

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Banbury, Oxfordshire

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123208

Headteacher: Sister Susan Collins

Reporting inspector: Lynn Adair
21095

Dates of inspection: 5 - 8 March 2001

Inspection number: 188593

Full inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Fiennes Road
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: David Gebbels

Date of previous inspection: November 1998

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Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21095	Lynn Adair	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Foundation Stage; Information and communication technology; Music.	The school's results and achievements; How well pupils are taught?
9115	Terence Clarke	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well the school cares for its pupils? How good the school's partnership with parents is?
21373	Richard Capel	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Physical education; Special educational needs.	How good curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils are?
1710	Thelma Edwards	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Geography; History; Equal opportunities.	
12116	Christina Morgan	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Art; Design and technology; English as an additional language.	How well the school is led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Joseph's Catholic Primary is an average size voluntary aided school for boys and girls aged four to 11 years old. It has 205 full-time pupils on roll. Attainment of the majority of children on entry to the reception class is below that of children of the same age nationally. Fifty-seven pupils in the school are on the special needs register, comprising almost 28 per cent of those on roll: a figure which is above average. Three pupils have statements of special educational need, which is slightly less than in previous years and is a below average proportion. A small proportion, about five per cent of compulsory school aged pupils, is from ethnic minorities. Twelve pupils speak English as an additional language and, at almost 6 per cent of those on roll, is a slightly higher than average proportion when compared with most schools nationally. Most speak English competently, and the main home languages spoken are Urdu, Punjabi and Italian. Almost 26 per cent of pupils have free school meals, which is an above average figure.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Joseph's Catholic Primary is an effective school. The good quality of provision makes a significant contribution to the standards which pupils achieve. When compared with their attainment on entry, standards improve much during Key Stage 1¹: this is due to good quality teaching and learning. Improvement is taking place in Key Stage 2² despite standards still being below average, by the age of 11, in some subjects. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, supported by an effective governing body and committed staff who are all working successfully together to move the school forward. Overall the school provides good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Standards in the school are improving steadily. Pupils are achieving well in Key Stage 1 due to a high proportion of effective teaching.
- The headteacher makes an outstanding contribution to the work of the school, and is supported by a very good governing body and highly committed staff.
- Good provision for children with special educational needs enables these pupils to make good progress.
- Good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare as well as strong promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral and social development creates a positive ethos in the school. All pupils are valued and they respond well in terms of their generally good attitudes and behaviour.
- The school makes good use of out of school activities to enrich the curriculum for pupils. Strong links with the community and other schools also enhance its work.
- The close working partnership between school and the very supportive parent body benefits the pupils' education.

¹ Key Stage 1 refers to those children in Year 1 and Year 2 at St Joseph's Primary

² Key Stage 2 refers to those children in Years 3 to 6 at St Joseph's Primary

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- The below average standards in mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) at the end of Key Stage 2 and in writing in both key stages.
- The quality of curriculum planning for children in the Foundation Stage³ to improve their achievement.
- Assessment procedures to provide more effective means of evaluating and recording pupils' progress.
- Attendance rates which are still slightly below average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School was placed in special measures after an inspection in 1996. It made significant progress to overcome a large number of shortcomings by the time of the inspection, conducted by Her Majesty's Inspectors, in November 1998. The school was then removed from special measures. Since that time, it has continued to make satisfactory progress towards addressing the two key issues identified in the report. Improvements have been made to provision; especially in terms of planning for the full range of attainment and meeting the needs of higher attainers. This has led to an improvement in standards. However, more work is needed to take account of new national requirements for planning for the Foundation Stage, and also to ensure that best practice in planning, precisely, for different groups of pupils is consistent throughout the school. Improvement in teaching has been instrumental in raising standards in a number of subjects, and this is especially notable in Key Stage 1 where many pupils now achieve the expected levels for pupils of that age.

³ Foundation Stage refers to children in a school aged between three and the end of the reception year. In the case of St Joseph's school these are children in the reception class.

STANDARDS

The table below 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
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	E	C	B
Mathematics	E	E	E	E
Science	E*	E	E	D

<i>Key</i>	
<i>well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>

The table above shows significant improvement in English so that attainment is similar to that of most pupils nationally and is better than that of pupils in similar types of schools⁴. The table above disguises the fact that there has been some improvement in pupils' performance in mathematics and science, especially since 1998, although this has not been sufficient to overtake improvement of pupils nationally. Results are still therefore well below the national average and do not compare well with similar schools. Targets for current pupils in Year 6 are very challenging in mathematics and are reasonable in English and science. Inspection evidence shows that pupils are on target to broadly meet these targets and sustain the generally average attainment in English, although writing standards are still below average. Attainment is likely to still be below average in mathematics and science. Standards in Years 5 and 6 are generally lower than in the rest of the school. This relates to the relatively poor start these pupils had when they were younger – at the time that the school was placed in special measures. National results for seven year-olds, in both reading and mathematics, have varied significantly over the last four years. In 2000, attainment was well below the national average. Results in science were equally low. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in Year 2 are on course to achieve better results this year and attainment was seen to be broadly in line with standards expected of seven year olds. Results have improved at a better rate in writing, although attainment is still below average and this was also found to be the case during the inspection. Key Stage 1 pupils achieve well overall, and Key Stage 2 pupils achieve satisfactorily to attain standards which are sound in most other subjects of the curriculum. However, standards in ICT are below average in Key Stage 2. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in developing their personal, social and emotional skills to achieve standards expected of most reception-aged children. They make satisfactory progress in basic language and mathematical skills, but do not achieve as well as they could in other areas of learning. Standards among these children are generally below average. Pupils across the school with special educational needs, and the very small number with English as an additional language make good progress in their learning.

⁴ Comparison with similar schools is based on those having free school meals entitlement of more than 20% and up to 35%.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy coming to school. They are interested in their learning and are keen to be involved in activities. This makes a strong contribution to learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Small pockets of misbehaviour occur among older, Junior pupils. This can be distracting but most pupils manage to concentrate well.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Pupils value each other and show a strong respect for each other's feelings. They carry out minor duties conscientiously. Occasionally initiative in lessons is constrained by adults dominating activities and doing the work for the pupils.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Rates of attendance have improved faster than the national average due to good procedures being implemented and to good promotion, but are still slightly below average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching as a whole was satisfactory in 94 per cent of all lessons seen, and was good and better in 42 per cent of lessons. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 was good, with the five per cent of very good teaching in the school all being contained in this phase. Teachers' good organisation and effective questioning help pupils to achieve well. In the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2, teaching was satisfactory overall, although a larger proportion of good teaching was observed in Key Stage 2. Teaching of basic skills is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage, and good in the rest of the school. The good teaching helps pupils to make good progress with language and mathematical skills. Management of pupils is a significant strength of teaching, and results in a productive environment in which pupils can work, despite some pockets of challenging behaviour. In the last inspection, planning required improvement. To a large extent, this has been achieved, although new weaknesses have emerged in the Foundation Stage: these create some constraints to progress in that not all activities have a clear purpose for learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities. The curriculum is enriched by very strong links with the community and other schools. Planning in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory: it does not provide a carefully planned programme of work, matched closely to children's needs in all areas of learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Effective programmes are well implemented by classroom assistants, who work in close partnership with class teachers and the school's special needs co-ordinator.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school's good practice in promoting pupils' personal development has yet to be drawn together in a whole school policy and scheme of work. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good, and sets a positive moral tone in the school. Promotion of pupils' spiritual and social development is good, placing a high value on respect for the individual and collaboration and co-operation among pupils. Promotion of pupils' cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. Very good policies and procedures to ensure pupils' welfare are implemented consistently across the school, especially in the very good promotion of positive behaviour. Procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic and personal progress are unsatisfactory and require improvement.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Good. Parents express very supportive views of the school. The quality of information they receive is good and the school works hard to encourage their involvement with a good degree of success.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher makes an outstanding contribution to the work of the school and has secured the commitment of staff who all work together as a team. Many of co-ordinators are new to role and have yet to make a significant impact in leading developments in their areas of responsibility.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors are very conscientious in fulfilling their statutory duties, and they have good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Good structures have been established to ensure their active involvement, and to keep them very well informed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. A good programme of rigorous monitoring and evaluation is in place for identifying key priorities for the school's improvement. Professional development of some co-ordinators is needed to enable them to take a full and effective part in the process.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Good financial management ensures effective support for educational developments, and careful evaluation of spending decisions. The principles of best value are applied well by the school to make the best use of its resources.
The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	Satisfactory overall. There are sufficient teaching staff with more stability than in previous years. They are supported by a good number of teaching assistants. There are no significant shortages in learning resources. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. Good features include the ICT suite. Less effective features are the hall, which is used as 'walk through', and the recently developed areas for children in the reception class, which are rather bare at present.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most (refers to more than 90 per cent of views)	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Their children are making good progress. • The teaching is good. • They are kept well informed about how their children are getting on. • They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or concerns. • They feel that the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. • The school is well led and managed. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • The school provides an interesting range of activities outside of lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was only a small amount of disagreement in relation to the range of activities provided by the school outside of lessons.

Parents' very positive views are supported by the inspection findings, but the findings do not substantiate parents' critical views of the range of activities provided outside of lessons which are considered very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There is a very wide range of attainment among children who enter the reception class, evidenced in baseline assessments conducted as children enter the school. Overall, the attainment of most is below the average of similarly aged pupils nationally. In personal, social and emotional skills, children make good progress towards the nationally recommended early learning goals for children at age five, and attainment is satisfactory. Satisfactory progress is made in developing children's communication, language and literacy skills, and their mathematical skills. Nevertheless, the proportion of children likely to achieve the expected goals by the age of five is still below average. Children do not make enough progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world or in physical and creative skills, and most children achieve below expected standards in these areas of learning. No judgements on the attainment of five year olds were made in the last inspection, so no judgement on improvement since that time can be given. However, the way the curriculum is planned at present creates some constraints to learning: for example, in relation to having a clear focus for learning in free choice activities, and in planning activities for the outdoor area. Children are not engaged sufficiently or given enough opportunity to develop their learning further through more demanding tasks.

2. Key Stage 1 results show that, overall, pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics has varied significantly over the last four years. In 2000 was well below the national average in both. In mathematics, attainment was also well below that of pupils in similar schools in spite of some slightly improved results last year. In reading, although results compared with similar schools were close in terms of the expected proportion at Level 2, no pupils attained the higher Level 3. Hence, overall comparison of performance is below that of pupils in schools with a similar context. In science, results of teacher assessments are well below both those nationally and those of similar schools. Work among current Year 2 pupils indicates that attainment in reading, mathematics and science is much better: standards are now in line with those expected of most seven year olds. Results of national writing tests show some improvement since 1998. Although overall attainment is below the national average, the proportion attaining the expected Level 2 is about the norm and this compares favourably with similar schools. Current writing standards in Year 2 indicate that standards are still below average.

3. Key Stage 2 results show significant improvement in English so that attainment is similar to that of most pupils nationally. Performance is also better than that of pupils in similar types of schools. This is reflected in the work of current Year 6 pupils who, overall, are likely to meet the modest targets, set after last year's significant rise. However, writing standards are generally below average. In spite of some improvement in mathematics and science results, especially since 1998, attainment has yet to overtake improvement of pupils nationally: results are still well below the national average. In relation to similar schools, results are well below in mathematics, and below in science. Targets for current pupils in Year 6 are very challenging in mathematics and are reasonable in science, bearing in mind

these pupils' prior attainment. Inspection evidence suggests that attainment in both subjects is below average overall. Standards in Years 5 and 6 are generally lower (in relation to the age of the pupils) than in the rest of the school. This is due to the relatively poor start these children had when they were younger; when the school was placed in special measures.

4. Pupils' progress in English is good in Key Stage 1, and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. This enables them to attain sound standards in speaking, listening and reading by the end of each key stage. Writing skills are below average. Pupils talk confidently and listen well in introductions and class discussions in all subjects. They readily ask and answer questions coherently, and older pupils display sensible views in debates as seen in 'circle times'. Pupils throughout the school develop their accuracy and fluency in reading, and they understand an increasing range of texts. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use information from books to underpin their knowledge of topics studied in other subjects, such as history. They are not so successful at interpreting it. Pupils' development of reference and research skills is sometimes constrained by their lack of use of the library, such as for geographical studies. Pupils write with increasing independence and coherence, although the accuracy and legibility of their writing is unsatisfactory. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils do not always incorporate the sound vocabulary shown in speaking and listening activities in their writing to make it more interesting. They use their writing skills in other subjects, but more extended pieces are less frequently seen.

5. Progress in mathematics is good in Key Stage 1: pupils attain standards expected of most seven year olds by the age of seven. It is satisfactory in Key Stage 2, although attainment is generally below that of most 11 year olds. In number, shape and measures, most pupils make satisfactory gains in learning across the school. However, pupils are less secure in applying their mathematical skills. In Key Stage 1, pupils' mathematical vocabulary is not so well developed, while in Key Stage 2, skills in algebra, data handling and solving problems in different contexts are not developed to a sufficiently high standard. Where pupils use their mathematical skills in other subjects, they sometimes have difficulty; for example, when representing data in a spreadsheet in ICT.

6. Standards in science are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils achieve well. Despite pupils making satisfactory progress based on their prior attainment in Key Stage 2, standards are still below average by the age of 11. Pupils make satisfactory gains overall in their knowledge and understanding of key scientific concepts, underpinned by a good range of practical investigative and experimental work. However, in this work in Key Stage 2, pupils have less opportunity to bring their own ideas to investigations: this impedes the full development of their enquiry skills.

7. Progress among pupils during the last inspection in 1998 was generally satisfactory. Evidence during the current inspection shows pupils achieve well overall in Key Stage 1: standards have generally improved. Progress in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory based on pupils prior attainment, and the school's efforts in raising standards over the key stage, a key issue in the last inspection, has met with some success, notably in English. Pupils with special educational needs, including those pupils with statements of special educational needs generally make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans and towards the targets in their statements. Pupils with significant emotional and / or behavioural difficulties make good progress in improving their conduct in school

and in settling to their work. This is mainly because they receive effective support in lessons, and specific one-to-one support from specialist teachers in withdrawal sessions. Their progress is carefully monitored and regular adjustments are made to learning targets. Some attention is given to extending the skills of higher attaining pupils, although this has yet to be consistent across the school. No notable variation in attainment between boys and girls was observed during the inspection.

8. In Key Stage 1, pupils' progress is good in ICT, geography and history based on their prior low attainment: this helps pupils to attain the standards expected of Year 2 pupils nationally. In art, design and technology, music and physical education in Key Stage 1, pupils' progress is satisfactorily developed year on year and standards attained are sound. In Key Stage 2, with the exception of ICT, progress is satisfactory and the standards achieved match those expected of pupils aged 11. In ICT, standards are below those expected of most 11 year-olds. Since the inspection in 1996, when standards in all these subjects was last reported, provision has been significantly improved, especially in teaching. This has helped to raise standards in Key Stage 1 so that all are at least in line with those of seven year olds, and in Key Stage 2 where the majority of standards are in line with those of most 11 year olds. The capacity to secure further improvement to standards is good, especially where they are still below average. This includes writing, mathematics, science and ICT.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Since the last inspection, pupils have maintained their good attitudes and behaviour. The good quality of relationships and aspects of pupils' personal development have improved since that time, although there is still some work to do in developing pupils' ability to use more initiative in lessons. The positive atmosphere in the school has a good effect on pupils' learning. Attendance, however, despite improvement since the last inspection, is still unsatisfactory and creates interruption to some pupils' learning.

10. Pupils' have good attitudes to learning overall. They enjoy coming to school and almost all parents confirm this in their answers in the questionnaires. Pupils are enthusiastic when they arrive and quickly settle down to work after registration. Even the youngest children in the reception class are quite happy to leave their parents and carers to get down to the morning's activities. Pupils are keen to talk to visitors about their school and show them the work they are doing in class. In Key Stage 1, pupils confidently ask and answer questions in discussions and display an obvious enthusiasm and enjoyment for learning. In Key Stage 2, most pupils are interested by the activities provided for them, although some lower attaining pupils are frustrated when tasks are too difficult - seen on occasion in ICT lessons. Most pupils in this key stage engage productively and sensibly in class discussions, although a small number of older pupils do not always wait for others to finish speaking before airing their views.

11. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good overall; a view shared by most parents. Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors and hold doors open for each other and for adults. A number of pupils, particularly on the first day of the inspection, were eager to be courteous to visitors by shaking hands with them. A small number of pupils have emotional and behavioural difficulties. These pupils are responsible for pockets of inappropriate behaviour, particularly in

Years 5 and 6. Without this, the behaviour, overall, would be very good. In these classes the behaviour is sometimes only satisfactory. These pupils are usually managed well by both the teachers and learning support assistants, with support from the local education authority's outreach service: there is minimal disruption to the learning of other pupils. There were no fixed term or permanent exclusions during the previous reporting year. This is an improvement on the previous two years, when there were two and one exclusions respectively. No bullying or oppressive behaviour was observed during the inspection. Parents, at their meeting, said that there were some minor instances of bullying but the school dealt with them promptly and effectively. Pupils also show respect for property. A good example of this was observed in a Year 5 art lesson, when pupils were seen handling resources very carefully. These resources were the teacher's own property and pupils were particularly anxious not to damage them.

12. From an early age, pupils have a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others. For example, in the reception class, pupils were able to empathise with the 'Three Bears' after 'Goldilocks' had caused damage to their home. In a Year 4 circle time, pupils discussed a picture, in which two boys were shown fighting. They talked sensibly regarding how they felt about what was going on. Pupils show respect for each other and for the feelings of others. Good examples of this were observed during circle time, in the reception and Key Stage 1 classes. Pupils did not interrupt each other as, in turn, they told the class why they liked the pupil in the middle of the circle. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils showed respect for the beliefs of a pupil from an Asian background, who had been away the previous day because of a religious festival. They listened well as he told them what he had done during that day.

13. Pupils show increased responsibility as they grow up through the school. In some classes there are "special" pupils and "busy bees", whose turn it is to do the day-to-day jobs. Pupils take the registers and the dinner money back to the office after registration. The older pupils took part in a debate at the Banbury Town Hall about facilities for young people in the town. Last year each class helped with the fundraising project for the library and ICT suite. Some of the older pupils managed the overhead projector during assemblies. However, the instances of pupils showing initiative during lessons are limited and many pupils are still very adult dependent, as seen in some art and design and technology lessons in Key Stage 1. In a Year 5 class, pupils were observed being fed sources of information by the class teacher, instead of being made to look them up for themselves. At the moment there is no School council, but the school is considering forming one to give pupils a formal means of sharing their views.

14. Relationships within the school are good. Pupils work well together in the classroom, in pairs as well as in groups. Paired reading takes place in some classes and group reading in others. Older pupils support the younger ones and pupils from Year 5 and 6 listen to the younger pupils reading. In the playground during break times pupils play well together. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect between pupils and between pupils and adults. Pupils with special educational needs form constructive relationships with adults and other pupils and this enables them to take a full part in the life of the school. Working together is very much a part of the ethos of the school.

15. The attendance level is below the national average even though it has improved year on year faster than the average. However, the level of unauthorised absence is below the national average

and the large majority of absences are authorised. Most pupils arrive at school on time, but there are still one or two regular latecomers.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. Overall, the quality of teaching in the school is satisfactory. This supports the positive views expressed by parents. Teaching was at least satisfactory in 94 per cent of all lessons seen, and was good and better in 42 per cent of lessons. Approximately 5 per cent was very good, all of which was in Key Stage 1, where the quality of teaching overall is good. The high proportion of effective teaching was in this key stage, helping pupils achieve well. In the Foundation Stage, teaching was satisfactory overall, with one lesson of good quality but one lesson of unsatisfactory quality. In Key Stage 2, teaching was satisfactory overall, with a sound proportion of good teaching. It is difficult to provide an exact comparison with the last inspection, when only a small number of lessons were seen and four out of five were satisfactory, but the situation appears to be slightly better. The shortcomings identified in the last inspection are being overcome through more precision in planning. However, new weaknesses have emerged in the Foundation Stage which create some constraints to learning. Significant strengths are noted in the management of pupils across the school, especially in dealing with some challenging behaviour, and in the very effective methods employed by teachers in Key Stage 1.

17. The teacher in the Foundation Stage finds some practical ways to make learning understandable for the school's youngest children. For example, adults make porridge so that children can write the instructions from experience, although the children themselves could be more involved in the actual making process. In Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers' subject knowledge is good overall and skills are well taught. Teachers use a range of interesting resources to make learning comprehensible, notably in Key Stage 1 where pictures and photographs of the locality and beyond are used well in history and geography to engage pupils' interest. In art in Year 5 and 6, a good range of interesting artefacts, sometimes the teacher's own precious items, are used to generate good teaching points. Overall, pupils with special educational needs are taught well by most teachers and by specialist teachers. Learning support assistants know the pupils well and guide and encourage pupils to succeed and to ask and answer questions in whole class discussions.

18. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is good in Key Stages 1 and 2 and satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. All teachers use the national frameworks and guidance to organise lessons. In Key Stages 1 and 2, these are well structured with a good balance of activities and good strategies to teach literacy and mathematical skills. This is helping pupils to increase their skills at a good rate as they move through the school, but especially with phonic skills in Key Stage 1. In the Foundation Stage, the structure of lessons is satisfactory in helping children to acquire skills in focused class and group activities in literacy and numeracy. However, opportunities are missed to develop basic skills more effectively in free choice activities, for example by intervening more frequently in role play activities to develop pupils' language skills and imagined situations.

19. In the Foundation Stage, planning is unsatisfactory overall and often leads to low expectations of pupils' learning. Most lessons express clear intentions for learning for focused class and group activities, although insufficient extension work is planned into some sessions and expectations are sometimes too low. In a music session, for example, much of the same work was repeated throughout the lesson with little development of learning. The children became bored and restless as

a result. On another occasion, children asked to make puppets but the bear was already cut out and stuck on a straw and all the children had to was to stick on sequins. They did this very quickly and without much thought. In free choice tasks and activities, there is not always a clear focus for learning. For example, there was little evidence seen in planning for how the outdoor area would be used. This affects the gains which pupils make in these activities as there is often insufficient challenge to sustain their interest.

20. Planning is satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2 and means that work is pitched at a suitable level on most occasions to provide appropriate work. Teachers' expectations are, on the whole, satisfactory. This is an area that shows some improvement since the last inspection. Most lessons are carefully planned and sessions are well structured, giving teachers and support staff opportunities to reinforce pupils' understanding. On occasion, support staff dominate group activities and overly direct pupils as they work: as seen in art and design and technology in Key Stage 1. This stifles pupils' ability to think for themselves. Objectives for learning are clearly stated, so that intentions are defined in terms of expected outcomes for different groups of pupils. Work is usually sufficiently adapted in group activities to cater for the wide range of attainment in each class. On occasion, higher attaining pupils are given more of the same, rather than a greater challenge which would give them an incentive to work harder. Sometimes the teachers' keenness to provide challenge for pupils means that some lower attainers are confused and become frustrated as they do not understand the work and neither do they have the same support as special needs pupils. This is evident in some ICT lessons in Key Stage 2 when pupils do not have the required mathematical skills to achieve greater success in their ICT work.

21. Across the school, teachers plan for pupils with special educational needs in relation to the targets in their individual education plans, and specialist teachers provide focused teaching of skills and knowledge, both in the classroom lessons and when the pupils are withdrawn for additional help.

22. Greater precision in planning is being brought about by some understanding of what different groups of pupils need to do next. To some extent this is based on satisfactory day-to-day assessment, although practice is still variable, especially in marking. Most teachers' comments respond to pupils' efforts, but some marking is minimal. The best gives key pointers to pupils for what they need to do next, and some useful annotation in the early years identifies what pupils have achieved. Individual targets have been identified for pupils in some classes and placed in the front of books, but then little reference is made to them in marking.

23. Teachers' methods are very good in Key Stage 1 in aiding learning, good in Key Stage 2, and satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. The best teaching is characterised by good introductions with teachers reminding pupils of previous learning. Teachers are effective in explaining new concepts and making clear what pupils are expected to do. Good focused questioning targets specific pupils - to check their understanding and to help them think more deeply. In Year 1 in a literacy lesson, the teacher effectively drew pupils' attention to key parts of the text in a 'Big Book': such questioning helped them to understand more about the storyline. Teachers offer pupils the chance to ask questions as well to clarify what they have to do, seen to good effect in an ICT lesson in Year 4 where pupils confidently raised their own questions. Sometimes in the Foundation Stage, class discussions go on for too long, which slows the rate of learning as children sit inactive when they are

eager to explore for themselves. The best lessons in the school have a lively pace, pupils are quickly set to work and group activities are well organised to gain and maintain their attention. A good example of this was seen in science in Year 1 where clever organisation in the classroom helped pupils and adults to work well together. Pupils were enthused, and their efforts increased so that they made very good gains in their learning.

24. Good management, based on high expectations of pupils' behaviour, is evident in all classes and is very good in Key Stage 1. This sets a positive tone for most lessons and learning, in which pupils can concentrate well. Effective strategies ensure that even some challenging behaviour among older pupils in Key Stage 2 creates minimal disruption to other pupils' learning. Most teachers build in time at the end of lessons for pupils to review their learning. In the best practice, as seen in Year 6, the teacher used the opportunity to explain something about the next session: this piques pupils' curiosity.

25. Homework makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. All pupils are provided with homework from an early age, such as reading and simple mathematical tasks. More structured tasks are carried out as pupils get older: this helps them to prepare suitably for the next stage in education. Most parents expressed positive views about homework.

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

26. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school is satisfactory overall. A key issue from the last inspection concerning the development of precise learning targets for groups of pupils has, to a large extent, been addressed. Teachers' planning identifies, on a regular basis, each group of higher, average and lower attaining pupils in English and mathematics. However, there are weaknesses in the quality of planning of the Foundation Stage in light of new national guidelines. The good work noted in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in the last inspection has been sustained, although there is an identified need to document a suitable programme for personal and social education. Provision for pupils with special educational needs was considered sound in the last inspection, but this has improved and is now of good quality. Other features of notable quality which were not mentioned in the last inspection report have emerged, such as very good links with the community and good links with partner institutions.

27. There are weaknesses in the quality of planning for the Foundation Stage curriculum which add constraints to children's learning. There is no specific policy for this stage of learning to identify the key principles and strategies employed to teach the school's youngest children. Long term planning shows that work for reception aged children is still considered on a subject basis and as part of whole school schemes of work based on the National Curriculum. It is not planned to nationally recommended areas of learning for children of this age. This leads to some overly complex planning and confusion when translating long term plans into a suitable programme of activities in the medium and short term. There is a sound structure overall for the medium-term planning of literacy and numeracy following national frameworks. However, the medium-term planning for the other areas of learning often makes too few explicit links to early learning goals and

is often a list of activities which do not clearly show how learning develops over time, especially for free choice activities. Planning for the use of the outdoor areas has yet to be incorporated in plans.

28. The curriculum meets statutory requirements for pupils in both Key Stage 1 and 2. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory overall and is well promoted through much of the work the school does. The school has some good features within its provision, such as the development of circle time. This, often good, practice has not yet been set within a coherent programme to ensure that aspects are not duplicated or omitted, and to provide a framework for the assessment of this aspect of the curriculum. There are suitable policies for health education, which incorporate aspects of sex and drugs education: they are integrated into the programme for science. However, there is no policy or identified programme for the teaching of personal and social education.

29. The school has satisfactory strategies in place for planning and teaching literacy and numeracy. Teachers have developed their planning using the national literacy and numeracy frameworks. This has provided a firm foundation for medium and short-term planning and teaching in these subjects. There are special 'booster classes' organized for those pupils who, at the end of Key Stage 2, are just short of achieving the expected standards of 11 year olds. This provision is helping them achieve more success in basic skills work. In Year 1, pupils have a regular daily session of phonics teaching as part of an early intervention project. The school has been recently awarded a certificate in the teaching of basic skills. Literacy and numeracy initiatives for parents have also been developed to help them assist their children. Near to the annual national tests in English and mathematics, the school provides a revision club for pupils on Saturday mornings.

30. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 which is satisfactory overall. There are policies for all National Curriculum subjects but they vary in quality and the aspects they cover. Good models are noted in ICT, music and physical education: these identify the school's approach and incorporate useful teaching and learning strategies. Long-term planning is satisfactory and provides a sound framework based on new national guidance for each subject. In some year groups, teachers work together to plan a two-year cycle of subjects in order to better link together some areas. Medium-term plans for all subjects are based on teaching for each half term. Although satisfactory overall, the quality varies between different years and subjects. In subjects other than English and mathematics where teachers have detailed weekly lesson plans, teachers generally use the medium-term plans as weekly lesson plans. However, some medium-term plans have not been adapted sufficiently from the long-term guidance and only specify broad objectives for the period being taught. The best practice identifies a clear structure to show how learning develops over each half term, ensures a progression of knowledge, skills and understanding and more precision about what pupils are expected to learn in each session.

31. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and reflects the inclusive ethos in the school. Pupils are identified early and accurately through appropriate testing, observation and good communication between the special educational needs co-ordinator, class teacher and parents. The school is proactive in seeking outside expertise where necessary, for example, using the skills and expertise of staff from a local Beacon special school. Provision is made to meet the identified special educational needs of pupils with Statements. When necessary, pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans: these contain specific targets that are achievable,

and relevant strategies that promote progress in the areas identified. A good range of support is provided: by learning support assistants, outside specialists, the special educational needs teacher through withdrawal from class for specialised help, and by support in class lessons. The support is well organised and is effective in helping pupils to make progress. Overall, pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those pupils with special educational needs, have equal access and opportunity to the planned curriculum and to other aspects of the life of the school, including extra-curricular activities.

32. The provision of extra-curricular activities is very good and teachers, parents and a charity are involved in running the wide range of activities. These include after-school clubs and an annual residential camping trip for Year 6 pupils. The clubs provide very good opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge, skills and understanding in areas related to the school curriculum. The extra-curricular activities are very well attended by pupils and include good quality experiences in guitar, recorder, art, dance, football, netball, rounders and athletics.

33. The school has some links with the local community, which make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. Some of these come through school visits such as to Coventry Cathedral and the Transport Museum. Other links are with the Parish, which combined with the school to raise funds for the ICT suite and library. Links with the Mayor and Town Council have involved the school in a number of local projects. These include a tree planting programme with reception pupils and allowing Year 6 pupils to use the council chamber to take part in a debate on children's facilities in the town. An artist visited the school last year to help Year 5 pupils with a 'Hobby Horse' project. A local builder sponsors the school's football strip and McDonalds sponsors the strip for the netball team. The school also helped the Mayor to launch the poppy appeal.

34. The school has good links with partner institutions. Those with The Blessed George Napier Comprehensive School are particularly good. There is now a "buddy" scheme between Year 6 and Year 7 pupils, which assists pupils in making a smooth transfer to the larger school. The comprehensive school also arranges a three-day induction period during the summer term. The school has links with the other primary schools mainly through sporting events but also for music and dance celebrations. The good links with the nursery class on site helps to ensure a smooth transfer of pupils into the reception class. During, and particularly at the end of the school year, nursery pupils spend time in the reception class to familiarise themselves with the new environment.

35. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development. There is, promoted in the school, an awareness of something beyond the immediate physical experience. Each day pupils engage in a period of quiet reflection in classrooms before beginning their lessons. When assembled in the hall as a whole school, pupils enter quietly into the calm atmosphere created by music and are evidently aware that this is a special time. Achievement is acknowledged and this raises pupils' self-esteem. Opportunities within the curriculum contribute to spiritual development. For example, in a music lesson in Year 2, pupils were encouraged to consider the feelings which music evoked and did so sensitively.

36. The provision for moral development is very good. The school places a strong emphasis on doing the right thing and accepting responsibility for actions. In a lesson in the reception class,

children considered the story of Goldilocks and decided that it was wrong of her to have entered the bears' house and eaten their porridge. Caring for others is strongly emphasised, especially in circle times, and a positive approach is taken to discipline with good behaviour being rewarded and acknowledged. Pupils who have broken the accepted code are put in situations where they can achieve success. It is the behaviour that is recognised as bad, not the pupil. All are aware of the values that the school holds and know, for example, that there must be no bullying. The pupils take their cue from the school staff who speak calmly and politely to them and set the example of self-discipline and self-control.

37. The promotion of social development is good. Adults set a good example by the way they work together as a team helping the pupils to develop an understanding of community living. On the playground, pupils are encouraged to play with others who may need a friend. Year 5 pupils are able to link with those in Year 3 for paired reading sessions. Out of school activities enable pupils to work with different aged pupils from within the school at the range of clubs on offer, as well as to work together as a team in competitions and events with other schools. Pupils are given some opportunities to take responsibility for minor tasks in lessons, but more significantly out of lessons. Older pupils, for example, have been involved in organising fund raising activities and games for the Summer Fayre. The school is considering setting up a school council to promote a higher level of meaningful responsibility. On occasion, teachers or support staff dominate activities, and pupils have fewer opportunities to develop independence in their learning and in initiating ideas.

38. Cultural development is promoted satisfactorily. Pupils are made aware of their own community and traditions in a number of ways. An artist has worked with older pupils on traditional 'hobby horses' and they then took part in the town festival. The school has helped to design a local museum in Banbury. Pupils are involved in singing in the local church and have joined with other catholic schools for music and dance. Pupils visit places of interest to find out more about the locality. Art and music provide opportunities for pupils to consider the work of famous artists and musicians to broaden their cultural awareness. There is an awareness and respect for different cultures and faiths, some of it promoted through the curriculum. However, this is not a strong feature of the curriculum. There are not always the resources available to support learning. For example, there is a lack of recorded music from non-western cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. Reference was made to some aspects of care for pupils in the last inspection, but not to all. Evidence shows that there has been significant improvement in some of the procedures identified and in their implementation, especially in supporting pupils' welfare. There has not been enough improvement in addressing shortcomings in assessment procedures. The steps taken by the school to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety, including the arrangements for child protection, are very good. This enables the pupils to receive their education in a secure and caring environment. Procedures for providing educational and personal support and guidance are satisfactory, although there are weaknesses in monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development.

40. There are very good child protection policies in place. The school has a very full and detailed child protection policy in line with local authority recommendations. The policy details the

responsibilities at every level in the school and all staff have received training on the procedures. The special educational needs co-ordinator is officially the designated adult, but she is very well supported by the headteacher, who has received full child protection training. The school has a good relationship with Social Services. The school takes the issue of health and safety seriously and there is a very good and detailed policy in place. The governors are actively involved in this, and regular inspections and risk assessments are carried out. The school also undergoes a two yearly health and safety audit carried out by the local authority. Very good procedures are in place for dealing with sickness and with both major and minor injuries. All medical needs and incidents are meticulously recorded and parents are kept well informed as necessary. Five members of staff have received training in first aid procedures.

41. Good procedures are in place for monitoring attendance and for following up lateness and absence. The education social worker visits the school monthly and follows up pupils, who are regularly absent or late. The school has a detailed attendance policy and parents are made aware of the importance of good attendance and of their children's need to arrive at school on time. What constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence is made clear to them and the school strongly resists pupils being taken on holiday during the time of their statutory tests. Good attendance is encouraged by the presentation of certificates for one hundred per cent attendance. Although the attendance level is still below the national average, the school's good procedures have ensured a year on year rise.

42. There are very good procedures in place for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. The school's behaviour policy has a full range of rewards and sanctions and there is also a comprehensive anti-bullying policy. Parents receive letters from the school informing them of incidents of particularly good behaviour. Most teachers deal with inappropriate behaviour and implement the policy well. They are quick to praise good behaviour. In difficult cases, they are well supported by members of the county's outreach service. Some planned alterations to the premises are aimed at opening up areas within the school to reduce the number of places where bullying could take place unobserved.

43. There are satisfactory procedures in place for supporting pupils' educational and personal development. Good use is made of systems such as stickers and certificates to reward good, or improving, attitudes to work. Pupil's photographs are displayed in the hall and the entrance when they have behaved or achieved very well and certificates are awarded in assemblies. In assemblies, regular opportunities to share achievements and successes raise pupils' self-esteem, and encourage them to do better. Staff know pupils well, and give them good guidance and support when they need to make improvements. Links with outside agencies, such as the educational psychologist, provide good guidance and support for pupils with special educational needs. In addition, a sound policy complying with the recommended Code of Practice, is consistently implemented in the school, and provides good guidance for teachers. The school uses circle time well to promote positive attitudes, to engender respect and care for others, and to focus on areas where pupils' personal development may be lacking. For example, they are helped to articulate why people are 'special'. However, a whole school programme for teaching personal and social education has yet to be developed to draw together the most effective practice in this area. Some comments on pupils' personal development are made in end-of-year reports. However, there is no assessment and

recording system in place to keep track of their levels of application, cooperation and concentration on a regular basis.

44. Procedures for assessing most pupils' attainment and monitoring their progress are unsatisfactory overall across the school. The school has identified this area as a priority for development in 2001-2002. Some use is being made of end of key stage performance data from national tests to inform school priorities which makes use of assessment overall satisfactory.

45. Summative assessments in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, such as the statutory tests at ages seven and 11 and standardised test results, are carried out appropriately. The school has made good progress on organising the data and analysing pupil performance. This has then been used to group pupils, identify weak areas in subjects such mathematics and to target improvements in teaching and long-term planning. Assessment procedures for pupils who have special educational needs are good. The special educational needs co-ordinator, using outside expertise where necessary, employs effective screening procedures for early identification of needs. This information is then used, in conjunction with the class teacher and parents, to draw up detailed and relevant targets within pupil's individual education plans, which are regularly reviewed. The special educational needs co-ordinator also meets regularly with all class teachers to assess the progress of pupils in relation to their specific difficulties and to provide advice or further assessment if required.

46. Since the previous inspection, arrangements for testing, assessing and recording most pupils' attainments have become overly complex and they lack relevance to current planned work. A policy has been developed for assessment, but it provides little guidance for teachers to show clear expectations for what is to be done and how. Most subject policies contain little further guidance and there is scant reference as to what will be done in the Foundation Stage. Baseline assessment is undertaken on entry to the reception class, and the system could provide a sound basis from which to record progress in terms of early learning goals. However, little evidence was seen of effectively assessing pupils' attainment against this benchmark. In Key Stages 1 and 2, assessment in English and mathematics is generally satisfactory and is based on the national literacy and numeracy frameworks. However, the frequency and quality of assessment in some areas within these subjects, such as in reading, is unsatisfactory. In other subjects the objectives used for assessing and recording pupils' attainments do not always match the learning objectives used in the schemes of work and in long and medium-term plans. It is therefore difficult to track the progress of pupils against what it was intended for them to learn.

47. Variance in the quality of assessments, noted in the previous inspection, still exists. Assessment opportunities are not always identified in teachers' medium-term planning and they rarely show who is to be assessed and how, focusing instead on broad assessment criteria. The school has developed a weekly evaluation form for each subject on the back of the medium-term plans. The quality of these evaluations varies. Some identify what individual pupils have achieved, although they often provide an evaluation of the lessons rather than of the progress of pupils or the difficulties they are experiencing. It is not a feature of all teachers' classroom practice to make ongoing assessments of pupil's progress in order to make improvements in pupils' performance. Opportunities are also missed for learning support assistants to help in assessing pupils' progress during lessons. The system

for gathering individual pupils' samples of work is unsatisfactory. Too much out of date material is stored in a haphazard way, which makes it difficult to assess what has been achieved. The quality of the annotation on some of the samples provided is inadequate in evaluating the work in order to identify strengths and weaknesses related precisely to what has been taught.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The school works well in partnership with parents. Parents' views of the school are very positive, the school's links with parents are good, and the impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. No mention was made of parental views in the previous inspection to make a judgement on improvement.

49. Parents' views of the school, as measured by the answers to the parent questionnaires, are very good. Over 90 per cent of the parents gave positive answers to the questions - either strongly agreeing or tending to agree - in all areas of the school's work. A significantly high proportion of parents believe that the school is led well, that the school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best, and is helping them to become mature and responsible. They feel comfortable about approaching the school. Inspectors were able to confirm these very positive views of the school. Parents also felt that teaching was generally good across the school. The teaching observed in Key Stage 1 was good overall while, in Key Stage 2 and in the Foundation Stage, it was satisfactory. A small proportion of parents (approximately 10 per cent) do not believe that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside of lessons. Inspection evidence shows that the school's provision is very good.

50. The quality and range of information about the school is good. The school has consulted with parents through a survey to seek their views on where improvement is needed. There is a very well presented and detailed school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents, both of which contain the relevant statutory information. Parents also receive regular informative newsletters. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory. They give information about pupils' work during the previous year, particularly in the core subjects. However, pupils' targets could be more focused and the information about progress could be written in terms which are more accessible to most parents. There are two parents' evenings each year, at the start and end of school year, at which parents can discuss children's work. These are usually well attended by over 85 per cent of parents. A number of parents expressed the wish for a further meeting in the middle of the school year to keep track of their children's progress. The attendance of parents at review meetings of pupils with special educational needs has improved last year from thirty per cent to sixty per cent.

51. Parents make a good contribution to children's learning both at school and at home. A small but significant number of parents come into the school as volunteers to work in the classroom. They listen to pupils read, (for which they receive guidance), and help in other activities. Many parents work so the number who can help is limited. They accompany pupils on school trips and some help with extra-curricular activities. Parents also make a contribution to pupils' learning at home through the homework scheme. Some pupils said that parents listened to them read at home and also read to them. A large number of parents have expressed their commitment to the school by readily signing the home-school agreement. There is an active Parents' and Friends' Association, through

which parents make a good impact on the work of the school. They support the school through their fund-raising. Last year a combination of the local parish, pupils and parents raised nearly £5000, which supplemented the grant from the National Grid for Learning, enabling the school to complete the new computer suite and re-site the library. On an individual basis, one of the parents, who is also a governor, raised £2000 in sponsorship by canoeing from Banbury to London.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The overall quality of the school's leadership and management is good. This shows an improvement since the inspection in 1998 where it was considered sound. It is having a positive impact on provision, with consequential improvement in pupils' standards of achievement.

53. The leadership provided by the headteacher and staff is good overall. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. Her dedication, professionalism and vision for the school have carried it forward through a very difficult period. The effectiveness of her leadership and management is the main reason why standards have risen substantially since the 1996 inspection when the school was placed in special measures, and why the quality of provision - especially teaching - has improved. Key issues from the inspection in 1998, when the school was removed from special measures, are being addressed satisfactorily despite a number of changes in staffing. The headteacher has worked hard to secure the commitment of all staff to improving pupils' learning and has increased delegated responsibility to them appropriately. The staff give generously of their time and effort to promote a positive and caring ethos for learning and to continue the improvement in standards that has been a feature of the school since the inspection of 1996. However, many of them are new to their leadership role and, although leadership by staff is satisfactory they have yet to have a strong influence on developments in their subjects. In addition to standards, the aims and values of the school focus very clearly on valuing and respecting individuals. These are reflected very strongly in much of the school's work and are firmly embedded in every aspect of school life.

54. The membership of the governing body has also undergone significant change. The present governing body is very effective in fulfilling its responsibilities through a good committee structure. Governors are fully aware of the role they have to play in providing a strategic direction for the school and ensure that decision making is firmly based on an informed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is achieved through regular reports from the headteacher, staff presentations, visits with a specific focus, or generally helping in school. They are strongly committed to school improvement. There is a supportive relationship between the governors and head teacher, which has built into an effective partnership driving the school forward to achieving higher standards. The governors' contribution to the leadership and management of the school is very good.

55. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and taking effective action are good. The headteacher, local education authority inspectors and advisers and, more recently, the deputy headteacher have been involved in the development of teaching. Nevertheless, the head teacher is still carrying a considerable load. Although there is a shared commitment by all staff to improvement, subject co-ordinators, several of whom are new to the school, have yet to assume a fully effective monitoring role. The head teacher is aware that the further professional development

of subject co-ordinators is a priority in order that staff with responsibilities can make a better contribution to developments and spread good practice. Several co-ordinators do not have a clear overall view of what was happening in their subjects throughout the school. Although they scrutinise teachers' planning on a regular basis they are not necessarily aware of how effectively it is implemented, particular in phases in which they do not teach. Neither the English nor mathematics co-ordinators, for instance, have more than a partial understanding of how to move their subjects forward and require support. Governors are fully involved in a systematic, rigorous and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of standards within the school. Protocols for visits have been carefully worked out to ensure that governors are clear about their roles. Overall, the shared partnership between governors, staff and the headteacher ensures good capacity to succeed.

56. The school's strategy for appraisal and management of performance is very good. The recently completed performance management procedures have raised a number of whole school issues as well as some which are specific to individual teachers. Their needs are being planned for carefully. The staff in general are very receptive to new ideas and keen to review and improve their classroom practice and management skills. Very good support is provided for new teachers, and staff morale is generally much higher than in earlier inspections. The school development plan is clearly focused on priorities drawn from analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and this includes increased use of performance data. Aspects for improvement are supported by sound action plans for their implementation and include criteria against which to measure success. However, these could be more sharply focused on pupil performance in a number of areas to form a good basis for governors to monitor and evaluate, more effectively, the impact of any action taken.

57. The management of the school's financial resources is good in supporting educational developments. Systems for monitoring and controlling income and expenditure are good, confirmed in the latest audit report, where only minor improvements were noted. These have already been addressed. Resource implications are noted in the school development plan and budgeting is based on an understanding of long term priorities as well as being flexible enough to respond to short-term need, for example with the decision to support the funding of the special needs teacher. Information about the budget is regularly supplied to the headteacher and governors for monitoring purposes. The school is in receipt of a number of specific grants. These are all allocated appropriately, and monitored carefully by the headteacher and the governors. Governors' meeting minutes show that, where necessary, governors seek clarification on spending decisions, and assess their effectiveness through consultation with the head teacher.

58. New technology is used well for streamlining administrative tasks, and the school has recently benefited from the installation of a good quality ICT suite. However, new technology is used only spasmodically across the school for planning and assessment purposes. It has yet to be used as effectively as it could be by staff and pupils in terms of the Internet.

59. The school successfully employs the principles of best value. Pupils' performance is compared with other schools locally, as well as against the national picture. The school has responded well to the significant challenges, which arose as a result of being placed in special measures. It is especially successful in responding to the demands of the local environment, providing pupils with positive experiences to compensate for their home circumstances. Good procedures are followed for ensuring best value is sought in any purchases. This was notable in

some of the more recent building work, which has taken place in the school. The school gathers the views of parents to gain their opinions about the school, and is in the process of establishing a school council in order to capture pupils' views and involve them in the consultation process.

60. The school has a satisfactory number of suitably qualified teachers with a range of experience to meet the demands of the curriculum and the teaching of different age groups. Over the past two years there has been a large turnover of staff. Most teachers left and have been replaced. There has been greater stability this year. The current staff members work well together. Good use is made of extra teaching support for Year 6 'booster' groups. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has a specific qualification for this work and supports pupils well. A higher than average number of support staff work in the school, supporting specific pupils in their learning and / or behaviour problems as well as with general classroom assistance. They are generally used well, although sometimes they sit and watch where better use could be made of their time, for example in assessment. The office staff provides an efficient service to the school. Midday supervisors and school keeper are well organised and carry out their duties with care.

61. The school accommodation is satisfactory and has been improved in recent years. It is well maintained and there have been major projects in recent years in relation to the roof, an improved heating system, toilets, window replacement and redecoration. The school is made attractive by displays of pupils' work and quiet carpeted areas. Classrooms have been made reasonably spacious by the removal of some internal walls. All but one class is housed in the main building and there is adequate space for the number of pupils on roll. The school has a specialist ICT suite and technology area. The hall is centrally placed and is a walkway through to other areas of the school: this interrupted some physical education lessons. Similarly, it is necessary to walk through some classrooms to get to others. The library, also, is not readily accessible to all classes except for Years 5 and 6. The outside area is in the process of being developed but suffers from vandalism. It is not possible, for example, to leave goal posts out for games. Some windows have also been broken on a number of occasions. Fixed seating has been placed around trees for pupils' use during break times and the school intends to set up an area where ball games might be played without danger to windows. Designated areas have recently been developed for children in the Foundation Stage, but these are quite barren at the moment and not well used by children in the reception class. Plans for addressing this are in place and awaiting funding.

62. The level of resources to support learning is good with no significant shortfalls. Only some minor gaps were noted: for example, the lack of music from other cultures, and the quality of some small equipment in physical education. Resources are well organised and accessible and are usually well chosen to support teaching. The school makes use of a loan service from the local Teachers' Centre for extra resources for history and geography. The library is well stocked with reference books. Good use is made of visits to the local area and others further afield, and of visitors to the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

(References to the most relevant paragraphs in the report are identified after each issue.)

- Working together, the governing body, headteacher and staff need to:
 - * improve standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in mathematics, science and ICT and in writing in both key stages. This should incorporate – although not be limited to - developing the work of co-ordinators so that they have a positive influence on the standards achieved*;
(Paragraphs 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 53, 55, 58, 76, 79, 81, 84, 86-93, 94-98, 112-117)
 - * improve the curriculum planned for children in the Foundation Stage to ensure that they are helped to make greater progress in most of the recommended areas of learning for children of this age;
(Paragraphs 1, 16, 18, 19, 26, 27, 63-75)
 - * improve assessment by developing manageable systems for gathering accurate and useful information about pupils’ academic achievement in order to track pupils as they move through the school to assess how well they have progressed, and to provide suitable information for planning future work*;
(Paragraphs 22, 39, 44, 45, 46, 47, 85, 98, 108, 111, 117, 125)
 - * continue in its efforts to promote good attendance in order to increase attendance rates*.
(Paragraphs 15, 41)

- Other issues which should be considered by the school include:
 - * drawing together the good practice that exists in the school in promoting pupils’ personal development into a coherent programme of work to ensure that pupils’ skills are developed systematically from year to year and a structure which provides a means by which their progress can be assessed and monitored.
(Paragraphs 28, 43)

* those items marked with an asterisk currently form part of the school’s priorities for development.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	63
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	37	52	6	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	205
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	53

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	57

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	12

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.3

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.2
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the per centage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	14	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	13	14	13
	Total	21	23	22
Per centage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	81(87)	88 (87)	85 (87)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	8	10	9
	Girls	14	13	11
	Total	22	23	20
Per centage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	85(74)	88 (84)	77(87)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Per centages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	13	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	11	7	11
	Total	18	14	18
Per centage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	72(54)	56(46)	72(62)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	8
	Girls	9	8	10
	Total	16	15	18
Per centage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	64(61)	60(50)	72(65)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

Per centages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	1
Pakistani	8
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	159
Any other minority ethnic group	9

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Qualified teachers and classes:

YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.4
Average class size	29.3

Education support staff:

YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	166

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	372 822.00
Total expenditure	361 775.00
Expenditure per pupil	1875.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	20 615.00
Balance carried forward to next year	31 662.00

Qualified teachers and support staff:

Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	205
Number of questionnaires returned	93

Per centage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	45	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	39	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	49	3	3	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	51	4	0	0
The teaching is good.	66	32	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	40	6	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	30	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	25	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	45	50	3	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	66	33	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	33	3	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	60	30	8	2	0

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

63. In the Foundation Stage, children enter the reception class in the September after their fourth birthday. Baseline assessments conducted on entry to the reception year show that the attainment of a large proportion of children is below average. Children currently in the reception class are on target to achieve the standard expected by the end of Foundation Stage in their personal, social and emotional skills, showing good progress since entry to the school. However, they do not meet expectations of children of similar ages in the remaining areas of learning - communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and in their physical and creative skills. Satisfactory progress is observed among most children in developing early language and mathematical skills, but children do not achieve as well as they could do in the remaining areas of learning. This is because work is not planned carefully enough and it does not provide sufficient challenge, especially where children are given a free choice of activities. No specific mention was made of children under five either in the 1998 or the 1996 inspection. Hence, it is not possible to compare standards, provision or improvement.

Personal, social and emotional development

64. Children achieve well in this area of learning: they build on their weak social skills on entry and, by the end of the reception year, attain standards that are in line with those expected. Most children have established good relationships with their teachers, other adults and, on the whole, with each other. This means that most are confident to leave their carers at the start of day. Children have a good understanding of class routines and usually settle readily to work, responding quickly to instructions. They are beginning to work co-operatively in small groups, sharing resources. For example, there are only a small number of outdoor large wheeled toys available and children take turns readily. Children's behaviour is good. Most children are quick to respond to the teacher's reminders for expected behaviour. They show a good understanding of right and wrong, for example when they empathise with the bears in the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. Children listen appropriately to teachers in whole class sessions, but start to call out sometimes and do 'wriggle' impatiently when they have been sitting for some lengthy periods. Children are given a high level of autonomy in selecting their own activities. This helps to develop skills of responsibility and initiative, but they need more guidance at these times from adults to sustain their interest and make the best use of the activities provided.

65. Teaching is sound overall. All the adults, teachers and classroom assistants, manage children's behaviour well to ensure that as little time as possible is wasted in lessons in dealing with any minor incidents. For example, a learning support assistant is very effective in employing good strategies for dealing with the needs of a particularly difficult child to ensure that disruption to learning for the rest is minimised. Staff encourage children to value each other, as seen in 'circle time' when children are helped to construct positive statements about each other. Children talk openly about their views and listen to each other.

Communication, language and literacy

66. In spite of standards still being below those expected of children of similar ages, children make sound progress overall in developing their language skills. They listen carefully to introductions and instructions, but their responses are sometimes limited, by speech weaknesses, to one word or simple phrases. Most children understand that print carries meaning, but few are able to decipher words using letter sounds without a significant input by adults, and few have strategies for tackling print independently. They become engrossed in stories read to the class by the teacher and relate well to the characters. They use picture clues to tell a story and are able to retell key points from familiar stories. However, they were rarely seen choosing to share books with adults on a one-to-one basis. Writing skills are developed satisfactorily in language sessions. Children have opportunities to practise their skills by writing for different purposes, for example, letters of apology from Goldilocks to the 'Three Bears', and instructions for making porridge. However, many do not form their letters well, and attempts at writing meet with mixed success. There is a heavy reliance on adults and few self-help strategies such as key-word lists. A few higher attaining children write recognisable letters and attempt simple words making use of phonic knowledge in their writing.

67. Teaching is satisfactory in developing children's language skills in focused tasks. Children's understanding of books is increased through story telling, which is often of high quality and with good expression. However, it is often the *teacher* who is doing the talking about books, and more emphasis needs to be placed on getting children to talk through ideas for themselves. In writing, relevant tasks are chosen to extend children's experiences but these are dominated by adults. For example when making porridge, children are given little opportunity to take part in the process. The Nursery Nurse is particularly effective in encouraging children to express their ideas freely. However, in other groups, adults encourage a heavy reliance on themselves to provide each letter of each word. This stifles children's independence. Writing areas are established for children to practise their skills, but are rather uninspiring and were not frequently used by many children during the inspection. Adults miss opportunities to engage with children during free choice activities, for example with role-play, to further the development of language, reading and writing skills.

Mathematical development

68. Standards in mathematics are below those expected of children of a similar age. Progress is satisfactory in building on their attainment on entry. Most of the children can count aloud together to 20 and count up to five objects accurately. A small number of higher attainers are confident with numbers to 20 on an independent basis. Some children are able to put numbers in the right order but many are unable to recognise and record numbers accurately. Most recognise simple positional language such as over and under, using these concepts well in physical sessions. They become confused with the concept of *more than* and *less than*. Their problem solving skills overall are weak, for example in sequencing and spotting patterns. Many children recognise some simple two-dimensional shapes such as squares and circles, but few three-dimensional shapes. Children were rarely seen reinforcing their mathematical understanding in free choice activities.

69. Teaching is satisfactory in this area of learning overall. Specific activities are suitably planned and organised so that children have a better chance of success through focused input. On occasion,

adults in different groups employ different mathematical language for the same concept and this is confusing for children. Support staff help children to learn well in small groups, although more input by adults in free choice activities would help to reinforce children's number recognition and recording skills.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

70. Children have only a very basic understanding of the world around them and they do not achieve as well as they could in this area of learning. The range of work produced by children in this area of learning is limited. They learn about some simple scientific concepts, such as push and pull, but skills are not always developed well through focused activities. For example, an activity was prepared which was intended to enable children to compare similarities and differences when blowing through a straw to move different sized balls, but children moved to other activities before sufficient gains had been made. A small number of higher attaining pupils show a sound understanding of the differences between materials and explained why some would be chosen for hot and not for cold weather. Children have regular opportunities to use construction materials and build simple, recognisable models. Some notable work was their construction of 'hobby horses' as part of their work on toys. A computer is available in the classroom for children to use, but they were not seen making purposeful use of this equipment during the inspection. However, some previous work showed that they have used the computer to draw pictures of their favourite toys, which are of sound quality. Overall limited evidence is found of children's observations to illustrate their early enquiry skills and children can recall very little work they have done.

71. Teaching is satisfactory overall. The teacher provides some opportunities for children to explore and find out about the world. However, a reliance on discussion, often very much directed by adults, of what children are observing, means that children have too little chance to ask their own questions. They are encouraged to record some of their ideas through pictures or print to show what they have found out but not enough opportunities of this nature are provided to consolidate their learning effectively. This means that children have to rely on their recall of what they saw and learnt, which is not always effective.

Physical development

72. Many children are not working at the expected level in the physical area of learning and achievement could be better. Their manipulative skills are sound in that they handle construction materials with reasonable control and co-ordination. However, their skills in using small tools are less effective, for example when gluing and sticking and in pencil control. Children too infrequently practise their skills in making marks in free choice activities. In specific physical sessions in the hall, children show little awareness of space around them to make the best use of it. They jostle for space in the warm-up and huddle

closely to the teacher, constraining their physical movements. They do not display confidence in controlling their movements when hopping, jumping and skipping. Children follow the teacher's instructions to travel over and under equipment using sound climbing and balancing skills, but employ little imagination when moving across mats and other floor apparatus.

73. Teaching of physical skills is satisfactory in specific lessons. Learning is given relevance through relating the use of equipment to a recent story about 'Going on a Bear Hunt'. Resources are thoughtfully arranged. However, adults are not deployed effectively to encourage development of skills on each piece of equipment and opportunities are missed in this respect. There are accommodation shortfalls that constrain learning. Children have some opportunities to explore large equipment outdoors independently, for example to use wheeled vehicles. However, the designated outdoor areas for the reception class have only just been established and both are currently rather barren environments with little equipment readily available for children. Support staff are not used effectively to lead specific outdoor activities, and neither is use of these areas noted in plans to provide a clear purpose for learning.

Creative development

74. Creative skills are unsatisfactory and children's progress is also unsatisfactory. During role-play, children show satisfactory skills in re-enacting parts of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' in the home corner, although the area sometimes becomes crowded. Children work with a range of media such as paint, textiles, malleable material and collage to produce satisfactory outcomes: simple paintings in the style of Kandinsky, and recognisable pictures of toys, for example. However, skills in using brushes appropriately are sometimes weak, as seen when children try to paint bears. Children recognise the sounds of some instruments when played behind a screen but repetition of the task becomes tedious and their learning is not developed well as a consequence.

75. Teaching is satisfactory overall but opportunities are missed to develop pupils' creative skills. A good example of an opportunity for the children to experience different textures was provided by the Nursery Nurse who encouraged children to talk about the sensations created when mixing paints with hands. Overall though, only a limited range of materials and media are provided for children to explore independently and the focus and purpose for learning are not clear in plans. Some tasks are too directed. For example, when children create paper puppets, they are already cut out and attached to a prop and all the children have to do is stick on sequins. In the best lessons, adults intervene appropriately with children in the 'home corner' and help to extend their expressive vocabulary. On occasion, such intervention is minimal in developing imagined situations both indoors and out.

ENGLISH

76. The results of national tests for seven year-olds in 2000 show that overall, pupils' performance in reading is well below the national average. It is also below that in schools with similar intakes. In writing, performance is below the national average but not dissimilar to similar schools. However, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard of Level 2 is

in line with the national picture: this compares favourably with similar schools. In reading, it is only just below the national average. It is because no pupils achieve the higher Level 3, that the overall performance is reduced. In spite of steady improvement in writing results since 1998, evidence from the current inspection confirms that attainment in writing remains below expected standards. In reading, results have been much more variable, although much better attainment was seen in reading among current Year 2 pupils who achieve well and are on target to attain standards in line with those expected of most seven year-olds. A small amount of high attainment was observed during the inspection. This is a better picture than that suggested by last year's results. The results of national tests for 11 year-olds show good improvement over the last two years so that they are now broadly in line with national averages, and above those achieved by pupils in schools with a similar intake. This year's group look set to achieve standards in line with those expected of most 11 year olds, meeting targets set for the group which are modest but realistically based on their prior attainment.

77. Teacher assessments of seven year olds in 2000 suggested that pupils' speaking and listening skills were well below average with no pupils achieving good standards. Inspection evidence shows that the school's efforts to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills have been effective. Pupils' achievement is good in Key Stage 1. They behave well and levels of attention are usually high during instruction, which ensures that listening develops well. The accuracy and clarity of their speech improves, because teachers give strong encouragement for pupils to talk in small groups, or as part of a whole class discussion. All take part in literacy hour discussions for example, and by the end of Year 2, most pupils are confident in expressing their opinions, even though some make very brief contributions. Pupils in Key Stage 2 become progressively more confident in speaking, taking part in structured class discussions to work out their views. Their achievement is satisfactory. By Year 6, most pupils have acquired and use a comprehensive technical vocabulary in most areas of the curriculum. They ask, as well as answer questions readily, to clarify what they have to do. They also enter well into debate about school issues, for example when giving opinions about problems associated with a 'Friendship Stop' in the playground. Higher attainers show that their arguments are sensible and well thought through.

78. Pupils achieve well in reading in Key Stage 1. In Year 1, pupils are developing their grasp of phonics to help them to attempt to decode words. Most pupils read aloud together from a big book and a small number spot and explain the purpose of key punctuation. Higher attaining pupils read independently with confidence when the text is familiar. Less able pupils memorise familiar text but have difficulty recognising words out of context. By Year 2, the majority of pupils can read simple texts accurately, and about half the pupils read with good understanding. They can discuss what they have read and use clues from pictures and the text to predict what might happen next. Lower attaining pupils have a sound knowledge of the sounds of letters but are not applying this systematically in decoding unfamiliar words. They use pictures to help them with difficult words, but need a great deal of adult support to help them make sense of the narrative. In Key Stage 2, pupils' achievement is satisfactory from year to year. By the age of 11, most pupils have positive attitudes to reading and express a preference for a particular author or kind of book. They have a sound range of reading experiences, so they make comparisons with other books, and use technical terms confidently. Levels of understanding are sound. Better readers talk about the plot and

different characters in books, and distinguish key elements of the style of different writers. Most pupils read aloud fluently and accurately, and some read expressively for dramatic effect. Less confident readers read more mechanistically but the remainder read with adequate understanding when the text is well matched to their reading level.

79. Attainment in writing is below average at the end of both key stages. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 have a good grasp of basic punctuation and spelling. However, evidence from pupils' books indicates that they have few opportunities for using these skills in pieces of extended writing. Standards of presentation are unsatisfactory and handwriting skills gained in practise sessions are not transferred when pupils focus on other aspects of writing, such as grammar or spelling. There is a general lack of interesting vocabulary in pupils' writing, despite the fact that at least one third of pupils in Year 2 are articulate and display a wide vocabulary in discussion. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils discussed different types of story endings, using a relatively sophisticated vocabulary, but when they began to write their ideas down, very little was accomplished. Even the higher attaining pupils produced very little written work and the good vocabulary demonstrated in discussion was not transferred to paper. By Year 6, pupils write with more confidence but do not develop their writing skills well through other subjects of the curriculum. For instance in a history lesson, research skills were superficial, concentrating on the rephrasing of secondary sources rather than in depth research leading to major pieces of extended writing. Although pupils have a good grasp of basic punctuation, including paragraphing, spelling is erratic and pupils do not use the range of vocabulary evident in discussions. They do not use dictionaries often enough as they write, or routinely proofread their work. As a result, some pupils continue to misspell common words. Presentation and unsatisfactory spelling are areas identified in the last inspection: they have yet to be fully addressed.

80. Pupils with special educational needs and the very small number of pupils with English as an additional language make good progress. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. Teachers plan lessons and organise their classrooms so that these pupils, whilst taking a full part in class activities, have appropriate work and good support from both classroom assistants and the special needs teacher. Pupils are well taught such basic skills as spelling, reading and grammar.

81. Satisfactory use is made of opportunities in other subjects to apply their literacy skills. Pupils are able to use their research skills to find out information, for example in history, although sometimes simply rephrase rather than extracting key elements from the information. Pupils could make more use of library skills for independent research, for example in geography. Some use is made of ICT to find out information. In Key Stage 1, pupils use a search facility well to find out about unknown words. However, skills among older pupils are unsatisfactory as seen when trying to find out about John Lennon. ICT is also used to improve the quality of some pieces of writing, although there is little discernible difference in outcome across Key Stage 2. 'Circle time' discussions in personal and social education make a good contribution to the development of pupils' speaking skills across the school.

82. The quality of teaching in English was at least satisfactory in all but one lesson, which was unsatisfactory. More than half of the teaching was good with one lesson of very good quality in Key Stage 1. In the better lessons, tasks were well matched to pupils' range of abilities and there was a clear focus for learning. Lessons proceeded at a brisk pace, introductions were short and to the

point, and time was well used, giving pupils sufficient time to complete tasks. In Year 1, some very effective questioning about features and content of a 'Big Book' enabled pupils to understand the storyline well. Learning objectives were clear in the best lessons and communicated to pupils in terms they understood. For example, in Year 3 where the lesson focused on familiar story endings, the teacher constantly referred back to the learning objective, and opportunities for vocabulary development were not only built into the planning but were a consistent feature of the teaching. Opportunities were provided for pupils to work collaboratively, with discussion of the various stories an important feature of the group tasks.

83. In less successful teaching, the lessons contained too many learning objectives or the focus of the lesson was unclear. For instance, in a Year 2 lesson, the primary focus was using commas to separate items in a list, set in a context of previous work on compound words. However, alphabetical order, dictionary definitions and cross-referencing were also discussed and the primary focus of the lesson was only sketchily covered in the introduction. In a Year 5 lesson on identifying cultural differences in myths, the plethora of different texts used did not help pupils to identify key elements of specific cultures and pupils became confused when discussing specific vocabulary.

84. There has been some effective monitoring of practice using external advice which has been useful in identifying where improvement is needed. The co-ordinator has a clear view of progress in Key Stage 2, and has been involved in the analysis of national tests and identifying areas for development. However, there has been less opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching in Key Stage 1 or to become familiar with the requirements of the new Foundation Stage curriculum beyond monitoring of planning.

85. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily. Planning procedures have been streamlined and are generally manageable and useful, although the assessment procedures are time consuming, cumbersome and not used consistently well by all teachers. For instance reading records are primarily a list of books read with some comments often related to pupils' efforts. More evaluative comments are only made in separate pupils' records two or three times a year but again their content is variable and often expressed in broad terms. In one class in Key Stage 2, specific and measurable short-term writing targets were put into the front of pupils' books, but subsequent marking made no reference to progress towards these targets. In some classes teachers adapt their planning in the light of some ongoing assessment, but this good practice is not consistent across the school. Marking practice also varies between classes, as does the procedure for support staff to feedback to teachers at the end of lessons. In some classes, pupils' progress or difficulties are formally noted on a recording sheet, while in others feedback is done verbally and informally. Some forms of assessment, such as tests, are used suitably to identify pupils who would benefit from 'booster classes' and additional literacy support. In Year 1, a small group of pupils benefit from an early intervention project. Resources to support learning are good. There is an attractive library, and materials to support the literacy hour are plentiful. However, in Years 5 and 6 there is a heavy reliance on a published scheme as a focus for pupils' text work.

MATHEMATICS

86. Results in the national tests in 2000 for Year 2 pupils are well below the national average, and below those of pupils in schools with similar intakes of pupils. They show that the per centage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 or above and the per centage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 are both well below the national average. Results since the last inspection in 1998 have shown a steady but slow increase compared with national results, after a sharp decline in 1998 when compared to the results obtained in 1997. A key issue from the previous inspection was to raise standards in mathematics. The school has been successful in this respect and evidence from this inspection suggests that most of the current Year 2 pupils are on target to reach the standard expected of seven year olds , showing good achievement since entering Key Stage 1.

87. In the Key Stage 2 national 2000 tests, results are well below both the national average and that of similar types of schools. Since the last inspection in 1998, results at the end of Key Stage 2 have shown a steady increase but have generally remained well below the national average. Although the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 has increased significantly, few pupils attain the higher level, reducing the overall performance. Standards among pupils in the current Year 6 reflect the fact that a larger proportion than last year are on course to achieve the expected Level 4 and meet the challenging targets set for these pupils, although standards are still below average overall. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have achieved as well as can be expected based on their previous attainment. Even more challenging targets have been set for the year 2002, in order to encourage the upward trend in results at a faster pace than the national picture.

88. Pupils with special educational needs and the very small number of pupils with English as an additional language make good progress. In both key stages, these pupils benefit from the effective support given by learning support assistants and the special educational needs teacher, especially during the main activity part of the lesson where the class is divided into groups based on their prior attainment. In 'booster' groups, organised for Year 6 pupils who are on the borderline of achieving the expectation in mathematics, pupils are helped to make good progress in areas such as doubling and halving numbers.

89. Most pupils start from a low baseline in mathematics when they enter Year 1 and achieve well to attain satisfactory standards overall by the end of the key stage. Year 1 pupils are fairly confident in counting to twenty and in counting on one more, but are less confident in making one less than a given number. A few higher attaining pupils can order a sequence of numbers under one hundred. Below average pupils add numbers to ten using their fingers. In the current Year 2, pupils are working at or close to what is expected nationally in some areas of mathematics such as number and shape. Pupils know the addition and subtraction facts to ten and the facts for the two and ten multiplication tables. Pupils order numbers to one hundred and higher attaining pupils have a firm grasp of the strategies for doing so. Past work indicates pupils have limited opportunities to measure using different units but do measure with increasing accuracy in centimetres. Pupils' development of mathematical vocabulary is not given sufficient emphasis. Pupils' problem-solving skills are less secure, and only a few examples were seen pupils of pupils applying mathematical skills beyond occasional use in subjects, for example measuring shoes sizes.

90. In Key Stage 2, pupils' progress is satisfactory. Year 3 pupils throw dice to make a two-digit number and then say what number is needed to make it up to one hundred. Higher attaining pupils progress to using correct strategies for adding on to a three-digit number to make one thousand. A few lower attaining pupils count up to one hundred from a lower number. In Year 4, pupils begin to understand the use of doubling and halving in relation to the three and six times table, whilst a few higher attaining pupils can mentally recall division facts such as twenty eight divided by four. Pupils in Year 5 calculate fractions of numbers but only higher attaining pupils are confident in knowing their multiplication tables. By the age of 11, pupils begin develop an understanding of probability, an area identified by the school as being weak. Pupils make reasonable predictions in this respect but they are generally working below what could be expected of their age group in many areas of mathematics. Many pupils lack accuracy and consistency in calculation but they are beginning to make sound progress in mental calculation, the recall of number facts and problem solving due to the good mental and oral sessions at the beginning of numeracy lessons. Past work indicates that in Key Stage 2, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to study algebra, data handling, apply mathematics through problem solving in different contexts to develop these skills to a sufficiently high enough level.

91. The opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge of mathematics in other subjects is limited in evidence of work since the start of the year. During the week of the inspection, more evidence was seen, for example measuring frames to mount artwork, measuring the area of boats in science and programmes involving calculations in ICT. However, pupils' mathematical skills in some of these tasks are not used effectively. For example, in Year 4, pupils find it difficult to calculate money problems to enter data accurately and systematically in a spreadsheet. Little use was seen of ICT to generally support mathematical work in lessons.

92. The quality of teaching in mathematics has benefited recently from a large proportion of new staff, the support of an advanced skills teacher and advisory teacher as well as training in numeracy. Teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons seen, and good in well over half. There was one very good lesson: in Key Stage 1. In the most effective lessons, where pupils made good gains in their learning, teachers asked good questions and set tasks, which were well matched to pupils' different levels of attainment. Teachers are secure with the three-part lesson of the National Numeracy Strategy. In mental mathematics at the beginning of the numeracy lesson, for example, teachers generally provided a quick pace to well directed questions ensuring that pupils were engaged, listening and could succeed. More emphasis could be placed on pupils learning the correct mathematical vocabulary. Introductions to the main teaching activities are effective, with clear explanations of strategies and methods in calculation. These allow pupils to then work in their ability groups confidently, knowing what is expected of them. Teachers' use of the end of lessons to consolidate and occasionally extend learning is helping pupils to progress well. Improvements have been made in the marking of pupils' work. Although satisfactory overall, marking throughout the school is not of a consistent enough quality to make it clear what has been done well, what needs to be improved and how. Homework is sometimes given to pupils, which makes a satisfactory contribution to their learning. Teachers use interesting activities to motivate pupils and sustain their interest in their work. The use of simple games, especially in Key Stage 1,

increases pupil's motivation and interest in their work. High expectations of pupils' behaviour and the effective use of learning support assistants and the special educational needs teacher to teach, guide and support lower attaining pupils, results in sustained concentration and a willingness of these pupils to offer and answer questions and make progress.

93. The school, through its analysis of national test and teacher assessment results is beginning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the performance of pupils and is using the information to target groups of pupils and areas of weakness effectively. Management of teaching and learning is good overall but the new co-ordinator is inexperienced and is based in the reception class. Support will be required in order to take on an effective leadership and monitoring role across the whole school. Teaching is currently monitored effectively by the headteacher and information gained is helping to raise standards. The sound implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has strengthened whole-school approaches to teaching and learning in the subject. Resources throughout the school are satisfactory overall but there is not enough software to support learning in the upper part of Key Stage 2, and more equipment is needed to support practical activities and investigations.

SCIENCE

94. Teachers' assessment of the attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000, showed standards were well below both the national average and the results of similar schools. From 1999 to 2000 there was a significant drop in the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard, Level 2, and no pupils attained the higher Level 3. Inspection evidence shows that the present Year 2 pupils achieve well to make good progress and are attaining standards in line with that expected for their age, indicating a good improvement on last year's results. This is due to the good quality of the teaching and the interest shown by pupils in the subject. It echoes the judgements of the last OFSTED report in 1998. Pupils' results in the National Curriculum tests for the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 were well below the national average, and below the results achieved in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In the four years from 1997 to 2000 attainment has varied, with a particularly weak year in 1998. Since then performance has improved, broadly at the same pace as the national picture but not enough to overtake national improvement. Despite satisfactory progress by most pupils, many of the current Year 6 are attaining standards below that expected. The present class includes pupils who not only have special learning needs, but also a significant number who need consistent support with their work. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in both key stages, because they are well supported in the classroom and have every opportunity to take a full part in class work.

95. Most pupils are acquiring a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and how to carry out investigations devised by teachers. In Key Stage 1 they have a sound understanding of the food we need. They also know that people have different senses. They have listened for sounds and know that they are all around and that some are loud and others soft. Year 2 pupils have successfully collected data to show what their grandparents are able to do and like to eat. They have thoughtfully compared this with babies through their

observations at home. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have found that there are many light sources and that, on the playground, the sun can cast a shadow. In their studies of materials, pupils have experimented to see which materials are best for making houses and have used principles of fair testing to carry out their work.

96. In Key Stage 2, most pupils know the importance of a balanced diet and a healthy lifestyle and, as part of one lesson in Year 5, carefully selected a diet suitable for sportsmen and women. They have studied materials and know that some are transparent, others translucent or opaque. They have learnt basic principles of magnetism and conductivity. Pupils have experimented with making sounds and explored pitch, showing good links with music to make higher and lower sounds with instruments they have made. They have studied forces and successfully tested air resistance by making and dropping parachutes. By the end of the key stage, pupils understand the importance of fair testing and show that they can draw conclusions from their investigations. They have yet to devise their own experiments. Pupils are encouraged to predict what they think will happen before they test, but are not always able to give scientific reasons for their predictions: an expectation of Year 6 pupils. As an example, pupils made boats and tested them to see how much weight they could carry. They selected the shape they wanted and measured its area but in making their predictions few made specific reference to either the area or shape.

97. The teaching observed was never less than satisfactory. It was good in both key stages in two thirds of lessons. In one lesson - in Key Stage 1 – it was very good. This is an improvement since the OFSTED inspection of 1996. Teachers transmit their enjoyment of the subject to their pupils, who respond well and, apart from a small minority of older pupils in Years 5 and 6, behave well. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they teach the basic skills of science investigation well. They remind pupils to use the correct scientific terms in their writing and carefully teach them how to record clearly the investigations they have made. The teaching methods they use and the management of pupils are good. Little time is wasted and pupils' interest is well maintained in the lessons. Teachers' expectations of their pupils are usually appropriately matched to their needs and pupils work well together, entering into discussions about the work they are doing. Older pupils show that they can organise themselves into small groups. Lessons are carefully planned and teachers and support staff work effectively as a team in the classroom. Teachers usually make satisfactory use of on going assessments of what pupils know and understand, but occasionally the activities chosen are a little bit too demanding, particularly for younger pupils, and they then need a lot of support to complete the task.

98. The co-ordinator gives good leadership to the subject and effectively monitors science work across the school. Information from a study of the standard test results has been analysed and, as a result, there is now more emphasis on work in physical processes. The curriculum is suitably balanced and there is no unnecessary repetition of work for pupils, an improvement on provision in the inspection of 1996. Investigative work has been well promoted and is a strong feature of science in all age groups. This is also an improvement since 1996. Teachers try to record what pupils have learned, but the whole-school recording system is not always clearly connected to current planning to give enough detail about pupils' attainments. Resources are suitably organised, are sufficient in quantity and support teachers' classroom work.

ART AND DESIGN

99. Standards in art attained by pupils at age seven and 11 are broadly in line with those expected nationally and achievement is satisfactory overall. This is an improvement on the inspection in 1996, when standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were considered unsatisfactory.

100. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are handling paint and other media with confidence. In Year 1, they use different media to represent their images of umbrellas with sound attempts at colour mixing. In Year 2, a combined art and design and technology project to design Joseph's coat of many colours has involved silk painting, hand sewing and weaving. Pupils develop a good appreciation of how to create an abstract design from its initial stages through to a finished product, learning a variety of simple techniques to achieve a sophisticated effect. They show increased awareness of aesthetics when displaying work, although they need considerable adult support to create their own picture frames. In Key Stage 2, pupils are developing sound observation skills. In Year 4, for example, they consider angles, viewpoints, reflection and lighting in camera work. In Year 5 they explore the properties of glass containers and represent their ideas through careful paintings or paper collage. Year 6 pupils develop this idea further through drawings, which emphasise the translucency, shape and reflective properties of containers from the Middle East. Sketchbooks are used well, as in a Year 5 lesson where pupils annotated their drawings with ideas of how the objects make them feel. However, there is little evidence overall to show that ICT is used as an effective medium in art. A well attended weekly art club enables pupils with a particular talent or interest to develop their skills further.

101. The quality of art teaching was satisfactory in three out of five lessons, with one lesson of good quality and one lesson being unsatisfactory. The quality of pupils' artwork depends heavily on the interest, expectations and expertise of individual teachers. For example the quality of work produced by pupils in Year 5 is high. A display of painted patchwork landscapes bisected by a golden river was particularly effective. Despite the fact that a policy and scheme of work are now in place, the progress of individual pupils is uneven and pupils' skills are not built on systematically year by year. These fluctuations in pupils' performance were noted in the inspection report of 1996. Where teaching is less than satisfactory, there is too strong an emphasis on outcomes and too little emphasis on developing processes that are appropriate to pupils' level of skill. This was evident when pupils became too dependent on adults in order to complete picture frames, and became frustrated by their own inability to work without help. In the better teaching, pupils are encouraged to work independently, building on earlier knowledge and skills. Adults are used to advise and support activities and allow individual pupils' creativity to flourish.

102. In general, art has maintained a high profile throughout the school and although useful links are made with other curriculum areas, it is taught appropriately as a subject in its own right. The co-ordinator is an art specialist but has only recently taken on the management of the subject. This brings an enthusiasm to the work and some interesting ideas for the development of the subject. There is sound awareness of the need to ensure pupils' skills are built on progressively as they move through the school. A wide range of resources has been built up over time and is used well to support learning in art. An artist has worked with pupils in art. This has extended their skills in the subject further.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. Standards in design and technology are broadly in line with those expected of seven and 11 year olds. This shows an improvement on the last reported standards in the subject in 1996 where they were considered unsatisfactory across the school. Appropriate links are made with art and other curriculum areas, although design and technology skills are given appropriate emphasis. In Year 1, pupils make moving pictures, using simple sliding mechanisms to make their pictures grow. In Year 2, in designing Joseph's 'Coat of Many Colours', pupils use a variety of sound techniques in a joint art and design project. These include making a paper pattern, and working with textiles. Pupils in Key Stage 2 understand the concept of design as opposed to drawing a picture. In Year 3, for example, they make satisfactory designs for crisp packets and packaging for a luxury box of chocolates. They are beginning to show sound evaluative skills when considering each other's designs. By Year 6, pupils recognise that structures require rigidity to remain upright. They use art straws to create tall structures and show how rigidity can be gained through use of cardboard corners and diagonal bracing.

104. The teaching seen was satisfactory in all lessons. Lessons were well prepared and all elements of the planning, designing and evaluating process were incorporated into lesson plans to provide pupils with the necessary skills. Staff in general are confident in their subject knowledge and can advise and support pupils as appropriate through sound guidance. Classroom assistants are used well in some lessons to support pupils as they work, although on occasion they take over and dominate their groups, stifling pupils' creativity and ability to initiate ideas for themselves. Good discussion takes place at the end of lessons to enable pupils to evaluate what they have learnt and this also acts as a useful lead into the next lesson. Although individual lessons contain clear learning objectives, tasks are sometimes rather limited in challenge and not enough attention is paid to the better development of pupils' skills over time or to extending higher attaining pupils. On occasion, music played in the background adds little to the atmosphere and creates high noise levels as adults and pupils try to talk over it.

105. The recently appointed co-ordinator is aware of the need to evaluate and review the effectiveness of the present medium term planning to ensure that learning develops as effectively as possible as pupils move through the school. A good level of resources support learning and are used well.

GEOGRAPHY

106. Attainment is in line with nationally expected standards at the end of both key stages. This is a similar judgement to the last report on the subject in 1996. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in their learning. They have considered plans and maps. Following a walk to explore the local area, Year 1 pupils show that they can interpret a map which shows the local roads just beyond the school gates. They have looked at photographs of the area taken at different times of the day and made successful comparisons of the numbers of cars parked there. Year 2 pupils identify clues in photographs, pictures and maps that show how land use has changed. In considering maps, they have found symbols and know that they are used to show important places such as hospitals and stations. They know that some parts of the world have warm weather and

some cold and have decided what someone would need to pack to go on holiday. They understand the need to conserve energy, for example by turning off lights and they know about the importance of recycling materials. In Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress when moving on to study the wider local area. They are able to compare and contrast where they live with the small village of Horley to which, as Year 6, they make a residential visit and engage in fieldwork. They are aware of changes in the countryside, both by the recent foot and mouth disease and the earlier flooding. In thinking about countries further afield, pupils have seen in newspapers and television reports the devastation that an earthquake can cause. They have some basic understanding of earthquakes but are unclear about the simple cause or effects of global warming. Pupils have developed their understanding of maps, know that they are drawn to different scales and can identify main features and points of the compass using an Ordnance Survey map. In their developing understanding of geography pupils do not have enough opportunities to engage in personal research, using the library and ICT.

107. The teaching was good in all but one lesson and was never less than satisfactory. It was particularly good in Key Stage 1. Teachers make very good use of the local area, including the village of Horley which pupils of different ages visit regularly and which engages their interest. Teachers plan their lessons well and make good use of secondary sources of evidence like videos and photographs which makes pupils want to explore further. Activities are interesting and reinforce and develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils concentrate well and enter into discussion as a class and in groups, sharing ideas and observations readily. Sometimes more could be expected of the potentially higher attaining pupils in both key stages by giving them more meaningful extension work rather than more of the same. This echoes the judgement made in the 1996 OFSTED report. Teachers help to make work enjoyable for pupils, and most behave well as a consequence.

108. Provision is much better than that reported in 1996. The curriculum is planned satisfactorily and is interesting and relevant to the children. It shows how skills are developed from year to year, although in medium term plans it is not always clear how learning is developed in the shorter term. The co-ordinator organises the subject well and sufficient resources are available for teachers to use. Teachers assess pupils' progress at the end of each unit of work but whole-school records do not necessarily relate directly to new planning to enable effective evaluation to take place and clear information on pupil attainment to be recorded.

HISTORY

109. Attainment in history is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages and reflects the judgements in the 1996 report when standards in history were last reported. Only one lesson was taught in Key Stage 1 but it is evident from this and from a study of pupils' books and displays of work, that pupils are achieving well. They are satisfactorily developing a sense of old and new and chronology. Younger pupils have looked at old and new Teddy bears, noted the differences and placed them in order of age. Older pupils have learned about the Fire of London and considered London as it is today. As part of this work they have read some extracts from the diary of Samuel Pepys and have studied pictures and photographs of London streets and buildings, noting differences, such as the material used for buildings then and now. They are able to answer

questions about the past and relate what they have learned to their own lives. In Key Stage 2, pupils make steady progress in their knowledge and understanding of different time periods. They have studied different decades of the 20th century and World War II. In doing this they have learned more about the use of different sources of information. They have interviewed people who were born in the 1940s and 1950s and have learned about their lives, contrasting them with their own experiences. In considering other historical periods, pupils have learned about the lives of rich and poor people in Tudor times. In developing their research skills pupils use the primary and secondary sources of information provided for them and some pupils use a CD-ROM but need considerable support. However, in looking at evidence, pupils do not have a good level of skill in interpreting it and in considering conflicting evidence.

110. The quality of teaching throughout the school was at least satisfactory in all lessons and, in two lessons, it was of a good standard. In a particularly well-taught lesson in Key Stage 1, pupils were very interested in the photographs of modern day City of London and compared them with the picture showing the 17th Century streets of London. Here the teacher made good use of detailed questioning to encourage children to observe carefully and compare and contrast what they were seeing. Teachers, overall, have a satisfactory knowledge of the history curriculum. They have appropriate expectations that the pupils will understand and succeed in what they are asked to do. As part of these expectations, teachers provide interesting activities and select resources that develop pupils' knowledge and skills through holding their interest. Throughout the school pupils are evidently interested in the subject, although a small group of older pupils are not always fully engaged in their work. The good use of support staff is an essential part of the remaining pupils' learning not being disrupted by this group. However, most pupils co-operate well with others and work comfortably in groups.

111. The curriculum across the school is suitably planned to ensure learning builds systematically from year to year. Teachers assess how well pupils have learned at the end of a unit of work but the school's current recording procedures are not closely linked to new planning. Their 'headings' are very broad and there is no space for teachers' comments to provide more detailed information.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

112. No mention was made of ICT in the last inspection in 1998, although the 1996 report identified standards that were below those expected of primary age pupils. The school has made significant recent improvements to facilities and equipment with the development of a high quality ICT suite. This has helped to improve standards so that, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected of most seven year olds and pupils are achieving well. Although pupils in Key Stage 2 are achieving as well as can be expected based on their prior attainment, their improved experiences have yet to raise standards sufficiently by Year 6 to what is expected of most 11 year olds and standards are below those expected nationally.

113. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to use the mouse and keyboard competently to word process and create pictures using simple edit features. They know how to enter data onto the computer and produce charts to represent results of surveys, for example about shoe size in Year 2. In Year 1, pupils use the information gathered in geography to produce pictograms representing data

about their journeys to school. In Year 2, pupils use a search facility well to locate specific words in different ways and find out their meanings, for example by scrolling or typing in the particular word. They are aware of technology in its wider sense. This was seen in some effective work on comparing different effects that can be produced in photographs, such as inappropriate use of flash. Little evidence was seen of control work in Key Stage 1 to show that enough progress is being made in this aspect of the subject.

114. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know how to log on, open and close down software packages and print out their work. However, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are still working at early stages in most ICT skills due to their lack of prior experiences in earlier years. For example, Year 5 pupils know the basic commands for moving a screen turtle and Year 6 pupils know how to build simple procedures using the commands to draw simple shapes. However, control work has not yet developed to produce more complex procedures, incorporating devices linked to specific outputs such as buzzers, motors and lights. Neither is there much evidence of pupils having the opportunity to monitor external events, for example using sensors. Pupils across the key stage are able to word process to present their work, but there is little discernible difference between work in each year and by Year 6, pupils have only limited understanding of edit features and no experience of multimedia presentation. There is some evidence of research to support learning in history, but searches are often random rather than systematic and pupils have little experience of using the Internet facility to provide sufficient detail. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 show sound attainment in use of simulation packages and early spreadsheet skills, but these have yet to be built in effectively in later years.

115. ICT is being used to support learning in other subjects, for example in geography in Year 1, literacy in Year 2, and history in Year 5. However, weak skills in other subjects sometimes constrain pupils' learning in ICT, notably their mathematical skills. This was seen when pupils attempted to calculate bus fares in Year 4 to complete their spreadsheets, and in control work in Year 5 and 6 when estimating distance and degree of turn.

116. Teaching was much improved since the last reporting on ICT where it was considered unsatisfactory. It was good in both lessons seen in Key Stage 1 and this helped pupils to achieve well and make good gains in their learning. It was satisfactory overall in Key Stage 2 with some good features in about half of lessons seen. A common feature of effective lessons is that clear plans are prepared so that teachers are aware of precisely what they are expecting the children to learn. Most sessions were well prepared, although delay to one Year 5 lesson arose because the location of the program on the computer was not checked prior to the lesson, and time was wasted in trying to find it during the lesson with little success. Good explanations introduce concepts to pupils, and in the best practice opportunities are made for the pupils to ask questions to clarify what they are expected to do. A good level of challenge for higher attainers is provided in some of the activities, although sometimes expectations are too high for lower attainers and pupils do not have the skills to carry out work effectively. This was noted in some work employing mathematical skills, which led to some frustration on the part of pupils. They did not apply themselves so well as a result, and did not always persevere to overcome difficulties. Management of pupils is usually good, in spite of some challenging behaviour among a small number of older pupils in Key Stage 2, and most pupils enjoy their work in ICT. Support staff are used well in this respect. They are also used for working with groups of pupils as part of a range of activities to support learning in lessons. However, they

do not always have the skills necessary to support pupils effectively, for example related to word processing and research skills.

117. The subject is supported by a good quality policy and new national guidelines have been incorporated into a scheme of work to ensure that statutory requirements are met, a concern in the previous reporting on the subject. However, the scheme of work is not always adapted sufficiently in teachers' medium term planning to show how learning develops over each half term. Procedures for tracking pupils' acquisition of skills are not directly related to new guidance, which is confusing for teachers when trying to note achievement and plan future work. The newly appointed co-ordinator has made a positive start to gain an overview of provision, and is currently trialling new assessment procedures. Some monitoring of plans takes place but further professional development would be helpful to ensure evaluation of teaching and learning is rigorous enough, especially in checking whether plans are implemented with consistent effectiveness in order to have a more positive impact on raising standards in the subject.

MUSIC

118. Only music lessons in Year 2 and Year 3 were observed during the inspection, and two singing practices for Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils respectively. From this evidence, standards of attainment in both key stages are in line with those expected of pupils of similar ages. Achievement is satisfactory with some good achievement noted in singing. This is a much better finding than when the subject was last inspected in 1996, when standards of attainment were below national expectations across the school. No mention was made of music standards or provision in the inspection in 1998.

119. In Key Stage 1, pupils in Year 2 know about famous composers, such as Vivaldi. They listen appropriately to his music of 'The Four Seasons' and express views on how the music makes them feel. They make some simple comparative comments about different versions but this could have been developed further to show higher levels of evaluative skills being employed. Pupils are able to maintain a simple beat by tapping in time to music, and a small number are able to use these skills with untuned percussion instruments. In Year 3, pupils recall the difference between pulse and accompaniment and are able to clap simple rhythms based on their favourite pizza filling! They attempt to maintain the beat of a Maori 'Haka' song but not with a high level of success without the support of the teacher. They practise pulse and accompaniment in groups to compose pieces based on their favourite foods, and using simple magazine tubes as percussion instruments. However, they are unable to relay these group pieces to the rest of the class, expressing disappointment about the lack of opportunity to perform. Pupils across the school sing well in assemblies and have a broad repertoire of songs. Younger pupils sing with good attention to pitch and harmony during assemblies. Older pupils develop these skills further varying their pitch, dynamics and expression when singing. They are able to perform some difficult two and three part pieces tunefully.

120. Teaching is at least satisfactory in both lessons seen. Singing skills are well developed in assemblies. Teachers plan appropriately for involvement of pupils and give suitable direction and guidance in teaching specific skills. Support staff are particularly effective in ensuring those with special educational needs take a fully inclusive part in discussions. Positive praise is given well so

that pupils are keen to do better. Resources are thoughtfully chosen to illustrate particular learning points, such as the contrasting versions of Vivaldi's music in Year 2, and the Haka music in Year 3. However, activities involving listening could be explored further to deepen pupils' understanding. Opportunities are missed for pupils to perform to others in the class to reinforce their creative skills more effectively. Pupils across the school have the opportunity to practise and develop their musical skills further by joining the guitar club, which meets weekly and where skills are well taught. They also have the chance to participate in peripatetic tuition, for example in violin. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development, with regular opportunities for reflection through listening to music, opportunities to work together on group pieces, and by taking part in local community events. More recorded pieces from other cultures are needed to develop pupils' understanding of music in a wider context.

121. Better guidance is provided for teachers in planning their work than was suggested in the previous report on the subject with a good quality policy and a scheme of work based on national guidance. The co-ordinator, new to the post, has good subject knowledge which is helpful in supporting staff informally, but has yet to have an opportunity to see music being taught in each class which would provide better information about strengths and weaknesses in provision.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

122. During the inspection, indoor lessons in movement through music and games were observed. Standards are in line with those expected of primary aged pupils overall, but there is a wide range of attainment between and within different year groups. However, the finding is an improvement on the last reporting of work in the subject in 1996, when standards were judged to be unsatisfactory.

123. In Year 1, pupils successfully explore moving at different heights to household noises and activities. Some lower attaining pupils find turning and balancing difficult, but higher attainers combine speed and tone of music well with matching movements. By Year 3, pupils dribble a small ball with a plastic hockey stick with reasonable accuracy, using the correct grip and body position. Most can keep the ball close to the head of the stick for a distance of about two meters but a few lose control as the speed of the ball picks up. Most pupils can hit the ball with the stick to make it travel but without a fine degree of accuracy. By Years 5 and 6, pupils are beginning to learn the basic skills of volleyball and to hit a small ball with a racquet to a partner. The majority can catch a small ball if it is thrown to them in line with their body. Higher attaining pupils can catch a ball thrown at varying heights, speeds and directions with one and two hands. In the limited opportunities given to pupils to evaluate their own and others performances, pupils are able to say why a performance is good or weak and give sensible reasons for the level of performance. They sustain energetic activity over suitable periods of time and show they understand the effect of exercise on their bodies by appreciating the need for careful warm up.

124. The quality of teaching and learning for all pupils is satisfactory overall, but varies from unsatisfactory to good in Key Stage 2. Teachers start physical education lessons promptly and in a well-organised manner. Warm-up activities are appropriate and interest the pupils, who work at a good pace. In the most successful lessons, teachers provide varied activities which are appropriately related to the aims of the lesson and which encourage the pupils to work hard and

sustain concentration. Teachers show a satisfactory knowledge of the subject through the instructions and demonstrations that they give and these factors, along with their use of pupils to demonstrate, help to ensure that pupils understand what they are doing and acquire new skills. This was particularly evident in a Year 3 lesson, where enthusiastic and purposeful teaching motivated all pupils to make good progress in their dribbling skills using a hockey stick. In the one lesson that was unsatisfactory in Year 6, insufficient guidance and instruction to the pupils was given and little use made of demonstrations of good practice to show the correct technique. The pupils became too excited and noisy due to the numbers of pupils trying to perform volleyball 'digs' and 'setups' too close together in a small gymnasium. Some pupils lost interest and concentration in performing the skills correctly. Many pupils did not have on the correct clothing and wore watches, which given the activity, had the potential to hurt themselves and others.

125. Many pupils show keen interest by participating in the extra-curricular sports activities and outside clubs. Pupils extend the work they do in physical education by attending extra curricular sporting activities such as the one seen in dance, and by taking part in competition with other primary schools in football and netball. The school has satisfactory facilities outdoors but not indoors. The gymnasium is inappropriately sited so that pupils have to walk through the gymnasium to get to the other classrooms. This disrupts the physical education lessons and did so on numerous occasions during the period of the inspection. Resources and storage facilities are adequate but some of the foam balls are in an unsatisfactory state of repair and should be replaced. The co-ordinator manages the subject well and has provided guidance for teachers on the planning of the subject. The assessment of physical education is unsatisfactory, as it is not sufficiently linked to the planning of lessons and the scheme of work. The co-ordinator has this as a focus for further improvement along with the need to be given the opportunity to monitor the teaching of the subject and to provide support and guidance to teachers where they require it.