give guidance to teachers and the school is reliant on teacher expertise and experience to ensure that pupils experience the full range of activities and do not, unnecessarily, repeat work. Throughout the school, pupils' artistic skills are used to produce work to enhance and illustrate other subjects, for example, making a textile representation of "Our World", or line drawings of buildings linked to both history and geography. Resources to support the teaching and learning of art are very good enabling pupils to be involved in a wide variety of art experiences.

Design and technology

128 Few design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection. However, sufficient evidence was available through scrutiny of pupils' work, examination of classroom displays and discussions with pupils and teachers to enable judgements to be made.

129 Pupils make steady progress in developing their design and making skills. In Year 1 they consider their designs carefully, for example, they looked at the types of houses in the area and discussed different types of building materials before designing and making their own models of houses using card and paper. Pupils sometimes look at commercial materials before designing their own models. For example, pupils in Year 1 looked at commercial seed packets and discussed what made them attractive before making their own. In Years 2 and 3, pupils made careful designs before making paper masks or simple models of Anglo-Saxon boats. Pupils start to evaluate their models simply by discussing what they like and dislike about them. By the end of Year 6, pupils are designing their work carefully, taking into account the different properties of materials. They make their models carefully and with precision, for example when designing and making mobiles inspired by Kandinsky's art, some pupils used computers to design their models and they cut wooden shapes with care.

130 Teachers have a sound knowledge of design and technology. Lessons are well prepared and occasionally are linked to real life problems. Pupils have positive attitudes to design and technology, they clearly enjoy lessons, particularly when making things. They listen carefully to their teacher's instructions, concentrate hard on the tasks they are given and work safely.

131 The design and technology curriculum is broad and balanced and is based on a commercial scheme of work, although this does not fully take the mixed age nature of classes into account. The school is considering introducing the national scheme of work in the near future. Resources to support the teaching of design and technology are adequate.

Geography

132 Few geography lessons were observed during the inspection. However, sufficient evidence was available through scrutiny of pupils' work, examination of classroom displays and discussions with pupils and teachers to enable judgements to be made.

133 Pupils make steady progress in geography. They have appropriate geographical skills and their knowledge of places and the local area are developed well. They are good at carrying out investigative work and recording their findings and present written work to a good standard. Pupils have a good knowledge of their local environment and the effect of environmental change and have well developed mapping skills.

134 In Key Stage 1, pupils have a good knowledge of compass directions and apply these skills well; for example they wrote a detailed route for an imaginary journey made by Little Red Riding Hood. Pupils identify the range and purpose of buildings in the locality and the materials that they are made of. In Key Stage 2, pupils' mapping skills are developed well, for example pupils in Years 5 and 6 worked out the positions of places on maps using 6 figure grid reference on a residential trip to North Wales. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 contrast the life of a Kenyan school child with their own. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 evaluate the impact of tourism in St. Lucia. Pupils use geographical terminology accurately; for example pupils in Year 5 have undertaken a river study and confidently explain the terms "erosion" and "deposition". In Year 6, pupils considered the arguments for and against the preservation of the rain forests in Brazil. They wrote persuasive letters to a sponsor and received funds to develop and improve their own school grounds. The good development of pupils' atlas skills enables them to name and locate continents, countries, rivers and major cities from world maps.

135 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers use specific geographical language well. There are good links with other subjects and opportunities are planned to support the development of the pupils' literacy skills. There are good relationships between teachers and pupils. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They take pride in their presentation of work and record their findings of investigations and field trips with a good degree of accuracy. When pupils are given opportunities to work co-operatively and

collaboratively they show initiative and work well in small groups. They particularly enjoy opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills through field trips and visits to the local area.

136 The geography curriculum is broad and balanced. There is a policy statement but schemes of work are not developed to ensure that activities are planned in an appropriate sequence that builds upon pupils' previous experiences and skills. As a result the school cannot guarantee that pupils do not unnecessarily repeat work in subsequent years. In addition, the school does not yet have an effective means of recording the progress that pupils make or the levels of achievement that they have reached. Geography resources are adequate and very good use is made of the local environment and field trips.

History

137 Few history lessons were observed during the inspection. However, sufficient evidence was available through scrutiny of pupils' work, examination of classroom displays and discussions with pupils and teachers to enable judgements to be made.

138 Pupils make steady progress in history. In Key Stage 1 pupils understand the difference between the past and present and old and new. For example, following a visit to a "living museum" they talked about the characteristics of Victorian kitchen objects and contrasted them with their modern equivalent. Pupils know how archaeologists help them understand the past; for example when looking at how the Anglo-Saxons lived. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand how sources of evidence inform them of the past and contrast aspects of current society with those in Victorian times. For example they write vivid descriptions of match sellers and study the school's log books from the 1920's to determine the reasons for pupils' absence from school. Pupils are knowledgeable about the periods in the past that they have studied and have gained a sound historical vocabulary. They organise, evaluate and present information derived from historical sources. They are knowledgeable about Ancient Greece and re-tell the story of the Trojan War with considerable accuracy and detail.

139 The quality of teaching throughout the school is good and is particularly so in Years 5 and 6. Teachers prepare their lessons well, have good organisational and management skills and clearly communicate their confidence and enthusiasm for the subject. The best teaching is characterised by thorough subject knowledge, good use of artefacts and a strong emphasis on pupils voicing opinions justified with evidence. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils will achieve and use praise appropriately. Teachers use resources well; for example when comparing the transport that people used in the past the topic was brought to life by bringing a vintage car to the school.

140 Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and they respond well. Pupils work hard and concentrate well on their tasks. Pupils readily enjoy the extensive opportunities to develop their investigative and research skills. Pupils are articulate and confident and very keen to participate in discussions; for example when pupils in Years 3 and 4 were identifying the date of an event from the past using only a picture of different types of transport. Pupils behave very well, are co-operative and have good relationships with each other.

141 The history curriculum is broad, balanced and planned using a whole school topic cycle. There is a history policy but a scheme of work has not yet been developed to ensure that activities are planned in an appropriate sequence that builds upon pupils' previous experiences and skills. There is a wide range of resources to support teaching. Very good use is made of the local community and visits to museums and other places of interest to develop pupils' understanding and extend their knowledge. The encouragement of personal research, the development of subject specific language and good cross-curricular link are good features of the history curriculum.

Information technology

142 Few information technology lessons were observed during the inspection. However, sufficient evidence was available through scrutiny of pupils' work, examination of classroom displays and discussions with pupils and teachers to enable judgements to be made.

143 The school's provision for information technology has improved since the last inspection. However, by the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in information technology is just below the levels expected for seven year olds. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is below the levels expected for 11 year olds.

144 In Key Stage 1, pupils make steady progress in learning to use information technology to communicate and present information. For example, pupils in Year 1 used an art program to draw houses. They learn to use the simple features of a word processor and gain confidence to use a mouse and type text from the keyboard. Pupils use computers effectively to consolidate their work in other subjects, especially English and mathematics. Pupils use floor robots and program a sequence of instructions to control them. However, pupils rarely use information technology to handle data by using simple databases or present information in graphs and charts.

145 As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils make steady progress in developing their word processing and presentation skills. They learn to combine different font sizes, colours and styles to create different effects in their work. Pupils use art programs well to design images. By the end of Year 6, pupils have sound skills in these aspects of information technology. They can load the program and their previous work, make alterations to it and then save and print out their work. Pupils use a multi-media computer in the library to research topics, for example pupils in Years 3 and 4 were finding out information about India from a CD-ROM. However, pupils do not make sufficient progress in other aspects of information technology during Key Stage 2. They do not make sufficient use of databases to handle information, or spreadsheets to manipulate numbers or model systems. In addition, they do not learn to monitor and control events sufficiently well. As a result, they do not reach the levels expected for their age by the end of Year 6.

146 Little formal teaching was seen, although some teachers in Years 4, 5 and 6 were seen teaching specific information technology skills. These teachers have a secure knowledge of information technology and teach pupils well, using well chosen examples and explaining the skills needed to the whole class before allowing small groups of pupils to use the computers. However, many teachers lack knowledge and confidence when using the recently purchased computers. Pupils have very positive attitudes to information technology. They thoroughly enjoy working with computers and other hardware and handle new equipment carefully and sensibly. Pupils listen carefully during lessons when their teachers introduce and demonstrate new skills. They are very keen to answer questions and contribute well to discussions.

147 The information technology curriculum is in the process of being revised to take account of a new national scheme of work. Despite the best efforts of the co-ordinator, the school does not provide an appropriate range of opportunities for pupils to develop skills in all aspects of the subject and is not meeting National Curriculum requirements, particularly in Key Stage 2. In addition, teachers do not sufficiently take account of the mixed age nature of the school's classes and cannot guarantee that pupils will be taught in a sequence that builds on their previous work. Despite recent purchases of computers, there are still insufficient resources available to teach the National Curriculum in information technology. There is a lack of hardware and software to enable pupils to model, measure and control events. A small room has been converted to provide a new information technology suite although this is too small to allow more than six children to work in at a time.

Music

148 Very few music lessons were observed during the inspection. However, sufficient evidence was available through discussions with pupils and teachers to enable judgements to be made.

149 Pupils make steady progress in Key Stage 1. They sing simple songs and rhymes tunefully and accompany them with simple percussion instruments. Pupils follow and compose simple rhythms, understanding well the role of the conductor in controlling the playing of the composition. They appreciate how music can produce a mood or be related to particular characters. For example, pupils listening to Saint Saens' "Skeleton" described how the composer used certain instruments to create particular effects. They have clear preferences for particular styles of music and express what it is they like or dislike about particular pieces.

150 Pupils continue to make steady progress in Key Stage 2. In collective worship, pupils listen to music from different historical times and composers. For example, Greig, Beethoven and “Big Bands” sounds. They recognise that different cultures have different styles of music and explain what those differences are. For example, when listening to music from India pupils identified the instruments used, as well as the rhythm and style differed to the music they usually listened to. Pupils recognise a variety of tuned and untuned instruments. They know how the pitch of stringed instruments can be altered and develop a sound understanding of notation. However, throughout the school, the quality of singing in collective worship is disappointing as it lacks enthusiasm, volume and clarity.

151 The quality of teaching is very good. This is because the school timetable is arranged so that music is be taught by the few teachers who have particular expertise in this subject. Lessons have varied and interesting activities that involve much “hands on” participation by the pupils but have a good balance of listening and activity. Music provision is enhanced by the involvement of peripatetic music teachers. Many pupils benefit from small group or individual instruction in an instrument of their choice. As a result, pupils speak enthusiastically about music and show obvious enjoyment of these lessons. They listen carefully to their teachers and work sensibly and co-operatively. For example, when composing a short piece of music pupils were supportive of each other, waited patiently for their turn and followed the hand signals of the conductor.

152 The music curriculum is broad and balanced. There is no clear scheme of work to give guidance to teachers and the school is reliant on teacher expertise and experience to ensure that pupils experience the full range of activities and do not, unnecessarily, repeat work. A good range of extra-curricular activities is available to pupils and these are well attended. Music is used well throughout the school to enhance Christmas celebrations and other concerts during the school year. In this way it contributes positively to pupils’ moral and social development. Resources to support the teaching and learning of music are barely adequate. The amount and range of untuned percussion instruments is just adequate but the range of tuned instruments is narrow and many are in need of repair or replacement.

Physical education

153 In Key Stage 1, pupils make steady progress. They develop greater awareness and control of their bodies in gymnastics, travel in a variety of ways and perform a range of simple movements. Pupils take part in activities that involve running, chasing and dodging, which improve their games skills. Pupils in Year 2 are taught to swim at the local swimming baths. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand the effects of exercise on their bodies and the need for warm-up sessions.

154 In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make steady progress. They develop gymnastic skills by improving and refining movements that involve balance and control. Most pupils can swim at least 25 metres and are given the opportunity to develop their swimming skills throughout the key stage. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have developed the necessary skills to play many games, for example, football, netball, cricket, rugby and rounders. They have a positive attitude to sportsmanship and play games fairly according to the rules. In Key Stage 2, there are many opportunities for pupils to visit outdoor pursuits centres and most pupils take full advantage of these opportunities. As a result, pupils’ understanding of outdoor and adventurous activities is well developed.

155 The quality of teaching is good and this teaching is enhanced by the use of coaches who have particular expertise in specific areas, for example, swimming, rugby and outdoor adventurous activities. Physical education activities are well organised and supervised. Teachers provide activities that encourage pupils to use their previously learned skills. Lessons include an appropriate balance of instruction, demonstration and activity. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to physical education. They respond with enthusiasm and pleasure in these lessons.

156 The physical education curriculum is broad and balanced. There is no clear scheme of work to give guidance to teachers but teacher knowledge and expertise in this area has ensured that this is not detrimental to pupils’ development. Pupils experience a wide range and variety of activities. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities including rugby, football, cricket, rounders, netball, gymnastics, dance and swimming. These activities are attended regularly by many pupils. This greatly enriches and enhances the physical education curriculum and also makes an excellent contribution to pupils’ social and

moral development. The school has competitive matches with other schools in many of these sports. Resources to support the teaching and learning of physical education are adequate. There is an adequate range and quantity of equipment but some of the agility mats are in need of repair and replacement. There is a hall that provides good indoor space, a large field and hard surfaced area to develop pupils' outdoor skills.

Religious education

157 By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment in religious education broadly matches the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for pupils aged seven and 11. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Judaism.

158 In Key Stage 1, pupils make steady progress. They are aware that different people have different places of worship and celebrate their beliefs in a wide range of festivals. Pupils are introduced to the basic beliefs of the Jewish religion. Their knowledge of Christianity and Bible stories is good and they describe many of the symbols and artefacts related to Easter and Christmas celebrations. They use their understanding of important messages from the Bible to help them write about feelings of happiness and sadness and what they like and do not like. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed well through discussions and stories.

159 In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make steady progress. They are introduced to the essential principles of a variety of world religions, for example Hinduism and Judaism, and study artefacts related to Hinduism, Sikhism and Judaism. In Years 4 and 5, pupils have a good knowledge of world religions and explain how and where their followers pray, whom is their god and who founded their religion. Pupils in Year 6 discuss Christian beliefs and traditions; for example pupils wrote good accounts of what Easter meant to them. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills; for example pupils in Years 3 and 4 retold the story of the Hindu god Ganesh in their own words.

160 The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned, although plans do not always clearly identify what pupils are expected to learn by the end of the lesson or sequence of lessons. The pace of lessons is usually brisk and teachers make very good use of artefacts. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and are aware of their individual needs and differences and approach issues sensitively. However, the results of assessments are not always used effectively to plan future lessons. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and are enthusiastic for the subject.

161 Pupils have very positive attitudes and show tolerance and friendship. They collaborate well and recognise and respect individual differences. Younger pupils share their feelings in a sensitive and kind manner. Older pupils are mature and confidently offer their own personal feelings and opinions. They are attentive, ask sensible questions and relate the issues raised to their own lives and experiences.

162 The religious education curriculum is broad, balanced and meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Resources, particularly artefacts, have improved since the last inspection. A strength of the religious education curriculum is the link made between religion and pupils' own daily lives.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

163 Four inspectors visited the school for a total of 14 inspector days and observed 67 lessons. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils from all classes read and talked to pupils about their work during lessons and extra-curricular activities. A comprehensive sample of pupils' current and previous work was examined. This included work completed by pupils in all areas of the curriculum, and provided a representative sample from pupils of all ages and prior attainment. The displays of pupils' work in classrooms and public areas were closely examined. A number of assemblies were observed. A number of extra-curricular activities were also observed.

164 Teachers' planning files and records, policy documents and the school development plan were examined. A wide range of documents relating to the organisation and management of the school, including the previous inspection report and the governing body's action plan, were also examined. Documents and records relating to pupils with special educational needs were examined. Inspectors interviewed all teachers, non-teaching staff, the school secretary, the caretaker and representatives of the governors, including the chair of the governing body. Discussions were held with parents, other adult helpers and visitors to the school. The head teacher met daily with the registered inspector, and was interviewed by all members of the inspection team.

165 Parents' views were sought at a meeting prior to the inspection, through the completion of a questionnaire that was sent to all parents and through a small number of conversations at the start and end of the school day.

DATA AND INDICATORS

166 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	170	3	46	5

167 Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	6.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	25

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff:	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	51

Average class size:	28
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Financial year:

1998-1999

	£
Total Income	284,808
Total Expenditure	274,721
Expenditure per pupil	1,518
Balance brought forward from previous year	-9,452
Balance carried forward to next year	635

169 PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

170

Number of questionnaires returned:

62

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	53	43	5	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	48	50	0	2	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	18	57	22	2	2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	20	58	10	12	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	22	58	15	3	2
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	33	62	3	2	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	73	21	3	3	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	21	61	10	7	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	39	53	5	3	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	34	60	3	3	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	57	40	3	0	0

NB Rows may not add up to 100% because of rounding of figures