

INSPECTION REPORT

MALTBY LILLY HALL JUNIOR SCHOOL

Maltby

Rotherham

LEA area: Rotherham

Unique reference number: 106900

Headteacher: Mrs E A Clarke

Reporting inspector: Mr George Brown
Number 21060

Dates of inspection: 20 - 24 March 2000

Inspection number: 188264

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Cliff Hill Maltby Rotherham South Yorkshire S66 8AT
Telephone number:	01709 812148
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Taylor
Date of previous inspection:	10 - 13 June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr G Brown	Registered inspector	Religious Education Geography History	The characteristics of the school Standards and school improvement School results and pupils' achievements Leadership and management
Ms M Jacobs	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Attendance, welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
Mrs M Griffiths	Team inspector	Mathematics Art Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	
Mrs J O'Hare	Team inspector	English Music Equal opportunities	Quality and range of learning opportunities
Mr M Wehrmeyer	Team inspector	Science Information technology Design and technology	Quality of teaching and learning

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Lilly Hall Junior School serves part of the small town of Maltby, which is situated on the eastern side of Rotherham in South Yorkshire. The catchment area is a good mix of local authority and private housing. The school covers the 7 to 11 years age range and is broadly average in size with 258 pupils on roll. A significant number of pupils show below average attainment at the time of entry. The ethnic background of pupils is almost entirely white and of UK origin. There are currently 44 pupils on the school's Register of Special Educational Needs and three pupils have a Statement of Educational Needs. Approximately 11 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, a figure just below the national average for schools of this type and size.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Lilly Hall is a good school that serves its community well. Pupils are happy to come here and the great majority achieve broadly average and sometimes good standards in much of their work. Pupils make good progress overall. This is an effective school characterised by good teaching and a committed hard working staff who present a stimulating learning environment, together with a wide range of learning experiences for the pupils. The management and leadership of the school are on a secure footing and ensure pupils maximise the many opportunities offered to them. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in religious education, history, physical education and particularly music are above average.
- The good, effective teaching ensures pupils make consistently good progress over time.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic about their learning and this, together with their good behaviour, makes for a harmonious and positive climate for good achievement to occur.
- There is a strong sense of care and community in which pupils' efforts and achievements are fully recognised and celebrated.
- The headteacher, in particular, provides strong, influential leadership.
- The curriculum provides well for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- There is a wide range of extra curricular activities that many pupils enjoy and benefit from.

What could be improved

- Aspects of written English and problem solving in mathematics.
- The progress made by many pupils in information technology.
- The influence of subject coordinators and governors in helping to raise standards still further.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1996 when it was judged to be providing a good basis for pupils' learning. Standards have remained at least broadly similar since that time, but the school has made good progress in relation to the areas of weakness identified by the previous inspection. The means of assessing pupils' attainment have greatly improved and assessments are closely linked to the knowledge and skills identified in the National Curriculum. There have been several updates of schemes of work and other documents, that have enabled teachers to plan their work more accurately and effectively. The management of the school has introduced several new measures that enable it to test the cost effectiveness of its spending. There are many examples of high quality teaching and the school has now moved some way in ensuring that good practice is shared effectively among the staff. The school shows good potential to improve in the future and, with additional focus on English and mathematics, is on course to meet its targets in these areas.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	C	D	E
Mathematics	C	C	C	C
Science	D	D	C	D

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The results indicate that over the past four years, the attainment of pupils has remained broadly average in mathematics, but that standards in English and science have varied between average and below average in the same period. The 1999 group of pupils contained a significant number of lower attaining pupils, including several with special educational needs. The projected targets for pupils' attainment in all core areas in 2000 indicate a potential rise in standards and the targets are challenging, yet realistic. The inspection findings are that attainment in English, mathematics and science are broadly average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels has remained a sound feature of attainment since the previous inspection. Standards in religious education, history, physical education and particularly music, are all above those expected for a majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in information technology are barely satisfactory and pupils make unsatisfactory progress in the subject overall.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are enthusiastic learners and enjoy school life. They work hard to improve their standards and take considerable pride in their efforts.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	This is consistently good and has a marked effect on the pupils' own quality of learning. Behaviour is reliable outside of classrooms.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships across the school are very positive and contribute well to pupils' personal development. Good emphasis is given to the development of the whole child.
Attendance	Good and above the national average. Lessons start promptly.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
72 lessons were seen	N/A	N/A	Good

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

Over 70 per cent of teaching is good or very good and some three per cent is excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed in any lessons. Particular strengths of teaching include the very good management of pupils during lessons and the overall effectiveness of teachers' planning, use of time and resources. These and other factors strongly influence the quality of pupils' learning. There are also strengths in the teaching of literacy and numeracy. The quality of teaching is good in most areas of the curriculum and very good in relation to music and the basic skills of reading, speaking and listening. The quality of teaching is too variable in information technology and, together with inconsistent provision, leads to unsatisfactory progress for many pupils. The needs of individual pupils are well met and the quality of their learning is good, particularly in relation to the acquisition of

basic skills, knowledge and understanding.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A good, statutory curriculum is well established, although aspects of information technology are less well provided for. The use made of literacy across the curriculum is a relative strength as is the breadth of extra curricular activities on offer to the pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall, including the support given on a daily basis. The individual educational plans are not specific enough for some pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	No such pupils occur on the school roll but sound measures are in place to support pupils as the need arises.
Provision for pupils' personal growth including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Spiritual and moral development is particularly well provided for during acts of daily worship, and social and cultural development during everyday schooling. The school is successful in placing strong emphasis on the all round development of the pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a caring and supportive community in which pupils feel secure, well known and appreciated.

The school is continuing to develop positive links with parents, particularly in relation to the work and activities undertaken by the pupils outside of school hours. The impact of parents' involvement on the wider work of the school is satisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	A good and well respected aspect of school life. Priorities and routines are well established and senior staff manage change well so as to help improve the school. The headteacher is effective in motivating and influencing both staff and pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is relatively new and meets its statutory requirements. Governors are enthusiastic and increasingly well informed about school matters. They are insufficiently involved in strategic, forward planning, particularly in contributing to the school development plan.
The school's evaluation of its performance	An expanding and currently satisfactory feature of school life. More emphasis should be given to raising standards still further and this could be better expressed and evaluated through the aims of the school.
The strategic use of resources	A good feature of leadership and management. The school represents a well administered and efficient unit with good use made of its available financial and other resources.

The school's accommodation, staffing and learning resources are at a satisfactory level for the needs of the pupils and the requirements of the curriculum. The school is well aware of how best it can achieve good value for money in its everyday work and administration.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The progress made by their children. • The expectation that pupils will work hard and achieve their best. • The sense of community that exists. • The quality of care and teaching. • The high standards of behaviour. • The impact of leadership and management. • School is helping children to become mature and responsible. • All the extra curricular activities available to the pupils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework given to pupils does not always feel right and some parents are unsure of its nature and purpose. • How parents are kept informed about their child's progress. • For some, the school does not always work in sufficiently close partnership with parents and carers, particularly when pupils are new.

The results of the inspection endorse all the positive points made here by parents. The school lacks a clear written policy on homework and is endeavouring to rectify this as soon as possible. The impact of homework on pupils' learning is currently good. The school has more open evenings than many other schools and parents should be aware that they need not wait for such occasions if they are at all concerned or curious about the progress of their child. The actual presence of parents in the classrooms is at a relatively low level, but the school is always anxious to extend the opportunities for parents to be involved in the wider education of their child.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

- 1 The standards achieved by the majority of school leavers in relation to the core areas of English, mathematics and science are broadly in line with the national average. Standards in English and science in particular have varied between average and below average during the past three years. This trend is illustrated in the results of the 1999 statutory assessments when pupils' attainment in English fell below the national average, but was in line with the national average in mathematics and science. In English, pupils' attainment was well below the national average when comparisons were made with similar schools. This, in English, was mainly due to a weaker cohort that contained a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. The percentage of pupils who gain the higher level in all three subjects, is close to the national average. It is more the overall number of pupils who fail to achieve the basic level expected for their age that keeps school attainment to the broadly average picture confirmed by the results of the inspection. A significant number of pupils enter school with below average skills.
- 2 Pupils reach satisfactory standards in speaking and listening. Throughout the school, good emphasis is placed on pupils talking with confidence about their work. By the end of Key Stage 2, most achieve satisfactory levels in their ability to express views about literature and, for example, about the differences between various religions. Listening skills are generally good and pupils learn well from each other or by active participation in the literacy hour.
- 3 Pupils make good progress in their reading and by the end of the key stage, standards are in line with the national average. The subject is well structured and taught across the school allowing pupils the opportunity to explore a wide range of texts for information and pleasure. Most pupils are well aware of how characters in stories are built up and portrayed and many can infer the meaning of texts as well as make sensible predictions as to what is likely to happen next. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils read to their potential, with many anxious to find the next story from a favourite author or able to extract information from non fiction texts to support other learning. Levels of comprehension are also satisfactory.
- 4 In their writing, pupils achieve average levels in relation to their creative ideas, spelling, grammatical knowledge and expression. The National Literacy Strategy has helped pupils find many forms of self expression in their writing, particularly in their use of written English to support the rest of the curriculum. For example, in Year 3, pupils write very effectively about the flood of Noah, as told from an imaginary reporter's point of view. Some accurate and lively writing resulted from Year 6 pupils following their residential visit to Northumberland, while pupils in Year 4 read stories with imaginative and spooky settings and then write successfully in a similar style themselves. Standards of written presentation are high. At times, the advantage of pupils keeping their work really neat and copying accurately from a script, appears to outweigh the importance of writing more freely and at greater length. Pupils are aware of the different audiences that their writing needs to target. For example, a Year 4 class compiled a book on Islam and Mohammed with a view to making it suitable for the neighbouring infant school. In many instances however, pupils lack the important self knowledge as to how their writing can be further improved including the small, but important stages they need to progress through to in order to make their writing even more convincing and accurate.
- 5 In mathematics, pupils have a sound grasp of the importance of place value and can add, subtract, multiply and divide to the level anticipated for their age. They also show average understanding of money, shape, area, time, data handling and measurement. In Year 3, pupils illustrate their knowledge of fractions and use specific terminology such as equivalence, numerator and denominator to accurately explain their work. The onset of dedicated mathematics lessons, has led to improved mental skills, with pupils showing sound levels of recall and by renewed speed in adding and subtracting. By the end of Key Stage 2, two weaknesses prevent many pupils from making more rapid progress in their knowledge and application of mathematics. These involve a lack of understanding of the essential relationships

between the major operations of number, such as multiplication and division; and secondly, the difficulties involved in choosing which operation is needed to solve a particular mathematical problem. Some pupils also lack a range of strategies and methods in order to achieve the same answer. As with English, pupils present their work very well although there has been in the past, too much emphasis on pages of sums rather than on the use and application of mathematical skills in other areas. However, the use and application of mathematics occurs to good effect in design and technology and during map work exercises in geography.

- 6 The attainment of pupils in science is in line with the national average and there is good emphasis on practical activities as well as increasing pupils' knowledge and understanding. Topics are recalled well and clearly written about and illustrated. In Year 3, pupils learn rapidly about materials and their experiments contain useful opportunities for predictions and testing for durability and general performance. In Year 6, pupils carry out a major cross curricular study on space and gain considerable scientific insight into the topic that in turn leads them to explore other aspects of science. The use made of subject specific language is not fully explored, but is satisfactory overall.
- 7 The attainment of pupils in information technology is barely satisfactory and many make inconsistent progress in the subject, particularly in its potential use to support other areas of the curriculum. Many pupils have an average grasp of the keyboard and on-screen menus and can readily access peripherals such as the mouse and printer. Older pupils save their work and open up their own files successfully. In a limited way, pupils use CD-ROMS to gain additional information about their various topics. A weakness lies in the lack of regular access to quality software that would heighten pupils' awareness of information technology and give a greater range of challenging experiences. In the main, skills are not well consolidated and then extended. The subject is also not used sufficiently to enrich pupils' learning in English and mathematics or to extend the learning of pupils with special educational needs.
- 8 In religious education, pupils learn well and standards of attainment are above those expected in the local agreed syllabus. A particular strength of religious education is the pupils' knowledge and experience of different religions and faiths, a matter of considerable importance when so few on roll come from minority ethnic groups. The subject is also a mainstay of pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- 9 Attainment in the foundation subjects is at least satisfactory and in some areas, standards are very good. In music for example, standards are high, with the school having a deserved reputation for quality music making and providing rich experiences for the pupils. Significant numbers play a musical instrument, including guitars or brass. The quality of singing, including that of the choir, is expressive and at times quite outstanding.
- 10 Standards in history are consistently good and in geography they are in line with the national expectation, but with good emphasis on map reading skills that are well developed by the end of the key stage. Attainment in physical education is above the level anticipated for the age of the pupils in several strands of the subject, not least in dancing where, for example, pupils in Years 6 work on group sequences to a high standard. A majority of pupils can swim 25 metres. Standards in all other areas of the curriculum are in line with the national expectation.
- 11 Pupils of all abilities, boys and girls, achieve sound and good levels, depending on their aptitude and own enthusiasms. Almost all pupils make good progress because of the level of demand placed on them and by the quality of teaching. The targets set by the school for the future attainment of its pupils are realistic, yet challenging. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards targets that are set for them, although some of these require greater focus. Their learning is also generally well supported by teachers, who carefully match tasks to their individual needs. The introduction of the Learning Support Initiative successfully contributes to the good progress pupils make.
- 12 All pupils benefit from everyday work targets where these are set, and the latest figures for end of key stage assessments suggest that the school is targeting future attainments to a realistic yet sufficiently challenging level. However, the school is only now beginning to set a more

rigorous agenda for driving up standards still further and this is appropriate due to the preponderance of mainly average results over the past few years.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 13 Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and to many aspects of school life. They behave well and relationships are warm and mutually respectful. They enjoy school and are keen to come. The overwhelming majority of parents say their children like school. Pupils work very hard, concentrate well and show interest and perseverance. They listen well but are also eager to read aloud and to answer questions. Pupils take pride in their work and standards of presentation are high. However, at times, some over emphasis on presentation slows working pace and therefore productivity. Even during long assemblies, most pupils remain listening, well focused and sit quite still. They participate very keenly in extra curricular activities and significant numbers are involved in musical and sporting activities in particular. The overall response of pupils has remained a strength since the previous inspection.
- 14 Behaviour is mostly good and parents support this view. Within classrooms, pupils are usually cooperative and attentive. They respond well to instructions and do as they are asked both quickly and sensibly. Although good behaviour is rewarded with team points and praise, there is simply an expectation that pupils will behave well and they respond to this in their everyday work. The headteacher recently received a letter from a hotel owner in Bamburgh, praising the behaviour of Year 6 pupils during their recent residential visit. Very occasionally, pupils try to challenge teachers with distracting and inattentive behaviour, but they are brought quickly back to task. There are many examples of pupils being managed effectively in a range of contexts. At lunchtime and playtime, pupils also behave well. They play together happily, with both younger and older pupils mixing well and boys and girls also share games. The dining room is sociable and well organised. Staff set a very good example by sitting at tables with pupils and sharing relaxed conversation. Pupils respond well to midday supervisors in the dining room and on the playground. There have been no exclusions for four years, but if pupils persistently misbehave at lunchtime, they are excluded over the dinner break.
- 15 Pupils play an active role in the life of the school. They willingly undertake jobs in the classroom and will ask if they can help at break or lunchtime. Pupils run the book shop, help with charity fund raising and older pupils often read to younger children. However, a lack of formal structures for responsibility such as a school council or Year 6 pupils acting as team point captains, does restrict opportunities for pupils to take on specific roles. Pupils in Year 4 are currently writing stories for much younger children, which they will take to the main feeder infant school to read aloud to the children there. Several pupils initiate competitions, for example to design an Easter card. They also organise fund raising events such as Blue Peter Bring and Buy sales. The recent residential trip to Bamburgh for Year 6 pupils made a very positive contribution to their personal development. Pupils share rooms and participate in a wide range of activities, cooperating well with each other and with the members of staff who accompany them. The extensive range of extra curricular opportunities encourages pupils to work together as teams or as groups of musicians and each understands the importance of their contribution to the success of the whole. The headteacher emphasises the importance of teamwork in assembly. In classrooms, pupils work diligently on assigned tasks either individually, in pairs or as small groups as directed by the teacher. Pupils' opportunities to undertake independent work and research are somewhat limited by the lack of a proper library area where they can sit and study books.
- 16 The majority of pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to their work. They try hard and form positive relationships with teachers and other pupils. They are happy in school and the fact that their contributions are valued enables them to develop in confidence and self esteem. Good attitudes and behaviour are mainly as a result of the good quality of teachers' discipline and classroom organisation. Pupils with special educational needs are very supportive of each other and other pupils in the school are often willing to help when problems arise.
- 17 Attendance at the school is good and a little above the national average. Pupils come willingly and happily to school and are usually prompt. Parents understand their responsibility to report

reasons for absence and most do so without having to be reminded. The school takes a strict line on authorised and unauthorised absence, which is made clear in the prospectus.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 18 The quality of teaching is now a strength of the school and has improved further since the previous inspection. The overall quality of teaching is good. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Almost 75 per cent of teaching is good or better. Teaching in about one lesson in five is very good, and three per cent of the teaching is excellent. There are particular teaching strengths in several subjects including literacy, numeracy, science and music.
- 19 Confidence and sound expertise have replaced the weakness in teachers' knowledge, noted in the previous inspection, mainly as the result of well structured in service training. Only expertise in information technology remains relatively weak. In the most effective lessons, teachers have full command of their subject material. They convey not only accuracy of detail to their pupils, but also enthusiasm for learning. A notable example is in music where at times the teaching is inspiring. The strong emphasis on teaching of basic skills extends to science and information technology as well as to English and mathematics. Teachers make very good use of the structure of the literacy hour to achieve a good balance between training in phonics and word building skills, work involving punctuation and sequencing of sentences and the reading of whole texts. Numeracy teaching provides a good base for developing pupils' mathematical skills, but the structure is not yet quite as well understood as literacy. Some teachers do not sufficiently emphasise pupils' independence in creative thinking, for example in developing and using their own strategies for handling numbers, and concentrate overmuch on mechanical exercises as opposed to greater understanding of pattern and the relationships between numbers. However, the quality of teaching enables pupils to make mainly good progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding in these two core subjects.
- 20 Teachers focus well on a sound range of basic computer skills, from loading software at the start, to saving work securely at the end of a session. They do not however, make sufficient use of all the opportunities available for pupils to work at the computer and support their learning across the curriculum.
- 21 In a determined response to the need for stronger planning in 1996, the staff has adopted an effective whole school approach to planning. Lesson plans are now based securely on a consistent pattern, usually based on accurate assessment of pupils' recall of earlier work. Lesson objectives are usually clear and, in the best lessons, targets are shared with the pupils, enabling them to get a wider picture of the context of their learning. Teachers are aware that pupils learn by small steps and are careful to ensure that new learning is built securely on the old, although this aspect is used insufficiently when teaching pupils to write with greater accuracy and purpose. Teachers are particularly good at matching activities used in mathematics and English lessons to the abilities of the pupils. This good practice is extending to science lessons in some classes. This means that pupils with lower attainment can understand the work they do and have confidence in their progress, while still stretching the higher attaining pupils to put in good intellectual effort.
- 22 Good teaching combined with appropriate matching of tasks to pupils' individual needs, enables pupils with special educational needs to make mainly good progress. Support staff work well with class teachers to ensure that pupils are appropriately challenged, including those who are more able. By encouraging good levels of concentration and by challenging pupils appropriately, teachers ensure that lessons are productive and pupils are able to achieve success. Close monitoring enables teachers to be aware of pupils' difficulties and to plan their work accordingly. Their ability to plan work at an appropriate level enables them to set targets that are generally realistic and achievable. Some individual plans are insufficiently detailed in terms of the targets they set.
- 23 Teachers have a high expectation that pupils will behave and listen well and particularly to present their work very neatly. Teachers put a lot of effort into making worksheets and guide cards for the lesson activities. Resources are well prepared, enabling pupils to make a quick start to their work. Teachers explain things clearly. They give precise instructions, so that pupils know what to do. For instance, most science lessons build up in a series of logical steps so that pupils can see exactly how one piece links to another. Teachers are also good at planning links between subjects. For instance, learning to design and make camera obscura

enabled Year 6 pupils to observe the connection with light and seeing, the history behind it, and extended their skills in measuring and writing an accurate account.

- 24 Management of pupils is very good overall, and teachers deal with interruptions and inappropriate behaviour swiftly yet calmly. The most successful lessons have short introductions followed by plenty of activity and opportunity for pupils to try things out for themselves, so creating their own solutions. In these lessons teachers, demand high productivity and give time signals so that pupils know how much they have to do and how long remains to do it. This keeps them on their toes. In a minority of lessons where the teachers' input goes on too long, or pupils are not required to complete sufficiently demanding work, some lose concentration. In a very small number of lessons, inattention and minor disturbances are overlooked and go unchecked. These inconsistencies affect the rate of learning in some pupils.
- 25 Very good and excellent teaching occurs when many factors combine to encourage good levels of pupil independence and initiative. These lessons set a strong pace and the use of particularly effective question and answer technique, gives pupils time to think out their replies. In these lessons, pupils' own experience or homework is used effectively. For example in a Year 5 lesson, pupils use their own family's data and views about facilities in Maltby, and this brought about strong ownership and deeper understanding of the activity.

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

- 26 The overall quality of the curriculum is good and provides a wide range of opportunities for learning. It is well suited to the needs of all pupils and has a positive impact upon the standards achieved. The school fulfils its statutory requirements to teach all National Curriculum subjects and the local agreed syllabus for religious education. The school meets its requirements for a daily act of collective worship. Adequate time is allocated to each subject. There are certain occasions when particularly strong subjects, such as music, are given additional time so that all pupils can benefit from the opportunities on offer and make good progress.
- 27 The school provides for sex education, mainly in Year 6, and teaches about the dangers of drugs misuse. As yet, the school has not formalised the curriculum arrangements for teaching about personal and social education, but this is planned for, as all the elements merely need pulling together into a cohesive whole. There are also opportunities within the wider curriculum, when pupils are taught about moral issues and the impact of their actions upon others. This is combined with attentive day to day support of the pupils. Such teaching is well reflected in the school's ethos. The school successfully promotes the pupils' intellectual, physical and social development and is helping them to grow into responsible and compassionate members of society. The curriculum prepares the pupils effectively for the next stage of their education.
- 28 Since the last inspection, when it was judged that some foundation subjects lacked progressive learning, the school has responded positively to the need to provide more detailed guidance to help teachers plan their subjects. Informative guidance is now in place for most subjects. The school has effectively implemented the National Literacy Strategy and this is beginning to impact positively upon standards achieved by the pupils. There is also a strong focus on literacy throughout the school and staff take many opportunities to ensure that these skills are used across several subjects of the curriculum. However, planning for the development and use of literacy in information technology is incidental rather than being carefully built into subject planning. The school's homework policy is being developed at present in the light of parents' comments, as they particularly, are keen to ensure that their children receive an appropriate amount to meet their needs. The National Numeracy Strategy is generally well implemented and is having early influence on mathematical areas such as the pupils' mental recall of number facts.
- 29 Pupils with special educational needs have access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum and to a good range of extra curricular activities. They receive good quality support that is almost always delivered within their classroom. On the few occasions that pupils are withdrawn

for individual and small group support, work focuses on their specific needs in order that the curriculum becomes more easily accessible to them. No pupil is disapplied from the National Curriculum. Some individual educational plans do not spell out precisely what the curriculum needs of pupils are.

- 30 Most subjects, particularly music, science, geography and history are ably supported through a good programme of relevant and well planned educational visits, including an annual residential field study to Bamburgh in Northumberland. The curriculum is further enriched through an excellent range of extra curricular opportunities. These include a wide variety of musical activities such as learning to play the guitar, woodwind, percussion and brass instruments, and various team sports where boys and girls are encouraged to take part. There are also opportunities for the pupils to participate in weekly drama sessions and a successful book club is held twice weekly. These activities are characterised by the large percentage of pupils in all year groups participating regularly. Parents are rightly pleased with the extra opportunities on offer to their children. Such clubs extend pupils' learning and help them to develop socially with other pupils.
- 31 The school has positive and helpful links with the community, including local infant and secondary schools. These links benefit the pupils' smooth transition between phases. The community policeman regularly helps with education about drugs and the harmful effects of their misuse. The pupils also benefit from weekly visits by an accomplished pianist who inspires them in their music activities through his high quality input.
- 32 The provision made for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Particular strengths lie in spiritual and social education. The provision for spiritual development is planned into many aspects of curriculum and in worship. Much of the teaching of religious education and many assembly themes centre on spiritual issues. Teachers also have a strong awareness of the need for pupils to have time to reflect and create opportunities for this to occur in their lessons. Pupils learn about different faiths. Regular visits to local churches and popular visits by ministers from these and other churches, introduce pupils to the diversity of worship and helps bring a living dimension of belief into school. For example, the school celebrates birth, life and the official dawn of spring bringing a strong sense of awe and wonder at the mysteries and joys of the world. Literacy lessons are often used as occasions to savour the beauty of the English language.
- 33 Provision for moral education is good. Teachers show pupils clearly the difference between right from wrong and place a high value on honesty and truth. This message is well reinforced by classroom rules and the behaviour code. Staff are good role models and the headteacher has a particularly good rapport with the pupils, contributing much to the orderly and positive ethos of the school. Assemblies have planned themes around current issues, and pupils are encouraged to use their initiative to plan their work. Many aspects of the planned curriculum involve moral elements, such as environmental issues in geography, pollution and healthy living in science, and the recurring theme of right versus wrong in literature.
- 34 Many opportunities are planned for pupils to work in social contexts, usually as paired or group work in lessons, which help contribute to the very good provision. Teachers plan opportunities for more experienced pupils to help the less experienced; for example, Year 6 pupils help younger ones with reading, or in computer learning, the more able help the less confident. Pupils volunteer to assist in the daily life of the school, and this help is valued by teachers. The school is particularly good at involving the community. It acts as a good host to visitors of all kinds. The 'catering committee of pupils' is well known for its generous measures of strong orange juice. Teachers organise events where pupils are confident to perform music for various parent groups in the local area. The school encourages initiative, and there is barely time in the term to accommodate the queue of pupils who have organised some competition to raise funds for a cause they believe in.
- 35 Provision for cultural development has improved since the last inspection and now includes, for example, a much stronger programme to raise pupils' awareness of the diversity of cultures in modern Britain. Such a programme is well supported by visitors into the school, and also visits to places of multi-cultural interest. For example, pupils were very interested in equal rights, a

theme that started as a single assembly idea, but grew into a dynamic project. By the end of it pupils shared the vision of a just world. Teachers create many opportunities in the work on music, literature and in the study of cultures in geography and history to extend pupils' experience of, and learning about other ways of life. The potential for this in dance is not overlooked. Opportunities are provided for pupils to put respect and reverence as well as care into their technology artefacts, by creating book rests to hold copies of the Qu'ran

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 36 The school provides a secure, supportive environment in which pupils learn and develop in the knowledge that they are cared for and valued as individuals. This aspect of care and nurture has remained a strength since the previous inspection.
- 37 There is good attention to the daily well being of pupils. Health and safety is also given high priority and regular safety checks are carried out. The designated person for child protection has been trained and all staff understand the correct procedures to follow. Pupils in Year 6 learn how to deal with emergency situations and the importance of protecting themselves and each other through the 'Crucial Crew.' concept. First aid is administered with sensitivity and care and appropriate records are kept. There is good liaison with outside medical and educational agencies; for example, the school nurse supports sex education for Year 6 pupils. The dining room is sociable and well organised and midday supervisors are exceptionally caring. Outside, there is good provision for social seating for pupils who wish to spend their break times merely talking quietly.
- 38 There is a real sense that children matter to staff. They know them well as individuals and understand their family backgrounds. The headteacher too, has considerable strengths in this area. Pupils are confident that they can go to any member of staff with a problem, be it of an academic or personal nature and they will be helped. The process of getting to know pupils starts from when they join the reception class of the main feeder infant school. By the time they start school, pupils have met their teachers several times and become very familiar with the layout of the school. Similarly, Year 6 pupils are well prepared for the move to secondary school and are looking forward to the next stage of their education with confidence. Good transfer documents and discussions between teachers ensure that essential information is passed appropriately between schools.
- 39 Within the school, records on each pupil are passed between teachers each year, which track their academic progress. Procedures for the identification and assessment of pupils are clear and are understood by all staff. Individual Education Plans are in place for all pupils requiring them and teachers take an active role in setting targets and monitoring pupils' progress. However, there is insufficient focus on how pupils' targets can be supported in subjects other than literacy and numeracy. The coordinator does not have the opportunity to monitor the teaching of pupils with special educational needs.
- 40 There are satisfactory procedures in place for maintaining the above average attendance and punctuality. Pupils who achieve 100 per cent attendance for the year are rewarded with a certificate. Registers are completed on time and carefully monitored for any patterns of non attendance. If these occur, parents are contacted. The school receives very good support from the education welfare officer when needed.
- 41 Most pupils understand how and why they are expected to behave. Noticeably, good behaviour is rewarded by team points, which are also deducted if pupils do not respond to teachers' requests. In most cases, any disruptive behaviour is very skilfully handled and pupils brought quickly back to task. Any incidents of poor behaviour are logged by the headteacher and parents called in as necessary. Pupils and parents are confident that any rare incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and fairly. The school has a good, clear discipline policy with an associated anti-bullying policy.
- 42 The previous inspection judged that assessment of pupils' attainment was a weakness and in need of review. The school has responded positively to this issue and staff have worked hard to

produce effective systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' attainment and progress. These procedures include a mixture of the school's own arrangements and the adoption and implementation of various tests to help make judgements on pupils' progress. These include annual tests in reading and optional National Curriculum tests in Years 3, 4 and 5. In addition, assessments are used to identify and track individual pupils' performance, particularly in English and mathematics. Information from assessments is used to set new and realistic targets for individual pupils and to identify target groups for literacy and numeracy. 'Booster Classes' are presently being arranged to enhance Year 6 attainment in English and mathematics. When pupils are assessed, they are sometimes involved in their own target setting and are therefore aware of what they need to do to improve their work. This strategy is under used in English. Overall, pupils are not given sufficiently rigorous guidance in all classes as to how they can improve their own attainment, including that in the National Curriculum tests. Nevertheless, there are some very good examples where this is taking place and is beginning to impact on the progress and subsequent attainment of the pupils, notably in Year 4 classes.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

- 43 The school works hard to maintain and strengthen its links with parents and carers and they are generally supportive of the way in which their children are taught and cared for. The parents' view of the school is good overall.
- 44 Parents and carers support the work of the school. The meeting and the questionnaires showed that the great majority is satisfied with the provision made for their children both in academic learning and in the wide range of additional activities on offer to pupils. They feel that teachers are approachable and that the school works with them. Although parents are asked to leave and collect their children at the outside door, teachers make themselves readily available to speak with any concerned or interested parents. Attendance at reporting and open evenings is very high and more parents now attend specific meetings on educational initiatives such as literacy and numeracy if these are held as part of an open evening.
- 45 A number of parents choose to involve themselves actively in the life of the school. Some give specific classroom help according to their expertise and this makes good impact on pupils' learning. For example, the Muslim father of a pupil talks to a class about Islam in religious education. Other parents hear pupils read and help out on trips. A number of parents came to support sports' teams during the week of the inspection. At the time of the last inspection, there was a Parent Teacher and Friends Association but this is no longer in existence. However, parents do support school and give generously to charity fund raising, much of it organised by pupils themselves. For example, the sponsored Krypton Factor raised over £1500 to buy additional resources.
- 46 Inspection evidence shows that parents are generally kept well informed. The school prospectus is a very full document, giving lots of useful information and illustrated with photographs of pupils engaging in a wide range of activities. It does not however contain the aims of the school. Regular newsletters keep parents updated as to what is going on in school and notice boards post school matters as well as items of more general interest to parents. There are three open evenings a year when parents can meet teachers formally and parents can always contact staff if they have concerns. Annual reports to parents are in the form of a Record of Achievement and clearly tell parents what their children know, understand and can do, and set some targets for improvement. Links with parents of pupils who have special educational needs are mainly good. Parents' attendance at their child's annual review is almost always good.
- 47 The response to the introduction of homework diaries has been very positive. Parents were consulted about homework and the current diary is to trial the system prior to introducing a school specific diary next September. Parents and pupils like the diaries. Parents find the diaries give them good information on what is being done in subjects and topics and also an indication of standards. They rightly would like a clearer policy statement on the place of homework in school life. Many parents hear their children read at home and comment in the reading diary.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 48 The school is led well by an experienced headteacher who, together with other senior staff, has set clear priorities relating to learning and to the care and personal development of the pupils. The headteacher seeks a school characterised by its reputation for hard work, endeavour and achievement. Consequently, those in management work hard and successfully to offer pupils a disciplined, organised and caring environment in which to live and learn. The headteacher helps to inspire, motivate and influence staff to meet the declared priorities of the school.
- 49 The aims of the school embrace the growing emphasis on literacy and numeracy but also indicate a determination to provide a good balance of rich and varied opportunities from which pupils will learn. Such aims are clearly well met. However, the aims are not written into the school's prospectus, nor do they sufficiently state the importance of high standards and achievements. There is therefore a growing need for the school to balance the strength of its curriculum and general work ethos, with the importance of raising standards year on year.
- 50 The governing body was newly formed in January 2000 but has been quick to ensure that it operates from an informed base and with a clear committee structure. It meets its statutory requirements and is enthusiastic and committed to the cause and future of the school. It has made valuable contributions to the early provision of literacy and numeracy and ensures that the school follows the approved code for supporting pupils with special educational needs. Whilst the governors' work in helping to shape the direction of the school is satisfactory overall, they have not yet made major contributions towards wider strategic planning, particularly in relation to the annual school development plan.
- 51 The management of the school has a sound grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of past performance and understands the vital importance of monitoring teaching and learning on a regular basis. Particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy, the school has begun to evaluate the performance of its pupils and to consider ways in which standards could be raised still further. Other areas of school life need to be evaluated in similar ways. Within management however, there is a shared commitment to make further improvements combined with the capacity to succeed.
- 52 The school development plan is a useful, well structured document and is central to the future growth of the school. All key areas, including school subjects and building matters, are well documented. Educational priorities are clearly stated, together with the action needed to meet the various targets. The subject coordinators vary in their experience and opportunity to influence future provision, practice and standards in their areas, but all contribute at least a basic audit to the central plan. Where effective leadership is apparent, as in English, physical education and music, the school needs to ensure such good practice becomes an integral part of strengthening leadership in other areas. This applies particularly to the monitoring of schemes of work and the quality of teaching and learning, as well as to the standards achieved by the pupils. The school meets its statutory requirements in relation to special educational needs, but there are no written guidelines relating to the drawing up and monitoring of pupils' individual educational plans.
- 53 The strategic use of financial and other resources is good. Specific grants are well targeted and expenditure is carefully monitored. The priorities in the school development plan are supported well by the school's financial planning. The cost effectiveness of decisions taken by the management of the school is regularly evaluated. In its daily practice, the school ensures the basic principles of value for money are carefully applied. In its most recent audit, the school was praised for its accountancy and clearly established financial procedures.
- 54 There is a satisfactory match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. The majority of teaching staff is very experienced and this helps bring stability to pupils' learning. Two classes are taught under job share agreements and these arrangements are generally effective. While most coordinators manage their subjects well, others are relatively inexperienced in terms of monitoring standards and therefore make less impact on their subject

areas. Teacher appraisal is a mix of formal and informal monitoring by the head teacher and deputy headteacher and is sound overall. Staff training and induction is well established and is effective overall.

- 55 Support staff are very experienced and cooperation between teachers and support assistants is very effective in addressing the needs of those pupils who need additional help. The school is also fortunate to enjoy the services of a conscientious, committed caretaker who keeps the school clean and well maintained. Midday supervisors clearly enjoy working with children and have benefited from recent training.
- 56 The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The school benefits from having two good sized playgrounds together with extensive grass playing fields set in an attractive hilltop location. The external environment is mostly well maintained and well used for environmental studies and sport. The hall is of a good size for assemblies and indoor physical education. Most classrooms are light and airy and all have running water. Two temporary classrooms are less conducive to pupils' education. A shortcoming in the main building is the lack of a designated library area. Placed as it is on the administration corridor, it is very restricted in space. There is no facility for pupils to sit with books to research or just enjoy a good read in comfortable surroundings. Pupils' opportunities for independent learning are therefore somewhat restricted.
- 57 Learning resources are satisfactory to support the curriculum. Music, religious education and physical education are particularly well resourced. Each classroom has its own book area to compensate for the deficiencies in the corridor library. Levels of display are particularly good throughout the school and resources are often used imaginatively alongside examples of pupils' work. The celebration of pupils' achievements in this way is a good feature of the ethos of the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 58 In order to further raise standards of attainment and improve the quality of education provided by the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

Improve standards in English by:

- ensuring that the written work of pupils is carefully assessed and monitored set against the particular learning targets and areas of need identified by the teacher.
- ensuring that the correct balance is maintained between the need for pupils to produce neat, well presented work, set against imaginative and factual writing of good length that includes well developed ideas, vocabulary and expression.
- giving clearer guidance to pupils themselves on how to improve the quality and range of their writing and what they should be aiming at next.

(Paragraphs 4, 65,69)

Improve standards in mathematics by:

- ensuring more pupils have a clearer understanding of the close relationships that exist between the main operations of number and that they use this knowledge to check their work.
- making pupils more familiar with a greater range of mathematical strategies that they subsequently can use to solve everyday problems in the subject.
- increasing the range of computer software to help pupils' learning in mathematics, particularly for the least able.

(Paragraphs 5,19,73,78)

Improve the progress made by pupils in information technology by:

- bringing greater clarity to the overall provision in which the various areas of skill are more carefully structured and allocated clearer slots of time within the year groups.
- improving on the present system that does not necessarily guarantee equality of access to

computer technology in relation to the needs of the pupils.

- developing ways in which information technology can extend pupils' experiences in other subjects and support their wider learning across the curriculum.
(Paragraphs 7,20,108-115 and 103)

Further improve the influence of school leadership and management by:

- ensuring that the school's aims are more widely published, reviewed and evaluated and that they more accurately reflect the desire to raise standards further in important areas.
- increase the use made of subject coordinators as a means of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning occurring in their own areas, following the successful examples already in existence.
- increase the involvement of governors in matters of forward planning and, in particular, their contribution to major school initiatives as identified in the School Development Plan.
(Paragraphs 48-52)

As well as the above, the governing body should give consideration to the following less significant weaknesses in their post inspection plan.

- Provide a clearer statement to parents about pupils' homework and evaluate the current provision with a view to making it more consistent and meaningful across the school.
(summary section)
- Provide clearer guidance to teachers and others as to how best compile and utilise individual educational plans for pupils with special educational needs.
(Paragraphs 11,22,29, 52)
- Bring together the various strands of personal and social education already in existence in order to form a cohesive, whole school approach to the pupils' personal development.
(Paragraph 27)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	72
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	25	46	26	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y 3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	No nursery	258
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		30

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	44

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	45	37	82

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	31	38
	Girls	24	26	24
	Total	48	57	62
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	59 (65)	70 (57)	76 (62)
	National	70 (65)	69 (58)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	28	34
	Girls	22	20	23
	Total	45	48	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (65)	59 (57)	70 (67)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	1
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	
White	262
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only and is based on 1998 form 7

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes (1999/2000)

Qualified teachers and classes: Y 3 – Y 6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	26

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	45.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	401720
Total expenditure	395640
Expenditure per pupil	1444
Balance brought forward from previous year	11818
Balance carried forward to next year	17898

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	258
Number of questionnaires returned	147

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	41	3	1	2
My child is making good progress in school.	44	51	2	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	50	3	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	50	12	3	1
The teaching is good.	46	49	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	54	16	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	40	4	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	37	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	27	59	13	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	54	38	3	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	51	4	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	46	3	1	3

Figures may not add up to 100 per cent because of rounding

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

ENGLISH

- 59 The results of the National Curriculum Tests in 1999 indicate that the performance of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 age was below the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was broadly in line with the national average. Standards were well below average when compared with those in similar schools. This was mainly attributed to the high percentage of lower attaining and special needs pupils within the 1999 cohort. Trends over time show that the pupils' performance in English is close to the national trend, although standards fell during 1997. The school has undertaken careful analysis of available data and has put into effect programmes to address these weaknesses.
- 60 Through the implementation of the literacy hour, the provision of additional staff and careful target setting, inspection evidence indicates that there is some overall improvement in the standards achieved by the pupils. The inspection found that the attainment of both boys and girls is average overall and higher attaining pupils continue to do well. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting felt that standards are high in the school. At the last inspection, it was deemed that levels of attainment were good. However at that time, attainment criteria were different, being largely judged against pupils' abilities. Therefore some data are difficult to compare and evaluate.
- 61 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them and, while for some pupils attainment is below or well below average, a significant percentage of them achieve standards near to the national norm. Small group support and modified learning activities help these pupils with specific skills in English.
- 62 Literacy levels are satisfactory and support pupils' learning in other subjects. Pupils' basic literacy enables them to work in those subjects where they need to use reading and writing fluently. There are good examples in core and in foundation subjects throughout the school where the pupils use these skills efficiently, for example in history and religious education. However, opportunities are lost in some classes, when the pupils are allowed to copy from books and other sources rather than extracting the basic information they require. As yet, there is no whole school approach to this area of the English curriculum. Nevertheless, there are some good examples where literacy skills are used effectively enough across other subjects. In science, for example, pupils write objectively when reporting their findings. They read text for meaning from various sources, including CD-ROM, and sometimes extract the information they require. In design and technology, the pupils use their developing literacy skills to label, write instructions and evaluate their designs, suggesting ways to improve them. Information technology supports pupils' development in English, but planning for its use is incidental, rather than being carefully built into reading and writing sessions.
- 63 There are very good guidelines for the progressive development of speaking and listening. There are planned opportunities across all subjects. The teachers create a climate whereby pupils feel confident to express an opinion, because their contributions are valued. As a result, pupils attain satisfactory standards for their age. Most pupils speak fluently, clearly expressing a point of view that others can understand. Most join in class discussions and critically review their contributions although, as in writing, this is an area that needs considerable expansion. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs achieve satisfactory standards in relation to their prior attainment. Most are able to participate fully in class discussions and confidently talk about their work. Their progress is well supported through drama.
- 64 Pupils make good progress in reading and their overall attainment is average. Their progress is well supported well by regular reading at home. Most pupils can recall in reasonable detail the range of books they have read. They show good understanding of key ideas, events and elements of characters in the stories they read. Most feel confident to read in front of the class or group, often with considerable expression, accuracy and enjoyment. Older pupils in

particular read for different purposes and can adopt different strategies for the task, including skimming, in order to gain an overall impression or to locate information. They use dictionaries and thesauruses when required to aid their understanding. The pupils use these skills in literacy and in other subjects. The higher attaining pupils have a secure understanding of a wider range of different books and often choose books by author.

- 65 Through effective teaching, the pupils make mainly good progress in writing and attain satisfactory standards by the end of the key stage. However, some weaknesses do exist, including the assessment of work against agreed targets, and the need for clearer guidance to pupils as to what they should aim for next. Higher attaining pupils usually write effectively and in sufficient depth using different styles and for different purposes. Many pupils recognise some of the distinguishing features of story writing and factual accounts, such as their recording in mathematics or science and poetry. Most, but by no means all pupils, have the confidence and understanding to produce work using vocabulary that is rich and arranged in a way that captures and holds the readers' attention. Spelling is generally accurate. Overall, pupils understand the nature and reasons for punctuation and are able to transfer these skills successfully to other subjects. The standards of handwriting and presentation are above average in English and across the curriculum. However, some parents are rightly concerned about the time their children spend on practising their handwriting when good foundations for a fluent style have already been established.
- 66 The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy. Realistic targets have been set. Planning materials for teachers produced by the school are clear and give sufficient guidance as to what skills the pupils are expected to learn as they move from class to class. Good assessment procedures are in place and information gathered is used to plan generally what the pupils need to learn next, but the detail of this is not sufficiently worked out in practice or conveyed closely to the pupils. The teachers make regular assessments of their pupils' work and make judgements as to the National Curriculum levels. Marking is meaningful and gives some guidance as to how pupils might improve their efforts. However, at present, the pupils are not always provided with sufficiently rigorous assistance as to how they can best improve their levels of attainment in English.
- 67 The quality of teaching is good overall, with some very good lessons observed during the inspection. Lessons are planned well to reflect the National Literacy Strategy and learning resources are well organised and used. In some classes, learning targets are made clear to the pupils. There are also some very good opportunities for the pupils to practise and develop important skills of literacy in other subjects. In science, the pupils write predictions and record their experiments in a very concise and factual way. In history and geography, they write imaginative accounts, while in music, they are encouraged to appraise their compositions. In all subjects, most teachers encourage pupils to use correct subject terminology when speaking and writing. As a result, the pupils confidently use such terms as consonants, syllables, similes and alliteration in English, and are familiar with musical terms such as pulse, rhythm, crescendo and dynamics.
- 68 Teachers plan carefully and in considerable detail. This results in a good match of work to meet the pupils' individual needs. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and, in the very good lessons, with infectious enthusiasm. The pupils respond well to the challenges and the demands made of them by their teachers. They acquire good study habits and know what is expected of them. Pupils work well individually, in pairs or in groups, as required. Throughout the school, there is a calm, purposeful atmosphere that is conducive to pupils' learning in English.
- 69 The subject is well led and the coordinator is aware of which areas are in need of some improvement. The careful analysis of pupils' past performance has allowed the school to begin to focus effectively on areas of weakness and address these through appropriate targets. The pupils' progress is monitored well. However, the current arrangements for monitoring pupils' work is insufficiently focused on how standards can be raised. There is also the need to balance handwriting and presentation with the quality and depth of written work produced.
- 70 Resources are satisfactory. There is a small library, which is presently accommodated in a corridor. This positioning limits its use by the pupils for their personal study and independent

work.

MATHEMATICS

- 71 Standards are satisfactory throughout the school and pupils are achieving broadly in line with what is expected from pupils of a similar age. In a minority of lessons, pupils achieve standards that are above average and where this is the case, it is frequently down to particularly effective teaching. Results in the 1999 National Curriculum Tests show that the percentage of pupils who achieved the level anticipated for their age was close to the national average. The picture was similar in relation to the percentage of pupils that achieved the higher level. In comparison with similar schools, pupils achieve average results.
- 72 The 1999 results reflected in part a relatively low attaining group that contained a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. Teacher assessment for these tests significantly underestimated the performance of pupils who went on to achieve Level four and above, and this is something of a weakness within the teaching. However, the fact that pupils achieved better results than those expected, was almost certainly due to intensive work targeted at weak areas prior to the tests. Predicted results for the current year are higher and pupils are on course for achieving the school's overall targets. There is little difference in the performance of boys and girls.
- 73 Since introducing new mathematics schemes and implementing the National Numeracy Strategy, pupils have been offered a rich diet of mathematical activity. Where topics are revisited, they are generally explored at a higher level. Pupils also enjoy the renewed emphasis on mental exercises at the beginning of each lesson. Younger pupils have an adequate grasp of how fractions work and know, for example, that to create one fifth you must divide by five. When recording all possible products from rolling two dice, at least 50 per cent of more able groups can identify all 22 products. Pupils count accurately in ten's, five's, and two's, both forwards and backwards. Many know their tables well but those who, for example, are familiar with the four times table, do not always appreciate that they do not necessarily have to know their eight times table to calculate four multiplied by eight. This is an example of some lack of understanding of number patterns. Most older pupils understand the difference between a complete and incomplete number sentence, but at times it is evident that they are less adept at problem solving. This is due to insecurity among some teachers to teach a range of strategies by which pupils can identify and work out problems. By the end of the key stage, pupils are beginning to plot two and six figure coordinates accurately, with above average pupils tackling the latter confidently. They can also calculate profit margins before and after the sale of a variety of articles made all the more interesting because they allegedly belong to the class teacher. Many pupils are competent at identifying geometric shapes and calculating angles.
- 74 Pupils make satisfactory progress overall with the progress of pupils with special educational needs being good. This is due to some good teaching and the fact that work is well matched to pupils' individual needs. Pupils are grouped by ability and the occasional practice of having more able pupils assisting the least able is benefiting all through reinforcement and consolidation.
- 75 Since the last inspection there has been a slight fall in standards. This is surprising, since teaching is satisfactory or better. It is likely that this is due to the introduction of more discrete mathematical teaching, with which teachers have taken some time to become confident. The school is satisfactorily developing the investigational side of mathematics. Assessment has been considerably improved with the introduction of class record books that are used effectively to give pupils and teachers a clear indication of the levels at which pupils are working, as well as for planning future work.
- 76 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are never less than sound and mainly vary between good and excellent. Pupils are very supportive of one another and are frequently enthusiastic about the work they are doing. They respond well to encouragement and persevere when tasks become difficult. Frequent high levels of interest are prompted by the very good interaction that teachers make among the pupils, involving them well. A good example of this is when they come out to show their working on the blackboard and get involved in discussion with other

pupils about the particular ways in which they have reached their answers.

- 77 Teaching is mainly good and sometimes very good. Planning and assessment are strengths as are cross curricular links. Teachers encourage pupils to work together. Most have secure subject knowledge enabling them to challenge pupils of all abilities. More able pupils are extended particularly well. In most cases, teachers provide pupils with a variety of strategies for calculating their answers although this is not always the case. Some teachers still need to reflect in their work, the fact that there are many routes to mathematics. All make good use of subject specific language, for example when looking at equivalent and vulgar fractions. Teaching is often clear and there is good encouragement of pupils to predict, calculate and check all of their working, using calculators only to check their answers. Pupils are better motivated when they are encouraged to try things for themselves prior to asking for help. The matching of tasks to individual needs is very good. It entails all pupils with special educational needs working on the same topic and yet not being disadvantaged due to the fact that they are working at different levels. Teachers' marking is very supportive and informs pupils of how they might improve.
- 78 The subject is well led and the impact of dedicated mathematics lessons on pupils' progress is being assessed. The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced but there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use their skills in information technology and there is a lack of software to support pupils' learning in numeracy. Pupils also need the curriculum to teach them a greater range of strategies to enable them to have a clearer understanding of problem work and the variety of patterns of calculation. Resources are adequate and well used. Numeracy across the curriculum is well developed. It frequently has an impact in English, science, physical education and geography, and teachers' planning takes account of the extent to which this is included.

SCIENCE

- 79 In 1999, the percentage of Year 6 pupils reaching the levels anticipated for their age, was in line with the national average. The results were in line with the average for schools of a similar background in relation to the higher level, but below average in the percentage reaching the anticipated level 4. Boys and girls performed at virtually the same level in 1999, but over the last four years, more girls than boys achieved the higher levels. The latest Key Stage 2 results are a continuation of a trend of rising standards in science. Though results dipped in 1998, this was the same as the rest of the country, and the rate of progress over time is very close to that found nationally. The teachers' assessments of pupils' standards for 1999 were close to the test results achieved.
- 80 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress at Key Stage 2. The standards shown by pupils in Year 6 during the inspection are average, with about a quarter of pupils achieving above average standards. Pupils are particularly good at carrying out practical investigations, using their reasoning powers well to work out the links between their measurements and the scientific conclusions to be reached, and using graphs well to display their results. They absorb a good quantity of subject knowledge in their lessons on the human body and from the space topic. Most pupils clearly explain for example, why the pig's eye is not as delicate as people imagine, and how they had to struggle to cut one open to dissect it. What pupils are not yet doing so well is using information technology both for measuring data and for analysing it, or suggesting individual lines of enquiry and planning their own investigations. Provision for science has improved since the previous inspection, with the introduction of a whole school scheme of work which guides consistency of planning and teaching, and which promotes a much stronger emphasis on practical work.
- 81 The teachers' confidence and enthusiasm show clearly in science lessons and promotes not only good learning conditions, but also achieves a very good response from pupils. They maintain their sense of curiosity and are very attentive in class, which in turn improves their recall of facts. Teachers' management is particularly good, creating calm conditions whereby pupils work steadily and with determination. This means that most finish their work on time and to a satisfactory standard. Teachers set high expectations for presentation, so pupils work with

care and with attention to detail. Teachers also encourage pupils to observe closely and use good quality hand lenses to effect this. Pupils' response has improved since the last inspection, and contributes well to the quality of their own learning and progress. Teachers give careful thought to the organisation of groups, so that the pairs and small groups relate well, and their discussion adds to the outcomes. Pupils share ideas and equipment sensibly, which adds to the clarity of their understanding.

- 82 Teaching is good. Teachers employ methods that create good, and at times very good, learning conditions. They encourage the pupils to do much of the thinking and problem solving, with backup help when needed. Good question and answer sessions draw on pupils' previous experience and they readily recall earlier learning. Teachers plan particularly thoroughly. This enables them to give clear explanations within a framework of precise objectives, often shared with the pupils which helps them to see where the lessons are leading. Most lessons are well paced, sustaining interest and leading to good productivity by pupils. Practical equipment is crucial to the effectiveness of the lessons. This is always well selected to demonstrate the teaching points, and well prepared so that pupils can make a quick, safe start to their work. Teachers value pupils' work and display it effectively. The display in the hall is particularly effective, not only because it is attractive, but also it shows how pupils' progress through the junior years.
- 83 The coordinator has a sound view of pupils' achievement and progress based on information from the assessment system from Year 3 upwards, and builds this into a portfolio of work. However, the portfolio does not show accurately enough the levels achieved, and the neat tracking sheets are merely graded A to E, making it more difficult for the school to correlate work in relation to National Curriculum levels. The coordinator monitors the annual test results to find particular gaps and adjust the planning to strengthen the teaching in these areas. In this way, the early start in Year 3 on more complex data study is creating a stronger foundation. The work chosen for the science portfolio shows that insufficient use is made by Year 6 of data handling. Comparison of evidence is also not extended as much as it is needed.
- 84 Numeracy skills of estimating, counting and measuring various quantities are well used to support effective investigations. Literacy, too, promotes pupils' developing ideas, as most read their texts purposefully and write their conclusions in a clear style suited to scientific recording. Pupils are beginning to get a good picture of their own learning by teachers' detailed marking of work, and particularly in the lower school, through the matching of task to ability. Pupils are not yet involved in the evaluation of their own work, the setting of individual targets, or seeing their learning as progressing level by level.

ART

- 85 Standards in art are satisfactory overall. In a minority of lessons where standards are very good this is due to a combination of very good teaching, good pupil response and the imaginative use of resources, all of which enable pupils to improve their expertise.
- 86 Pupils are given opportunities to work with a wide range of media and tools. They mix their own paints and have experience of blending and merging of colours. When using textiles, younger pupils produce some interesting pictures of dragons using felt on hessian. However, when questioned, pupils clearly did not know that their dragons were made from felt or what the background fabric was. Pupils nearing the end of the key stage, produce very good paintings and computer graphics based upon the 'Travellers Guide to the Solar System.' Their three dimensional models of coastline, harbour and a seal, following a recent visit to Bamburgh, are impressive.
- 87 Most pupils have not yet acquired the art of sketching. They do not use sketch books and often work with the wrong pencils which restricts their ability to shade correctly. Standards in observational drawing varies too much, with some pupils drawing what they want to see and not what is actually there for them to see. Nevertheless, most pupils draw and paint appropriately an Amaryllis, or fruits and vegetables that were cut in half. Pencil drawings of violins are very accurate as are those of Victorian implements. Pupils are proficient at modelling in clay,

particularly their planetary landscapes, but there is too little emphasis given to the work of other artists. Rather than enriching artistic development, it is regarded as being too prescriptive, and this is not the national view.

- 88 Although standards are better by the end of the key stage, overall they are not as good as at the last inspection. This is mainly due to there being no scheme of work, no monitoring of teaching and no in service training provided.
- 89 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are generally good and impact well on learning and progress. Most pupils show interest in their work, and behaviour is almost always good, despite the fact that pupils are constantly moving around. Pupils remain on task well, working both individually and collaboratively with their peers. Most use the time at their disposal very profitably, although daydreaming occasionally occurs when pupils are not well motivated or engaged. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs, who often welcome opportunities to express their creativity away from more formal work.
- 90 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although on occasions it is very good. In these lessons there is very good planning and class management and secure subject knowledge enables pupils to improve their expertise, for example, of how to draw a seal. High expectations have a positive effect on pupils' learning and the progress they make. Occasionally some lessons are too dominated by teachers and pupils are reluctant to make their own decisions about whether or not a colour is right or which colour should be used where. Appropriate links are made between art and other areas of the curriculum due to the fact that the subject is topic based. There are particularly good links with literacy and numeracy and also information technology which is beginning to be used more to enhance pupils' work. Although art is also taught as a subject in its own right, there are some teachers who lack the necessary expertise to develop pupils' skills.
- 91 Planning is insufficiently structured. Although there is an informative policy, there is as yet no scheme of work to indicate the development of the subject throughout the school. Display is well used to celebrate pupils' work and this is very well presented.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 92 Very few technology lessons were seen. However, the school has taken considerable trouble to display pupils' work particularly effectively. Pupils, too, explain clearly what they have been doing. They make good progress overall and standards are at the level expected for a majority of pupils.
- 93 An aspect such as clay work can be seen developing through stages, the rough hewn daffodil tablets made in Year 3 grow into the delicate, striking, lunar landscapes of Year 6. Such skills are gradually extended so that by the end of Year 6, pupils confidently tackle a wide range of challenging tasks. They are particularly good at drawing on the repertoire of ideas and skills learned. They take a problem solving approach. Many pupils can see what is needed from their plans and use considerable independence in choosing and testing the materials they need. They are not quite so good at measuring accurately or using precise scoring techniques to get the very best finish, although they do take care and pride in their work.
- 94 The quality of teaching seen is good and contributes significantly to the good progress made in observed lessons. Materials are well prepared enabling pupils to make a quick start to their work once the relevant instructions have been given. Teachers have precise objectives for their lessons and explain these clearly to the pupils. Teachers are particularly good at creating effective learning conditions whereby the pupils have to do most of the thinking for themselves. For example, Year 5 pupils had to decide which of the earlier pop up techniques were most effective, spring spiral or lever. They also had to concentrate carefully on judging the effectiveness of the materials they were using for the purpose. They expanded their language skills by explaining the reasons for their choices in writing, and verbally to their peers. This is an invaluable and effective part of teachers' planning.

- 95 Teachers are good at planning in links with other subjects, and technology is often a vehicle for learning more about mathematics in a practical situation, for example in getting a feeling for shape size and symmetry. Many pupils use their scientific knowledge of levers and forces well, but know less about weak and strong shapes to guide their work. Teachers encourage initiative well. A good example of this is letting the pupils use the computer to find a particular bit of information or diagram to use in their designs. This not only enhances interest, but also makes their work more purposeful and develops confidence in their own ideas.
- 96 Occasionally, teachers link technology work with the geography field trip, as in Year 6, when making three dimensional maps of the landforms that pupils had seen, thereby re-establishing the learning. Teachers and assistants give good support to pupils with special educational needs and build up considerable confidence. Pupils' work is at least as good and often better than that of their peers and most make good progress.
- 97 Where teaching is less effective, it is because teachers are not good in keeping close to the agreed scheme of work. Occasions arise where pupils are engaged in pre-planned tasks that clearly do not give enough scope for their own design effort. This makes the consistent tracking of progress by assessment difficult. Information technology is under used not used as a medium for drawing up designs.
- 98 The teachers' enthusiasm promotes a very positive attitude to technology. Pupils rightly show off their work with pride. Their level of involvement and concentration is very good. They listen well. They have quite a good working knowledge of their own learning through the evaluations they write, but not yet to the extent of knowing how they are progressing through the various levels.

GEOGRAPHY

- 99 Standards in geography are average overall and at the level expected for the majority of junior aged pupils. The subject continues to be well represented in the curriculum and has made satisfactory progress since the time of the last inspection.
- 100 The strength of pupils' attainment is in their mapping skills. This strand runs right through the geography curriculum and pupils build up their skills and experience well year on year. In Year 3, pupils make accurate attempts at plotting their routes to and from school onto a local, large scale map; while those in Year 4, begin to use and understand ordnance survey symbols for the first time. Year 4 pupils also show average knowledge and understanding when drawing their own settlements around a basic grid of rivers and roads. In Year 5, pupils combine geographical and numeracy skills by measuring distances between towns on a road map and then converting these over to kilometres using an agreed scale. Year 6 pupils had recently completed a residential week in Northumberland and use Ordnance Survey maps to retrace, then describe some of their favourite walks.
- 101 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils cover an appropriately wide range of geographical topics and build up their knowledge and understanding of river systems, European capitals, large English cities and India. They also debate environmental issues and know more about their own town and region. Pupils are less adept at recalling major facts about world geography and show less awareness of comparing and contrasting regions and environments.
- 102 The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school. Pupils make particularly good progress in practical map reading because of the way they revisit this type of work on a regular basis and because the good teaching targets the gradual acquisition of their basic skills. Teachers also have a good working knowledge of the topics they undertake and present these imaginatively to the pupils. Work is challenging, yet fulfilling and a good pace is engendered into most lessons. The pupils' tasks are not determined by worksheets and pupils write to sound standards, showing good use of a wide range of geographical vocabulary. Much of the work is individually set, with pupils in Year 4, for example, making up their own map of a village settlement and showing average to good levels of understanding regarding the impact of human activity on the growth of villages and towns. Pupils of all levels of attainment are well supported and sound assessments are made of finished pieces. The quality of learning is also influenced

by the positive enthusiasm and overall response of the pupils, best illustrated in their work rate and the pride shown in their finished efforts.

- 103 The subject is well led by an experienced coordinator who monitors pupils' work by sampling books and checking the planning of teachers. The subject has some useful cross curricular links, but is at its best when teachers work systematically through the planned scheme, ensuring even coverage and the gradual development of skills. Assessment is satisfactory and carefully marked samples of pupils' work are filed for future reference and staff discussion. Learning resources are plentiful and are of good quality. Good use is also made of the immediate environment and there are several outdoor visits, culminating in a residential week that opens up new geographical experiences for many of those older pupils able to attend. The subject is not particularly well supported by information technology.

HISTORY

- 104 This is one of the subject strengths of the school and the attainment and progress of the pupils have improved since the previous inspection. It is a real favourite of pupils and staff alike and standards are consistently above average in all age groups.
- 105 The higher than average attainment is partly due to the growing sense of chronology carefully explored by the pupils as they move through the school. Many very young pupils are adept with time lines and can sequence historical events and characters very successfully. Year 3 pupils carry out real investigations involving archaeology while others in the same year show good understanding of the nature and sources of historical evidence during a lesson on 'Old Maltby.' Good indepth studies are made of the rich and poor in Tudor times and pupils extend their learning by using design and technology to design and create a money container such as would be in use in the Tudor period. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show good recall of the major topics covered during their junior years and make an indepth study of The Second World War. In this and other work, pupils' written work is very good. Although at times rather too much is copied, pupils write imaginatively overall, using their literacy skills to express clearly what they know and to bring a topic alive. For example, Year 6 pupils write with feeling about the Blitz and make authentic looking diaries containing moving stories of men who faced possible death every day.
- 106 The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. Teachers show very good subject knowledge and translate this into meaningful and thought provoking exercises for the pupils to complete. The finished pieces are well presented, often on large A3 sheets of paper, containing an impressive blend of pupils' own notes and diagrams. Good emphasis is placed on historical enquiries and pupils rapidly build up their experience in handling evidence from old newspapers, maps, textbooks and artefacts. Teachers pass on their enthusiasms to the pupils and good joint research often occurs. A good feature of pupils' learning and progress is both the quantity and quality of finished work and the ability pupils show in being able to discuss their findings in groups or in front of the class. Appropriate emphasis is placed on local knowledge which then makes a good contribution towards pupils' understanding of their own heritage and culture. Pupils show sustained enjoyment in their topics and finished work is attractive and well laid out. Cooperation and behaviour in lessons are of a high order and make their own significant contribution to learning and pupils' achievements. Pupils with special educational needs progress well set against their previous learning, mainly due to work that is well matched to their understanding.
- 107 The history curriculum has been revised effectively several times and is well presented by the coordinator who supports her colleagues on a regular basis. The subject is carefully organised to gain the maximum impact from the good resources, including the teachers' own expertise and subject knowledge. Information technology is used occasionally to support the subject, for example in word processing articles and redrafting work.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- 108 Pupils nearing the end of Year 6 are broadly in line to achieve the expected standards in most elements by the end of the key stage, although some weaknesses occur. Pupils are particularly good in word processing skills. They are also good at using the computer independently. The confidence that was lacking and reported in the previous inspection is now better established. When pupils recognise something that the computer can do for them, they ask to use it on their own initiative. Pupils achieve average standards in writing small control programs, and in using CD-ROM disks to get information. What is not so evident, is the pupils' ability to use data handling and spreadsheets, or their understanding of software that models real life situations.
- 109 Provision for information technology has marginally improved since the previous inspection. Some equipment has been upgraded. The range of applications has also increased since 1996. Information technology contributes to science in the Year 6 life and space topics, some of it as valuable homework research. The computer is occasionally well used in geography, for instance in Year 3 with the study of maps of garden designs, but such practice is too infrequent. Additionally, some vital coverage is neglected. Pupils do not use the data measuring facilities for science or geography, or explore applications in art and music. Consequently standards in these aspects are unsatisfactory as is progress.
- 110 The scheme of work has a 'skills ladder' that shows these gaps ought to be covered at some point. However, a failing is that not all teachers stick closely to the scheme, and those that do, move through it at too slow a rate. Some well targeted in service training for staff has improved the expertise found lacking in 1996, but some teachers are still not confident in the skills they have to teach. Nevertheless, the school's aim to ensure the teaching of basic capability skills is gradually being realised.
- 111 Teaching in the few lessons observed was satisfactory. Teachers use the strategy of teaching a whole class a particular new skill effectively enough. They give clear explanations and rightly use demanding technical language. In the following days, pupils get a chance to practise what they have seen and heard. They have a positive interest and use the equipment sensibly. However the type of rota used to ensure that all pupils get an equal turn or based on their needs, does not always work effectively. There are several examples of pupils going out of turn, and sometimes, long gaps when no pupil uses the computers.
- 112 Despite the potential for use being there, teachers feel somewhat inhibited in their use of the computer during literacy and numeracy sessions in particular. Valuable time and opportunity are therefore lost and consequently, pupils' progress over time is unsatisfactory.
- 113 The school has experienced some difficulties in setting up its new network of internet facilities, and the coordinator has largely been concerned with troubleshooting problems. The delays incurred mean that pupils are disadvantaged in important skills learning, and that the computer has not been able to adequately support their learning in other subjects. The development plan for information technology includes a new scheme of work which is to detail much more precisely the balance between skills teaching and the use of the computer to support other subjects.
- 114 The current provision does not clearly show exactly which skills, in which order and how much time is allocated to achieving them. Not only is the new scheme planned to regulate the rate of progress but it also has to ensure that curriculum requirements are fully met, rather than just planned. The development plan also addresses the need for an assessment system to track pupils' progress, which will include pupils themselves in the process to give them a greater insight into their progress level by level.
- 115 Several subjects have greater potential to feed into computer learning even more effectively than is currently the case. Literacy is useful in that it enables pupils to read their worksheet or on screen instructions to take the next necessary step. Numeracy also contributes important skills, such as the knowledge of angles that underpins pupils' understanding of how a database constructs pie charts. However, these activities tend to be incidental as teachers' general planning does not specify how information technology is to be developed in other subjects.

MUSIC

- 116 At the time of the last inspection, standards in music were judged to be good. The school has successfully built upon these and they are now well above those expected for pupils of this age. Throughout the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress.
- 117 By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils read increasingly complex rhythms from a musical score correctly and with a steady beat. They sing well and have an increasing repertoire of songs. The pupils enunciate words clearly when singing, start on time after an introduction and finish crisply. They successfully adopt a performing role, showing a growing awareness of other singers and players. In Year 3, the pupils understand that music can evoke an atmosphere and use appropriate instruments, for example, to compose their own interpretations of sound pictures. They represent the giant's footsteps, counting his money or going to sleep, or Jack climbing down the beanstalk. They can control their instrument and voices, evaluate their work and suggest ways for improving it. They understand expressions such as singing in a 'piano' voice in Year 3, and by Year 5 recognise major and minor keys.
- 118 In a very good lesson observed in that class, the pupils used musical terms and applied these to their work very effectively. In an outstanding lesson observed in Year 3, the teacher was using varied and imaginative strategies that resulted in excellent progress. They learn to read complex notation and terms, to recognise these in their names and to reproduce them in playing different pitched and unpitched instruments, usually using the correct techniques. By the end of the lesson, the pupils were able to combine these as if in an orchestra, responding to the teacher-conductor accurately and expressively.
- 119 Instrumental tuition is of particularly high standard in the school. There are opportunities for pupils to participate in playing a variety of instruments, including guitar, brass, percussion and woodwind. Parents make a contribution towards the cost of this tuition. These opportunities are extended further through extra curricular activities, which include a well attended choir. The quality of the pupils' performance is of a very high standard, due to the high quality of specialist teaching and the encouragement these pupils receive in the school to share their work with other pupils in assemblies, and in performances in and out of school.
- 120 The pupils' response to music is very good throughout the school due to the effective and inspiring teaching they receive. Younger pupils try hard when working on their rhythms and show obvious enjoyment at the effect they are able to create, when playing or singing. Older pupils are positive about their musical experiences and are keen to discuss their performance and to suggest ways of improving it. The pupils concentrate in lessons well and rise to the challenges set for them. When undertaking instrumental tuition, they persevere and practise well in order to perform to the best of their ability. They are appreciative of their peripatetic teachers and enjoy their music making.
- 121 The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school. The teachers' knowledge is very good and expertise is used well to teach the subject. Teachers build on the pupils' previous knowledge from year to year and this successfully ensures continuity and progression in the subject. In lessons, they give good demonstrations both in singing and in playing and techniques are taught well to improve the quality of their pupils' performance. Opportunities are provided by to develop musical vocabulary and to encourage the pupils' imaginative development, for example, in interpreting musical effects or in composing. The teachers make references to other subjects, such as mathematics, for rhythmic work and they take opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills.
- 122 The subject makes very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. At the time of the inspection, these aspects were observed through the quality of singing and playing. The pupils are provided with ample opportunities to develop socially, by playing instruments or singing in the choir, when they often share their music with the wider community. They listen to a variety of music from different traditions, times and cultures. These opportunities successfully encourage the pupils to develop their interests and wide appreciation. There are good quality resources for music that are accessible to all classes and

used to good effect by both pupils and teachers.

- 123 The subject is very well led by two enthusiastic and talented coordinators, who have leadership responsibilities for the curriculum and extra curricular activities. There are outstanding guidelines compiled by the curriculum coordinator for other teachers that are well used by non specialists to teach music successfully. A particular strength of these schemes of work is the way that other subjects can be used for extending musical understanding. All these factors contribute to the very good progress made by the pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 124 Standards in physical education are consistently good and sometimes very good with pupils often achieving above what would normally be expected for pupils of a similar age. Pupils produce good work in gymnastics and dance, always operating in safety and with due consideration for others. They have a wide range of movement vocabulary and are able to create interesting sequences of movement showing a clear beginning, climax and conclusion. All pupils are able to transfer their movement ideas onto apparatus, which, with the odd exception, they handle well. However, not all pupils are encouraged to use apparatus, approaching from a variety of directions.
- 125 Good observational skills allow pupils to carefully analyse movement which is in the main of good quality. Girls generally display a greater range and quality of movement than boys, although this is not necessarily the case by the time pupils reach the end of the key stage. The majority of pupils dance well and are successful in choreographing group and individual dances for display. Cross curricular links with history are a feature of some dancing, when pupils get to grips with a 'Pavanne' as well as Tudor dances. The majority of pupils demonstrate good skills in games, particularly soccer, rugby and 'mat ball', all of which are competitive extra curricular activities. Pupils are learning to swim in appropriate stages and many are able to swim a variety of strokes on their front and back. A majority swims the anticipated 25 metres. A few swimmers who attend the out of school clubs are very competent at swimming a range of strokes. Participation in extra curricular activities is very high and contributes effectively to overall standards.
- 126 Almost all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress through open ended tasks which they are able to achieve at their own level of expertise. Since the last inspection there has been an improvement in standards although there is still room for improvement with regard to movement precision and refinement. There are now ample opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work and that of others and they do this well.
- 127 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are, at times, exemplary and are never less than good. When travelling out of school they are good ambassadors and are polite and well behaved. They enjoy their lessons and are anxious to improve their skills. Whether working alone or as part of a group, they give due consideration to others. Many of the older pupils show surprisingly mature attitudes to their work, demonstrating high levels of concentration and responding well to the challenges that have been set.
- 128 A strength of the teaching is the high level of commitment to raising standards and the support for extra curricular activities. Teaching is satisfactory or better throughout and is occasionally excellent. Most teachers display confidence, secure subject knowledge and have high expectations of pupils. Good planning by many teachers enable pupils to have a clear understanding of what they are trying to achieve. Pupils are taught from an early age the value of warming up and cooling down, although on rare occasions this does not happen and has implications for pupils' safety.
- 129 The subject is well led and the curriculum is sufficiently broad to give pupils a wide range of experiences. Good use is made of outside help, such as the local rugby club who come into

school on a regular basis to coach pupils alongside teachers. A good range of resources are well used and are easily accessible to staff and pupils. Pupils' performance will eventually be effectively monitored through the introduction of individual record booklets that are just being introduced throughout the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 130 By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are good and above the levels recommended in the local agreed syllabus. Despite the recent demands of major national initiatives on the curriculum and on teachers' time, the school has been successful in both maintaining and extending standards in religious education since the previous inspection.
- 131 Pupils throughout the school show above average knowledge and understanding in a wide range of religious topics. In Year 3, pupils study aspects of the New Testament and show a good understanding of the Parable of the Good Samaritan. This they illustrate by accurate accounts of their own, followed by interesting pieces in which they reflect on the occurrence of any similar deeds today. A particularly effective lesson on Christian infant baptism was taken by the coordinator who acted out a typical ceremony in the classroom using a doll, but with pupils and herself bringing in their own baptismal robes. In Years 4 and 5, some very good work is undertaken on Islam and the religious life of Muslim believers. A Year 5 class undertook a detailed look at the life of Hindus and built up an excellent display from which they further learned a great deal. In Year 4, pupils made good quality greetings cards celebrating the Eid, after being taught first hand about the festival from a practising Muslim. By the end of Year 6, pupils understand the basic principles of the Jewish faith and can compare and contrast these with other religions. Pupils also attempt to describe a wide range of other topics such as Moses and the Burning Bush and St Cuthbert and monastery life. The Christmas story is given a modern flavour with some of the leading participants sending imaginary emails about the events surrounding Christ's birth. A further good feature of attainment is the variety of ways that pupils record their work, either by class discussions or through their own narrative accounts, that in turn encourage good use of literacy across the curriculum. Occasionally, pupils go into great depth over a story, such as their very detailed books concerning the story of Joseph.
- 132 The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. Special efforts are made in the teaching of comparative religions because of the lack of pupils from ethnic groups in the wider school. Pupils learn quickly and well within a setting that encourages good, sensitive relationships and a sound appreciation of the beliefs of others. Teachers work particularly hard in extending their own subject knowledge into what are quite difficult areas and show considerable skill and enthusiasm in their teaching. In their turn, pupils are enthusiastic learners and become very involved in their topics. The wide ranging displays accurately reflect the depth of their work and what pupils have clearly enjoyed learning about. The subject is also used well to develop the pupils' sense of morality as well as providing good opportunities for spiritual reflection and growth. Themes are also taken up and further explored during worship and this helps to bring cohesion to the total learning.
- 133 Teachers are keen that pupils express their knowledge and understanding of religious themes in a variety of ways and this is well reflected in notebooks, worksheets and in subjects such as art and design technology. There is little scope for the use of computers to further stimulate learning due to a lack of appropriate software. Staff find it difficult to make accurate assessments about pupils' attainment in the subject, but do look carefully at how they talk and write about the work, how they express their feelings and understanding, and also how well they listen to others.
- 134 The subject is well led by an experienced coordinator who supports teachers effectively and translates the agreed syllabus into meaningful topics that are then frequently well resourced. She ensures that all staff work to a prescribed pattern in order to bring continuous learning to the pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are satisfactorily provided for in the range of tasks they are given and by the additional support they receive. Resources are good, particularly in the range available for teaching world faiths. Very good use is made of visits to local churches and the range of interesting visitors including some from overseas.

