

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **GODMANCHESTER PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Godmanchester, Cambridge

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110677

Headteacher: Mr Ellington

Reporting inspector: Mr J Heap  
18824

Dates of inspection: 10<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> January 2000

Inspection number: 188597

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: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Park Lane  
Godmanchester  
Cambridgeshire

Postcode: PE18 8AG

Telephone number: 01480 375 115

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs R Haldane

Date of previous inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> February 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr J Heap	Registered inspector	Physical education	<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p> <p>Schools' results and achievements.</p> <p>How well are pupils taught?</p>
Mrs J Madden	Lay inspector		<p>Pupils attitudes, values and personal development.</p> <p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
Mr P Thrussell	Team inspector	<p>Mathematics</p> <p>Religious Education</p> <p>Special educational needs</p>	
Mr P Collings	Team inspector	<p>Science</p> <p>Information technology</p> <p>Design and technology</p>	How well is the school led and managed?
Mr P Hayes	Team inspector	<p>Geography</p> <p>History</p> <p>Music</p> <p>Equal Opportunities</p>	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mrs J Clayphen	Team inspector	<p>English</p> <p>Art</p> <p>Under-fives</p>	

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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a primary school that caters for pupils aged 4 to 11 years. It is situated on the outskirts of the town of Godmanchester, which is close to Huntingdon. It has 505 pupils on roll, much higher than the average sized primary school in England. The number has reduced significantly since the last inspection and will continue to do so due to the establishment of a new Church of England School locally. Pupils are taught in 18 classes, five of which have mixed-ages of Years 1 and 2. The other years have single-aged classes with at least two in the year group. At present there are 118 pupils (23.4 per cent) on the register of special educational needs, this is above the national average. 6 pupils (1.2 per cent) have Statements of Special Educational Needs, which is broadly in line with the national average.

The school takes its pupils mainly from the local area, but some come from surrounding wards. There is a higher than average profile of adults with higher education and children in high social class households. The majority are white and about four per cent come from a variety of ethnic heritages. Only one pupil has a mother-tongue other than English; this is low. About 80-85 per cent of pupils live in owner-occupied housing and the rest are from local authority estates. There are 40 pupils (7.9 per cent) entitled to free school meals: this is below the national average. Children are admitted to the reception classes in the September of the school year in which they become five. There are 56 children in the two reception classes at the time of the inspection; the majority are under-five years of age. All the children have transferred from nurseries in the area. Early assessment of children's competencies indicates that attainment is average when they enter the school.

The present headteacher took up his position just three days before the inspection started. The school does not have a deputy headteacher and has not had one for several years.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Overall, this is a good school. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection. The school cares soundly for its pupils, teaches them well and enables them to achieve above average results in national tests. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and behaviour is of a high standard. There are shortcomings, most particularly in management but the school is well placed to improve these soon. The strengths of the school far outweigh its weaknesses. Given that the unit costs are low, the school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment in national tests is well above the national average in English, and above the national average in mathematics and science.
- Teaching is good overall and 19.1 per cent of lessons are very good or excellent.
- Pupils are very well behaved and have very good attitudes to their work.
- The school provides effectively for pupils with special educational needs.
- Music makes a strong contribution to pupils' development.
- The school has good links with the community.

#### **What could be improved**

- The presentation of pupils' work is too often untidy.
- The leadership and management of the school has shortcomings; most particularly in the role of the governing body, monitoring teaching and development planning.
- Overall curriculum planning lacks a long-term plan.
- The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory.
- The quality of information for parents, most particularly annual reports and details about the curriculum are unsatisfactory.

**The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan and will be sent to all parents and carers.**

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1996. Average standards of attainment have been maintained in most subjects and the standards in English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education have improved. The quality of teaching is much improved. In 1996, around 25 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory, compared to 1.2 per cent this time. Furthermore, the amount of good and better teaching has increased, from around 40 per cent last time to 67.5 per cent this time. These developments are supported by improved short and medium term planning, better classroom management and the work of coordinators in devising draft schemes of work in subjects other than design technology and physical education. There has been a significant improvement in pupils' behaviour that is now very good. This is particularly noticeable in the playground where new rules have provided pupils with clear guidance about acceptable behaviour. The new head plans to revise the discipline policy to reflect a more positive approach and introduce rewards that should encourage pupils and develop self-esteem. Collective Worship is now a daily event. Improvements have been made in health and safety and monitoring is now rigorously carried out. The accommodation has been improved significantly, including a new swimming pool, a new hall for music and improved play areas. Overall, the school has made good progress. The new headteacher has already identified areas he wishes to develop and consequently the capacity for future improvement is good.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	All schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	A	C	A	B	well above average    A above average        B average                C below average        D well below average    E
mathematics	B	C	B	C	
science	B	C	B	C	

Children enter reception with average attainment. They make good progress in personal and social development and achieve the early learning goals well before they are five. Satisfactory progress is made in the other areas of development. Consequently they achieve these early learning goals by the age of five.



Results in national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 were well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared to schools that have a similar entitlement to free school meals the results were above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Reading is the most improved subject since the last inspection and the school rightly pays a great deal of attention to ensuring that pupils receive a firm grounding in the basic skills. Over the last four years, results at the end of Key Stage 1 have fluctuated in reading and mathematics, particularly in 1998. Results in writing have consistently been above the national average but recently the gap has been diminishing. Results over the same period in Key Stage 2 have also fluctuated, but to a lesser degree and standards are now higher than they were at the last inspection. In fact, the improvement in the school's results is broadly in line with the national trend. The most baffling trend in recent results concerns the difference between boys' results and those of the girls. At the end of Key Stage 1, boys are doing better than girls, most particularly in reading. By the end of Key Stage 2, this trend has reversed and girls are achieving results that are, on average, the equivalent of one term's progress more than boys. However, the boys' results are still ahead of the national average in English, and close to it in mathematics and science. There was no evidence found in the inspection that would shed any light on this apparent change. The only targets available are the ones for English and mathematics: these are too low and are easily exceeded. However, the school felt the need to be conservative with the targets because of the uncertainty caused by the opening of the new school and not knowing who was about to leave. Pupils' oracy and literacy skills are good. High standards are achieved in music, art, history and swimming. The work pupils were doing during the inspection confirm the standards indicated in the test results. A weakness is the quality of presentation, where standards are not good enough.

## **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They listen and concentrate very well; they are keen to do their best and are pleased with their achievements. Pupils are highly enthusiastic about attending school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Behaviour in lessons and outside is very good. There have been no exclusions.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Relationships throughout the school are very good, most particularly in the collaborative and discussion work in all classes. Pupils develop initiative well and take on various responsibilities, including older pupils reading with younger pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Broadly in line with the national average.

There has been a significant improvement in pupils' behaviour since the last inspection. This was highly visible in the courtesy shown to adults. Pupils relate well to classmates and adults and the older pupils are very protective of the younger ones. Pupils are generally confident and mature in their dealings with others and in the way they approach their work.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching of English, including reading and writing, mathematics and science is good at both key stages. There are significant numbers of very good lessons in English and mathematics and at both key stages. Particular strengths include lesson planning, management of pupils, good use of resources and searching questioning. The strengths far outweigh the weaknesses, but shortcomings at Key Stage 2, include inconsistencies in marking, the use of homework and insufficient attention to pupils' presentation of work. Teachers are enthusiastic, clear about their expectations and generally meet the needs of all pupils. During the inspection: 98.8 per cent of lessons were satisfactory, or better; 18.1 per cent were very good or better and 1.2 per cent (one lesson) was unsatisfactory.

Pupils throughout the school learn well. A particular strength is the way they learn basic skills, acquire knowledge and develop understanding. This is particularly noticeable in reading where the younger pupils are gaining a good knowledge of letter sounds. Older pupils are developing a great deal of independence in their reading through the use of the new reading scheme. This is mainly because of the links with information technology, which provides useful motivation through its ability to give immediate feedback on the quality of work and keep records of pupils' achievements. Pupils put a great deal of effort into all that they do. Creatively, this is reflected in the high standards in art and music and physically in the hard work and level of achievement in swimming. Pupils with special educational needs learn well and they reach satisfactory standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The main weakness in their learning concerns the presentation of work in books.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and caters soundly for pupils' aptitudes and interests. Visits, visitors and links with the community successfully add to pupils' experiences. Weaknesses occur in the long-term planning with the absence of a school-wide plan. The curriculum for under-fives satisfactorily follows the nationally agreed early learning goals.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Effective procedures for early identification of pupils with learning difficulties. Individual education plans are clear and realistic and they provide good guidance for the teachers and assistants who support the pupils well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The one child, who is Arabic-speaking is making good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Staff provide good role models and are consistently calm and respectful. Social and moral development is good and successfully promotes mature attitudes amongst the pupils. There is satisfactory provision for spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection are satisfactory, but there is no school policy. Pupils who have special educational needs are quickly identified and provided for well. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance and for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory.

The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents. As a community school it provides more facilities and time to use them than those offered in a number of establishments. Parents are expected to have a positive impact on their child's education and in the majority of cases this is realistic. However, the school does not provide them with enough information about their child's progress nor the work which is being done.

The quality and range of the curriculum in Key Stage 2 is good. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and good in music. The curriculum fully meets statutory requirements.

All aspects to do with behaviour are effective, most particularly the procedures for monitoring and the action taken afterwards. Pupils and their parents are confident that any incidents will be properly dealt with. However, the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are not consistently applied and there is a need for a school-wide policy which will identify and build on the effective practice already in the school. Furthermore, the monitoring of attendance is also inconsistent and staff are not following the guidelines set out by the school and the local authority. Whilst there is satisfactory implementation of the local education authority child protection procedures, the school does not have its own policy.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The new headteacher is experienced and he has made a good impression on pupils, staff and governors since he started at the beginning of term. He has identified several issues in the school that need urgent attention and provided good indications that the school should continue to improve. The lack of a deputy headteacher is a weakness in a school of this size.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are highly supportive of the school, fulfil the majority of their statutory duties and have some very useful expertise. Committees are in place to deal with the main areas of business. However, these committees are not always effective and consequently the school does not benefit from having a 'critical friend', nor rigorous appraisal of its performance.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. Subject coordinators do not have the opportunity to monitor teaching. Appraisal or other forms of staff development are not currently part of the school's work.
The strategic use of resources	Given that the school receives relatively low income compared to the national average, the use of the funds is satisfactory. However, the school development plan does not provide sufficient detail for future developments and the use of supportive funding. Budgets allocated to coordinators do not always match priorities.

There are sufficient teachers and support staff to meet the needs of all pupils. The accommodation is good, with plenty of space and features to support the teaching and learning. Particularly good are the recent acquisitions of an indoor swimming pool and sizeable hall for musical activities. Learning resources are, at least, adequate and are more than this in reading, physical education and information technology.

The newly appointed headteacher is quickly gaining the respect and support of the school community. Furthermore, he has identified some early priorities that are entirely appropriate and his strong vision is already beginning to give direction. Members of the senior management team are strong, skilful teachers who provide good models for those less experienced. There have been some significant shortcomings in management. For example, the lack of teacher monitoring; the decision not to have a deputy headteacher; the shallowness of development planning and the absence of an effective appraisal scheme which could identify strengths and weaknesses in staff performance. The school has been very successful in acquiring the funds and developing partnerships with outside agencies, such as the local music service to make the upgrading of the premises a reality. However, the other principles of best value have often been absent.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The progress their child is making.</li> <li>• Standards of behaviour.</li> <li>• The good quality of the teaching.</li> <li>• The way they can approach the school and feel comfortable.</li> <li>• The expectations placed on the pupils.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The irregular approach to setting homework.</li> <li>• The amount of information about their child's progress and what s/he is doing in school.</li> <li>• The closeness of the school's relationship with parents.</li> <li>• The range of out of school activities.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with the parents' positive comments. Homework is provided for the majority of pupils but the arrangements are inconsistent and in need of formalising. Parents receive annual reports and have opportunities to consult teachers twice a year: these are satisfactory arrangements. However, the reports lack specific guidance on individual areas for improvement and targets to be achieved. There is little information about the curriculum sent home to parents and this is a weakness. The majority of parents are comfortable about coming into school and feel that they are listened to and taken notice of; this indicates that there is a sufficiently close relationship between the school and parents. The range of extra-curricular activities is good when one takes into account those offered through the community. However, the range of sporting activities is less than is found in other schools.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

- 1 Early assessment of children who are under-five indicates that they enter the school with average attainment. They make good progress in their personal, social, numerical and oral development and achieve the early learning goals before their fifth birthday. Progress is satisfactory in literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Consequently, by the time they are five they have achieved the early learning goals and their attainment is broadly average. A significant minority of children are embarking on work in the early stages of the National Curriculum.
- 2 By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are well above the average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to all schools and when compared to schools with a similar number of free school meals standards are above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher than expected standards at Level 3 was above the national average in reading and writing and well above in mathematics.
- 3 By the end of Key Stage 2, results are well above the national average in English and above the national average in mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools, results are above average in English and average in mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher than expected Level 5 was well above the national average in English and mathematics and above the national average in science.
- 4 Pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 1 are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics when measured over the last four years. However, this masks some inconsistency; for example, the reading and mathematics results in 1998 were lower than those achieved in 1997, but the results recovered in 1999 and this has gone a long way towards establishing the high trend over time. By the end of Key Stage 2, results over time in English and mathematics were above the national average and close to the national average in science. Again, this picture masks some inconsistency, particularly in 1998. Once more the results in 1999 were much better and these have ensured that the trend over time remains upwards. When adding together the pupils' average scores for English, mathematics and science, the trend is gradually upwards and broadly in line with the national trend during these years. In the same period, boys have outperformed the girls at Key Stage 1, but this is reversed at Key Stage 2. The school has not investigated this sort of evidence and is at a loss to know why it is happening. Evidence from the inspection does not shed any further light on this issue because there were no outward signs of inequality in lessons or in the work scrutiny. Pupils of both sexes have equally good attitudes to their work.
- 5 The only targets made available were the ones for English and mathematics. The school has set them for the period up to 2002. However, the school had the significant difficulty of trying to set these targets against the background of the new school opening and the likelihood of the number on roll reducing in Year 6, without knowing accurately which pupils were about to leave. Consequently, targets were set conservatively and easily out-performed by the pupils in Year 6 in 1999.

- 6 At the end of Key Stage 1, standards of work seen during the inspection are above average in English, science and information technology and below the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus in religious education. Standards in mathematics are average.
- 7 At the end of Key Stage 2, standards of work seen are above average in English, science and information technology, and average in mathematics and religious education.
- 8 Pupils' oracy and literacy skills are good. In Key Stage 1, pupils' achievement in speaking, listening, reading and writing is above average. Pupils listen and talk well and their skills are promoted by the oral session at the beginning of the Literacy Hour. Reading standards are above average for the majority of pupils, most particularly in terms of accuracy, fluency and understanding. Lower attainers have weaker skills, but all pupils enjoy reading. Writing skills are developed well amongst higher and average attainers and the majority of pupils are competent and accurate in their handwriting, punctuation and spelling. In Key Stage 2, pupils maintain high standards of speaking and listening. Their reading is developing well, particularly in terms of the breadth and interest in the text they read. This is largely due to the reading programme that the school is trialling. The knowledge and understanding of how to use non-fiction books is good and pupils use these skills well when they are studying other subjects. Writing standards are not as high as they ought to be, and not as good as the 1999 national test results would indicate. The main reasons for this is that the work completed in books is often untidy and whilst the range of work is generally satisfactory there is too little completed for pupils of 11 years of age. Information technology is used effectively to develop reading and writing. For example, in reading the computer is used extensively to improve the skills required to understand well-known books and in writing, the word-processor provides opportunities to edit stories and to improve presentation.
- 9 In mathematics, pupils' achievements by the end of Key Stage 1 are above average. They understand value of numbers to hundreds, know two- and three-dimensional shapes and their properties and skilfully use numbers. Their mental strategies are developing to the extent, presently, that they double numbers to 20 and they are counting in twos, fives, tens and hundreds. Pupils estimate lengths sensibly and subsequently measure accurately. By the end of Key Stage 2, levels of achievement are average, and not as high as 1999. This is because a significant number of Year 6 pupils are often careless when subtracting and they are not given sufficient time to consolidate prior learning. The majority of pupils of all abilities have a good grasp of multiplication tables. The emphasis placed on mental and oral work has resulted in many pupils handling mental arithmetic confidently and correctly. Most pupils have a very sound knowledge of the value of numbers and can use the four basic operations of number competently. They have very good knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes and their properties and can describe them using correct mathematical words. Pupils can use a variety of methods to collate and represent data they have collected. The mathematical vocabulary is good and they use words such as 'numerator', 'denominator', 'multiple' and 'factor'. Pupils have a clear understanding of the appropriate measures to use when measuring and can gather information that they use to form a bar chart.

- 10 Pupils achieve well in science. By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils know and understand the key facts associated with materials, colour and light, electricity and forces. Their grasp of scientific vocabulary is steadily developing through constant introduction of appropriate words and reinforcement when the right moment occurs. For example, when discussing the similarities and differences of materials. The use of simple experimental processes is sound. The knowledge, skills and understanding developed in Key Stage 1 go further in the later years and by the end of Key Stage 2 levels of attainment are above average. Particularly good knowledge is shown in work on life processes, magnetism, electricity, materials and forces. Pupils are good at discussing their findings and conclusions; know how to formulate ideas and plans and subsequently prove or disprove their findings.
- 11 Standards in information technology are above the national expectation by the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use a mouse with controlled accuracy and, with help, load, save and print. They can enter information into a database and show it as a simple bar chart or pictogram. They can use their skills in word processing to reproduce some of their writing. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils write, edit and print their own work. They enter information on to a database and can represent this pictorially in a number of ways.
- 12 Standards in religious education are in line with those of the locally agreed syllabus. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of Christianity and other world faiths. Pupils' knowledge and understanding is promoted by appropriate visits to local places of worship. By the end of Key Stage 2, knowledge and understanding of several world-faiths has been deepened. They become increasingly skilled at considering more difficult ideas such as what it means to belong to a group.
- 13 Overall, standards of achievement in other subjects never fall below satisfactory at both key stages. In art, history, music and swimming standards are above expectations. In all of these subjects, the development of skills is very important to promote achievement. For example, in music pupils are becoming good at singing two-part versions of songs. In swimming great emphasis is placed on learning individual strokes and then swimming for relatively long periods; consequently, standards are above the national expectation. Strengths in these subjects indicate a commitment to developing the whole child's achievement.
- 14 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Those having moderate learning difficulties achieve satisfactory standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Targets for reading and writing are clearly set out in the record sheets kept for pupils on Stages 1 and 2 of the register, and on the individual education plans for pupils on Stage 3. These targets are realistic and are achieved.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

- 15 The overwhelming majority of pupils are clearly happy to be in school; a point emphasised by parents at their meeting with inspectors and in the questionnaires.

- 16 Induction arrangements for the under-fives are good. Children enter the school confidently because they have met staff at the school and at their own pre-school setting and their parents are encouraged to come into school and take a full part in what is going on. Consequently, the children settle quickly, show they are eager to learn and develop good relationships with teachers and classmates. They listen well and soon show that they can get on with their work independently. Teachers emphasise the personal, social and emotional development of the children and this forms a firm foundation for the very good attitudes and behaviour in the school.
- 17 Attitudes to learning are very good. They settle to work at the beginning of the school day with a minimum of fuss. Throughout the school, pupils move from session to session in a quick and orderly manner, composing themselves for work speedily and efficiently. They listen well and levels of concentration in every year group are very good. Pupils enter fully into discussions from reception onwards, where they are interested enough and confident enough to offer suggestions. They are keen to produce their best work and have great pride in their achievements, but are often let down by the quality of presentation.
- 18 A key issue in the previous inspection was the behaviour of pupils in the classroom, and their relationships with other people. This is no longer a problem as both aspects have improved greatly and are now very good. Again, this reflects the views expressed by parents at their meeting with parents and in the questionnaires. Effective teaching in well-planned lessons encourages and motivates pupils, and the few instances of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with swiftly and firmly. In turn, the very good behaviour enables high levels of concentration and interest to flourish. There have been no exclusions and no incidents of bullying or aggressive behaviour were seen during the inspection week. Behaviour outside the classroom is more boisterous, but of an equally high standard. The spacious school grounds and staggered break times contribute significantly to the absence of inappropriate behaviour.
- 19 Teachers have a good rapport with pupils who are motivated in an atmosphere that is supportive and relaxed. Very good relationships between pupils are demonstrated by their work in pairs and groups, and their tolerance and consideration of the views of fellow pupils. This was particularly apparent in a mixed Year 1/2 class where Year 2 pupils enjoyed helping younger pupils, and felt it encouraged them to work harder to keep ahead. In addition, pupils in all classes needed no prompting to deal with any problems arising in the classroom. This was clearly demonstrated by the quiet and efficient action of one pupil to help another who was experiencing a nosebleed. In this atmosphere pupils become increasingly confident and mature, take responsibility for the good order of the classroom, preparation for lessons and general day to day classroom tasks.
- 20 Attendance is satisfactory, and broadly in line with the national average. There is no unauthorised absence. Lessons begin and end promptly. There has been no improvement in the quality of the day to day completion of registers since the last inspection, and no whole school monitoring of attendance.



## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 21 Overall, the quality of teaching is good and this promotes effective learning in the majority of lessons. Across the school the strengths outweigh the weaknesses. 98.8 per cent of lessons were satisfactory, or better; 18.1 per cent were very good or better and 1.2 per cent was unsatisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection when three-quarters of all lessons were satisfactory or better.
- 22 In the under-fives teaching is good. 12.5 per cent of lessons were very good, 62.5 per cent were good and 25 per cent satisfactory. In the good lessons the quality of planning is crucial to the impact on learning. For example, in a language and literacy lesson the good, clear planning involved children at levels matching their attainment, captured their attention and fostered a good pace for the lesson. Furthermore, basic skills and knowledge of literacy are promoted successfully with the class knowing all the sounds they have been taught so far. The use of the learning support assistant is also effective, particularly with the less mature, in mathematics. Joint planning provides a unity and efficiency of approach and ensures that the less mature will receive equal access to numeracy. In one lesson, pertinent questioning and making deliberate mistakes kept children's interest alive and challenged their reasoning. All the children worked out the mistakes and they all counted to 12.
- 23 In Key Stage 1, teaching is good. There are five classes of mixed Year 1/2 pupils. A significant strength is the quality of planning which involves all of the teachers and takes pupils' ages into account well. Twenty five per cent of lessons were very good, 55 per cent were good, 15 per cent were satisfactory and a single lesson of religious education was unsatisfactory. In the very good lessons the strengths are quality of preparation, brisk pace, questioning that stretches the individual and the use of information technology to reinforce learning. In a literacy lesson, the teacher moved amongst the activity groups to discuss the use of adjectives when writing poetry and asked searching questions which brought the following line from a Year 2 pupil, "Sprinkling of golden stardust; swirling puff of silver smoke". In numeracy, higher attaining pupils learning of numbers to a thousand is supported and accelerated by the use of very good work sheets and other apparatus like number rods. There is also homework provided that extends learning. In another numeracy lesson pupils were enthusiastic and largely accurate in a session of mental mathematics which proceeded very briskly. In the single unsatisfactory lesson, the weak planning was not sufficiently focused on the objectives for the lesson, consequently the pupils became restless, the teacher asked a number of unrelated questions and did not involve the pupils. Unsurprisingly, the pupils did not learn much.

- 24 In Key Stage 2, teaching is good. 3.6 per cent were excellent lessons, 14.3 per cent were very good lessons, 44.6 per cent were good and 37.5 per cent satisfactory. In the high quality lessons, in music and religious education, the strengths were quality of planning, developing an atmosphere of enjoyment through enthusiasm, very secure subject knowledge and using resources very well. In the music lesson, the control of the large group was also very effective and the use of the music hall also set the correct atmosphere. In the religious education lesson the planning very successfully developed themes already set up in previous sessions. A significant strength which appears in a number of lessons across several subjects is the good development of basic skills, often through inquiry. For example, in history, Year 6 pupils inquire into several types of secondary sources to acquire a greater understanding of the period they are studying. This type of work expects a great deal from the pupils in terms of curiosity and motivation. In science, basic skills of how to develop an experiment provide rich opportunities for pupils to frame hypotheses and then prove, or disprove, them whilst going about the task.
- 25 In the majority of subjects, teaching is good. The exception is design technology where just one satisfactory lesson was seen during the inspection. In music and religious education there are examples of excellent teaching and in English, mathematics and history there are a significant number of very good lessons. This is an improvement on the last inspection when the teaching was good in art, music and physical education, throughout the school.
- 26 The teaching of literacy is satisfactory. Skills are developed well in Key Stage 2, most particularly in the teaching and consolidation of reading through the accelerated reading programme. The teaching of writing is adequate but there are weaknesses in presentation, across the curriculum. Although there appears to me more time for writing within the format of the literacy hour, this does not seem to have improved the quality or length of the writing. This goes a significant way to explaining the difference between attainment in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- 27 The teaching of numeracy is good. This is mainly because the implementation of the numeracy hour has improved the overall quality. Particular strengths are the clear objectives, variety of activities and the conclusions to lessons refer to the objectives. The structure of the strategy promotes the assessment of pupil's achievements. This is in contrast to the lack of consistent arrangements in the whole curriculum, mainly because there is not an overall structure or "map".
- 28 Pupils with special educational needs are taught well within the classroom; activities are planned for different ability levels, including those with special education needs. Good use is made of learning support assistants who support pupils with special education needs within the classroom. Particular help is given by learning support assistants to pupils on the reading recovery programme; they receive four half - hour sessions each week of reading and associated activities on a one-to-one basis. The special educational needs coordinator, in her job as a primary support teacher, withdraws groups from lessons to reinforce their learning and plans effective lessons to meet pupils individual targets.

- 29 Children in reception are learning well, most particularly in numeracy, spoken language and personal and social development. For example, they learn about the passage of time by discussing what “teddy” does at different times in the day. In the main, most lessons challenge the pupils to apply intellectual, physical or creative effort. For example, in swimming most pupils are progressing well because they are being provided with good teaching of individual strokes and then they put in hard work when practising. The majority of pupils work at adequate pace and produce a significant amount of work, however in some parts of literacy lessons this is clearly not the case and pupils make little, or no, progress for a short time. An interesting example was a lesson in Year 6, when higher attaining pupils were supposed to be looking at the sound “u”. Unfortunately, the willingness to follow the spelling scheme was overly slavish and the activity was not suitable for many of the pupils. Conversely; in history, Year 5 pupils had a significant intellectual challenge when they were learning about the Tudors and focussing on the basic idea of cause and effect. Thereby, increasing their knowledge and understanding of a very different era. The teaching of basic skills is generally good, particularly in reading, writing and number work in Key Stage 1. Throughout the school, standards in music are often very good because pupils have been taught the skills effectively and often by specialists, consequently, even in very large groups they know what they are doing and can make a full contribution.
- 30 Although test results show a disparity between the attainment of boys and girls at both key stages, there was no evidence of differences in the way that teachers treated them. In literacy, the books that pupils read have interest for both genders. However, teachers are unaware of the differences in test results and this unhelpful. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as a second language make satisfactory progress and they receive good support from teachers and dedicated assistants.

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

- 31 The quality and range of learning opportunities provided are satisfactory overall and the curriculum meets statutory requirements.
- 32 The curriculum in the school’s two reception classes satisfactorily follows the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals and the teachers and classroom assistants work effectively to provide a wide range of opportunities for the children to experience all the six recommended areas of learning. The reception curriculum emphasises the personal, social and emotional development, helping to establish a firm foundation for the very good behaviour and attitudes to the school of the older pupils. The school’s provision of a safe and secure outdoor area for the children’s use of large play equipment and wheeled vehicles is unsatisfactory. Much emphasis is placed on the basic skills of language and literacy and mathematics. They are effectively planned through the design of the Literacy and Numeracy strategies.

- 33 The school satisfactorily meets the statutory curricular requirements for all subjects. In both key stages the whole curriculum has breadth and balance, appropriately includes health and sex education and teaches the pupils the dangers of the misuse of drugs. The provision for religious education, soundly follows the locally Agreed Syllabus. The daily provision of satisfactory acts of collective worship meet legal requirements; this represents an improvement from the last inspection. The national initiatives for the literacy and numeracy strategies are implemented soundly and an effective accelerated reading programme has recently been put into place.
- 34 Weaknesses include the lack of an overall curriculum 'map' and the absence of policies or subject guidance for teachers in physical education and design technology. Consequently, teachers have an insufficient view of the whole curriculum and how the parts they are teaching fit into the overall plan. Furthermore, the opportunities for teachers to assess pupils' skills and understanding are not so clearly identified. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school has effective procedures for identifying pupils with learning difficulties and ensures those needs are met with clear and realistic individual educational plans and other work that is matched to their level of attainment. Class teachers and classroom assistants work co-operatively to support those pupils. Any occasions when pupils are withdrawn for extra help are appropriately planned so that pupils do not constantly miss the same lessons and class teachers ensure that any missed work or information is given to them. Opportunities exist for all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity or age to take full advantage of the school's curriculum.
- 35 The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. Pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 take part in a range of activities; for instance, gymnastics, judo, pottery and conversational French. Music makes a valuable contribution to the extra-curricular provision. The school has over 80 pupils taking instrumental tuition and a good number of these make up the Concert Band, led by one of the school's two music co-ordinators. Pupils play at a variety of school productions and community events, such as a Victorian Music Hall in alternate calendar years, school assemblies and at the local music festival. Pupils are encouraged to get involved with local bands or assist with the Salvation Army's community programme. In extra-curricular sport, the school organises soccer coaching led by players from Peterborough United Football Club, and mini-soccer and netball is played using the floodlit area. Other teacher-led activities have included unihoc, short tennis, quik cricket and jump rope. The school's facilities are put to good use for various inter-school tournaments, such as athletics competitions, the annual swimming gala and ice skating for pupils and parents.
- 36 The school also provides good before and after school child care, with activities, for 40 pupils in the 'Kids Club'. Additionally, upper Key Stage 2 pupils are able to take part in experiences that are more appropriate for older pupils, such as the 'Safer Cycling' course in the term prior to their leaving for the secondary school. Separate residential visits, composed of adventurous activities, are made by Year 5 and Year 6 pupils in the Derbyshire Peak District and these have a positive effect on their social skills.

- 37 The school has a strong involvement with the community. Pupils, parents and staff contribute to events and activities in the neighbourhood organised by the Godmanchester Community Association or the school's parent teacher association. Studying the local area and places farther afield make a good contribution to pupils' learning in history, geography and religious education. There are many visitors into school, such as theatre groups, puppet shows, visiting authors, portable planetarium and the Post Office, who help enhance pupils' awareness of areas of the curriculum and of the adult world around the school. Ministers representing several denominations of the Anglican faith also contribute to assemblies and assist with pupils' wider spiritual awareness. All year groups in the school take part in field trips to the local and wider environment, not only for residential outdoor pursuits for the older pupils, but also to broaden and stimulate the children's interests in many areas of the curriculum, including history, geography, music, science, physical education and the arts. These trips have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- 38 The school has good links with partner institutions, including a close and effective relationship with its parents and their related association, and with other local schools. The strong links with Hinchingsbrooke School enable the Year 6 pupils and parents to visit the secondary school for an evening meeting, to familiarise themselves with the site, its staff and its systems. Pupils' questions and concerns are answered by the visits of the Year 7 tutor, prior to attending an "experience day" later in the year. The secondary school is appropriately informed about their new pupils by means of records of achievement and transfer documents.
- 39 Overall, the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory and represents a limited improvement from the last inspection in 1996. Most particularly the provision of a daily act of collective worship.
- 40 Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The teachers' programmes of work, particularly in religious education, provide opportunities for pupils to explore the personal significance of religious beliefs with some sensitivity and insight, and work in personal and social education helps reinforce trusting relationships which allow for sympathetic discussion and time for personal reflection. Through the religious education lessons and the daily acts of collective worship, pupils learn about Christianity and other world faiths satisfactorily. The school has clear values and principles that are expressed in its aims and parents are highly supportive of these and are pleased with the attitudes to others that the school fosters.
- 41 Provision for pupils' moral development is good. All staff are good role models and take every opportunity to teach effectively the principles which distinguish right from wrong, often through discussion. In their daily dealings with pupils who feel themselves to be 'wronged', the teachers are consistently calm and courteous, ask questions to draw out the facts and find solutions which are acceptable to all. This consistent school-wide approach promotes the successful development of co-operative and polite pupils who have the capacity to consider others less fortunate than themselves. The use of whole-class discussion in personal and social education lessons reinforces the message that teachers and pupils are willing to listen to each other and gives pupils the confidence to say what they feel, resulting in mature and reasoned approaches to dealing with difficulties.

- 42 The provision for social development is good. The school encourages pupils to take responsibility for routine tasks in classrooms and around the school and many volunteer to help where they see a need. Pupils are expected to be careful and considerate with each other and many are observed sharing and co-operating in and out of classrooms. Rules are clearly displayed in classrooms that emphasise treating others with respect and courtesy. Subjects such as music and geography make a particularly good contribution to pupils' social development in terms of working together as a team and by instilling self-discipline and an understanding of the need for rules. For example, by waiting for their turn to speak and sharing views and resources. They are encouraged to collaborate in various projects, which highlight problems for society, including the recycling of paper, cans and clothes. Pupils have various opportunities to help others through fund raising for charities or by taking responsibility for filling shoe boxes for children or families with useful items which are difficult to find in other parts of the world. Pupils are invariably polite and welcoming, they open doors for visitors and take great pleasure in explaining their work or any other features of the school.
- 43 The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. They are given many opportunities to develop a good understanding of their own culture by the visits of artists, musicians and authors, who introduce them to living examples of their cultural heritage. Art and music provide opportunities to study and reproduce the work of famous artists and musicians from both modern and ancient times. Visits are made to museums, field study centres. History is also brought to life through country dancing which includes authentic Tudor arrangements. Although adequate coverage is given to other cultures and faiths through their lessons in religious education, with religious artefacts and books providing good support, pupils have no direct experiences of places of worship of other faiths, such as visits to temples or mosques.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

- 44 A caring atmosphere permeates the school, and pupils clearly feel secure and confident. A 'Kids' Club' on the site enables pupils to be cared for by well-qualified and trained staff before and after school and during holidays. Unfortunately, this is now over-subscribed, and cannot meet the needs of all pupils.
- 45 Pupils with special needs entering the school are quickly identified and brought to the attention of the Special Needs Co-ordinator by teachers. Parents of these pupils indicated their pleasure with the care they receive at the meeting with inspectors. In addition, the school uses a range of outside agencies, amongst them the Hearing Support Service, Educational Psychologists, behaviour support, and the school nurse and doctor, to help pupils. There are good arrangements for first aid – the school has a designated room, a sufficient number of first aid kits, and well-trained staff.

- 46 Child protection procedures are adequate. The local education authority policy is followed, but the school has no written procedures of its own, and has undertaken no regular staff training. However staff are aware of what to do and who to inform. The school recognises that this is a weakness and strategies are being developed to remedy the situation. There is no whole school monitoring of attendance, and no analysis of attendance data. However, such analyses would be of little use until all teachers consistently follow guidance. Health and safety is monitored termly by a widely representative group, including governors and staff, which initiates any necessary action.
- 47 Behaviour in and around the school is promoted successfully by consistent approaches from staff, and the present policy is being revised to reflect more positive values and encourage self-esteem. The school carefully monitors behaviour in the playground, in part to ensure that oppressive and aggressive behaviour does not occur. As a consequence, new rules have been introduced recently to provide a clear basis for expected behaviour.
- 48 Procedures for assessing the attainment and progress of pupils are, in the main, unsatisfactory. There is no overall assessment policy, and procedures are inconsistent. The result is a lack of in-depth knowledge of each pupil's progress through the school, on both a personal and academic level. The outstanding exception is the accelerated reading scheme, which monitors pupils' progress from day to day and provides detailed information for teachers, enabling them, if necessary, to make timely and effective interventions. In the best lessons there are good examples of day-to-day assessment, which feeds into future planning.
- 49 Pupils are rewarded at weekly assemblies for good work and behaviour, and the achievement of pupils in the Key Stage 2 accelerated reading scheme is shown on big displays throughout the school. The highest achievers have their name displayed in the small hall. The impact of targets and the regular testing of pupils on this scheme have brought significant improvements in reading standards. Discussion with those pupils reluctant to read revealed that they now read regularly, and with understanding. Pupils in literacy and numeracy classes are grouped according to their ability, with those making the least progress receiving consistent support from classroom assistants and teachers. At Key Stage 1 a successful reading recovery scheme is in place, which enlists the help of parents to improve pupils' reading.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

- 50 Overall, parents find that the school makes good provision for their children, especially in the high expectations it has for them, the good teaching, and the subsequent progress their children make. Equally valued are the pupils' good standard of behaviour and the way that the school deals with parents' concerns and queries. The inspection team's findings agreed with parents. Parents were less happy, however, with homework and its inconsistent delivery across the school, and with the information about their child's progress and what he or she is doing in school, coupled with the lack of closeness with the school. The findings of the inspection team in all these areas agreed with parents. The other area of dissatisfaction is with the range of out of school activities. Here the inspection team feels that, in co-operation with the community, good provision is made in all areas except sport, where there is room for improvement.

- 51 Links with parents are satisfactory. They help in school with reading, reading recovery, group work, field trips, and after-school activities. Many parents worked for a day at the school before the inspection to clear the school-grounds of litter and attend to the gardens. The parent-teacher association raises large amounts of money for the school through its activities. In one instance these donations greatly increased the number of computers and enhancing pupils' access to new technology. There is no Home/School Contract, but this is being dealt with by the governors as a matter of urgency.
- 52 The quality and range of information for parents is unsatisfactory. Irregular newsletters and correspondence have, nevertheless, kept parents informed about the social side of school life. Conversely, there is little or no information provided about the curriculum. Annual reports to parents are very positive about pupils' progress, but give little information about areas for improvement, and targets. Pupils at both key stages, however, are given the opportunity to be with their parents at the twice-yearly parent-teacher interviews. Parents who visit the school regularly to deliver and collect pupils find it very easy to speak informally on a regular basis to teachers about the curriculum and the particular needs of their children. In this way, teachers and parents work together to improve pupils' learning. Those parents who are, for various reasons, unable to speak to teachers are much less able to work in partnership with the school.
- 53 The introduction of pupils into reception is well thought out, and provides adequate opportunities for both parents and pupils to find out about the school. The youngest pupils attend school initially on a half day basis for the first few weeks. The Family Room is open for one afternoon each week throughout the year for parents and pre-school children. It is run by the nursery nurse, who organises activities and provides an opportunity to visit the reception classroom during the summer term.
- 54 In general, insufficient consideration appears to be given to the natural desire of parents to know what their children are doing, and how well they are succeeding.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

- 55 The headteacher has been in post since January 5<sup>th</sup> 2000, that is three days before the inspection started. He is an experienced headteacher and in the very short time that he has been in post has identified a number of areas which can be improved. The new headteacher has a clear vision for the future educational direction of the school and is able to articulate how this may be achieved. The chair of governors is supportive and enthusiastic and is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. She is already building a strong rapport with the headteacher and sees the future very much as a partnership in which governors and staff are aiming for the common purpose of providing the best possible environment and education for the pupils.
- 56 The school has explicit aims that emphasise the quality of relationships between all members of the community. These aims are carried out very effectively. Pupils have trust in their teachers and teachers have the welfare of pupils at heart. The committed and enthusiastic efforts made by members of the teaching and non-teaching staff have made a large contribution to the improvement since the last inspection.



- 57 The school does not have a deputy headteacher. This blurs the lines of communication amongst staff and makes the function of the senior management team difficult. Teachers have job descriptions that are all the same but the responsibilities of the senior management team are not clearly defined and regular meetings have not been held in the last six months. Subject coordinators, despite developing some well planned policies and schemes of work, have not had the opportunity to monitor teaching in the classroom. There is a great willingness on the part of the staff to make further improvements and the experience and commitment of the teachers make this a realistic and achievable goal. Induction of new teachers is the responsibility of a mentor and this has worked well when required. There are no newly qualified teachers on the staff in the current year.
- 58 The governing body fulfil the majority of their statutory duties, however, they do not ensure that appraisal takes place. A number of committees meet on a regular basis but they are not always effective and consequently there is a lack of accountability on serious matters. For example, the school has not separated the community and school budget; consequently the costs of heating and lighting the swimming pool are paid from school funds initially and then reimbursed from central funding. There is a standing order which pays £1,800 a quarter into school funds to cover this cost. The chair of finance is properly aware of the need to separate the funding and is keeping detailed records of all transactions. In particular, she wants to ensure that the school's funds are used entirely for pupils' education. Inspectors agree strongly with this. Furthermore, she ensures the correct use of the current allocated budget by checking individual transactions. Overall, there is careful financial planning and the governors have already budgeted for a forecasted and steep fall in the school roll. The school was last audited externally in 1995. The school fund, which contains substantial income from the community's use of the premises, has only been audited internally, which inspectors believe to be bad practice. The governors make an adequate contribution to the school on curriculum matters and they have issued a satisfactory curriculum statement that commits them to making every endeavour to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. They are planning to introduce 'link governors', who will take an even greater interest in individual subjects and work alongside coordinators. This is good practice because they will have greater knowledge of priorities, progress towards targets and levels of funding. The administrative staff make efficient use of new technology in the office and use a computerised financial programme for ordering and monitoring budget spending. There is no monitoring of the cost effectiveness of the various maintenance and supply contracts to ensure that the school is getting good value for their spending.
- 59 Appraisal of teachers is not taking place, nor is there any formal system whereby the Governors monitor the role and effectiveness of the headteacher. The budget for staff training has been targeted on the priorities identified by the school and has been used soundly. The school development plan has identified some priorities and there is appropriate and supportive review documentation. Costings are not always specific and will need careful identification and accuracy when the school development plan is reviewed. The way in which equipment allowances are allocated to subjects and classes is not entirely satisfactory because it is not based on an accurate review of need.

- 60 The school has a good range of experienced and qualified teachers and subject responsibilities have been matched to their expertise. There is a great enthusiasm amongst staff to broaden their responsibilities and to have the opportunity to share their expertise. The teaching staff is well supported by a number of learning support assistants who add to the quality of learning and standards achieved by the lower attaining pupils. They provide valuable support in lessons. Support staff are not always fully employed. In most lessons when oral activities are taking place they have no function but to listen. Resources are adequate in all areas and better than average in some. Accommodation is above average and classrooms are well managed. The school has a range of specialist rooms and a covered, heated swimming pool: all of which are put to good use. The school is successful in using both staff and resources effectively and both these elements contribute towards the good standards achieved by the school.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Improve leadership and management by:
  - developing the role of the governing body as a 'critical friend'; (paragraphs 55, 58)
  - instituting a rigorous system of monitoring teaching and staff appraisal; (paragraphs 57, 59)
  - clarifying the roles of senior staff; (paragraph 57)
  - devising and implementing a development plan which: (paragraph 59)
    - i) identifies targets and the time to achieve them,
    - ii) provides accurate costings based on a rigorous review of need,
    - iii) identifies the criteria for success and personnel responsible.
- (2) Improve assessment procedures by:
  - developing a common system for monitoring and recording pupils' attainment; (paragraph 48 )
  - introducing a system of establishing challenging targets for each individual pupil and measuring whether they have attained them. (paragraph 5)
- (3) Devise a school-wide curriculum plan which: (paragraph 34)
  - identifies current good practice;
  - includes comprehensive schemes of work for all subjects which focus on what to teach and assess and when to do them,
  - provides staff with a 'map' to guide their planning, and help them understand the school's full programme of teaching and learning.
  -
- (4) Improve the presentation of pupils' work by: (paragraph 8)
  - developing a policy which will guide teachers to impart good practice consistently;
  - regular monitoring of pupils' books;
  - providing a reward system which highlights excellence.
- (5) Provide parents with more information by: (paragraphs 50. 52)
  - making annual reports state clearly the progress pupils are making and provide targets for further improvement;
  - sending home a regular (termly) and detailed bulletin about the curriculum being followed in each class.
- (6) Improve the care of pupils by:
  - monitoring attendance and ensuring teachers comply with local authority guidelines on completing attendance registers. (paragraph 46)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important area for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- writing a child protection policy; (paragraph 46)

The previous headteacher and the governing body did not produce a detailed school development plan because they felt that this would not be helpful with the new headteacher starting in January 2000. Consequently, these items are not part of the school's long-term plan., However, the present headteacher has identified priorities that are not dissimilar to the issues raised here.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	82
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2%	17%	49%	30%	1%	0%	0%

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	505
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	40

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	118

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	39	35	74

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	36	36	36
	Girls	34	32	34
	Total	70	68	70
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (98)	92 (94)	95 (83)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	36	36	36
	Girls	31	30	34
	Total	67	66	70
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (89)	91 (83)	95 (88)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Percentages 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
	1999	39	39	78

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	35	32	36
	Girls	35	31	36
	Total	70	63	72
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (62.5)	81 (62.5)	92 (70.8)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	29	29	33
	Girls	34	31	33
	Total	63	60	66
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81	77	85
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	8
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	2
Indian	1
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	430
Any other minority ethnic group	4

*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)	19.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.3
Average class size	28

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	137

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	780580
Total expenditure	780580
Expenditure per pupil	1339
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	0

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	505
Number of questionnaires returned	164

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	31	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	44	3	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	23	66	7	3	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	48	18	6	3
The teaching is good.	49	43	4	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	51	20	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	34	3	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	45	4	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	29	52	15	4	1
The school is well led and managed.	36	48	8	5	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	41	7	2	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	46	15	3	6



## **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**

- 61 No mention was made in the previous report about the quality of provision for under fives. There is a good induction programme of visits to school, and visits by the teachers to the nurseries which help the children to enter school confidently. Parents are involved in children's learning through helping in lessons and by giving support at home with reading homework. By the age of five, children make good progress overall. In numeracy, spoken language, personal and social development the large majority of children attain the recommended early learning goals before they are five. Their knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development is broadly average and satisfactory progress is made.
- 62 Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Twelve and a half per cent of lessons were very good, 62.5 per cent of lessons were good and 25 per cent were satisfactory. Particular strengths include thorough planning in literacy and numeracy, with adults from both classes working closely together to ensure that the children have similar experiences. In the very good lesson, the children were fully involved in a group discussion about how they would respond if they had to give their name and address to a responsible person like a policeman. The use of a teddy bear passed around the group to signify the speaker helped the children take turns in speaking and helped the least confident take a full part in the activity. Good standards of behaviour, attitudes to learning and achievements are promoted by the high expectations of the adults teaching them.

#### Personal and Social Development

- 63 Standards of personal and social development are high and virtually all the children achieve the early learning goals well before they become five. They are encouraged to develop good relationships with each other and there are many opportunities provided for them to select activities and to play amicably alongside and with each other. There is also positive encouragement of independence. For example, children choose carefully from a selection of white materials, assemble them to make snow pictures without adult supervision, and discuss between themselves what they are doing. They are eager to learn and they listen well to their teachers and to each other. The reception staff all place a strong emphasis on developing children's self-confidence and have a very warm, reassuring manner towards both children and parents which is effective in instilling confidence. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a variety of strategies to help children understand problems, including the use of whole-class discussions. Staff have high expectations and they make good use of available resources.

## Language and Literacy

- 64 Teachers provide elements of the Literacy scheme which are suitable for reception children. The children all know the letters that they have been taught in class, and many use them to build simple words. They recognise the beginning sounds to words and enjoy writing them freely in the form of early and simple writing. Children enjoy handling books and discussing their contents. The higher attainers read a few words as they notice them. They recognise their own names and enjoy writing or copying them. Most children are on target to attain the learning goals in this area by the age of five. Children listen attentively to teacher instructions, explanations and stories and are articulate when replying or making comments. The majority show mature language development and already achieve the early learning goals in this area. The quality of teaching is good. There is planned support of children's' learning by teaching staff. They ask questions skilfully and rightly invite children to talk about what they are seeing and doing.

## Numeracy

- 65 Teachers gradually introduce those early stages of the National Numeracy Strategy which are suitable for the more mature reception children. The provision for children's mathematical development is good. In the reception classes children learn to recognise and to sequence numbers beyond 10. Lessons begin with 'mental maths' where mathematics is made fun through games. Children count up to twelve and back with high levels of confidence and accuracy. They understand the meaning of the word 'pair' and make matching patterns on gloves to form pairs. They recognise common two-dimensional shapes and can name them. They learn to form the cardinal numbers correctly, and have some idea of the value of zero. Children start to understand daily routines by discussing what Teddy does at different times of day. Appropriate play situations such as 'the winter café' offer relevant and engaging mathematical experiences and support children's mathematical development. There are good displays of children's work in mathematics; for example, painted two-dimensional shapes. Teaching is good, most particularly the quality of planning and the range of activities provided to help pupils' learning. Staff use whole-class sessions at the end of a lesson effectively, to reinforce their learning. Children make good progress in mathematical development. The majority should attain the learning goals by the age of five, and many are likely to exceed this standard.

## Knowledge and Understanding of the world

- 66 The provision to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory, carefully planned and promotes sound progress. Children understand the passing of time when talking about what they do during the day. They are aware of the changing seasons and discuss some of the differences between them, such as needing warm clothes in winter. They can name a range of animals and talk about them. They are aware that leaves change colour in autumn. They choose pictures of winter clothes and cut them out using scissors, join jigsaw pieces together and join materials by sticking and gluing carefully. The computer is used to support their lessons, for instance in mathematics when using a number program to practise numbers 1-10 using the directional arrows. The quality of teaching is sound. A particular strength is the work of the nursery nurses who are well-briefed and efficient.

### Physical development

- 67 Due to lack of large outdoor equipment, children are restricted in the development of climbing and balancing skills to the supervised visits to the climbing apparatus that is provided for older pupils in the school, and to physical education lessons in the hall. Regular swimming times are very much enjoyed and enable the children to develop confidence in the water, particularly through the good use of floats. More mature children progress to a 'dog-paddle' stroke and practice a variety of leg kicks. Children use scissors, glue spreaders and paint brushes well. By the age of five children make generally satisfactory progress and are in line with the goals expected nationally. Teaching is at least satisfactory and the session in the pool was good. Staff are very encouraging and give clear instructions. Lessons, particularly in the pool, have a good pace and lots of variety.

### Creative development

- 68 Reception children use a variety of materials in their creative activities. They explore the feel of wet and dry sand. They learn to mix paints to create shades of blue when decorating large cut-out rain drops. They create mosaic collages to illustrate sets of toys, and they explore and discuss the possibilities of a range of white materials to make snow pictures. Children very much enjoy singing, and learn new songs quickly. They enunciate clearly and sing sweetly. Children use percussion instruments to develop their sense of rhythm. They use role-play creatively, dramatising a winter café and using the resources provided imaginatively to extend their language and number skills.
- 69 The teaching of creative activities is good. Lessons are well planned and support staff work closely with teachers to make a significant contribution to children's learning.
- 70 Resources in the reception classes are satisfactory, providing for all areas of learning. However, the outside area for reception children is unsatisfactory. There is no provision for children to play in a secure fenced and adventurous area, and very little equipment. This restricts their development, and raises questions about their safety during playtimes despite careful adult supervision.

### **ENGLISH**

- 71 When compared to all schools nationally, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2, or above, in the 1999 National Curriculum tests is well above the national average in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher than expected standards at Level 3 is above the national average in reading and writing. When compared to schools of similar type, standards in reading are above the average, and standards in writing are in line with the average. Over the past four years the performance in reading has generally improved in comparison with all other schools, but in writing the difference has narrowed. There were no significant differences observed between the performance of boys and girls during the inspection.

- 72 At the end of Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4, or above, is well above the national average in 1999 compared to all schools nationally. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher than expected Level 5 is well above the national average. The results are above average compared with similar schools. Over the past four years standards, with the exception of 1998, have generally been maintained in comparison with all schools. There were no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls observed during the inspection. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
- 73 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above the national average. The oral work that is at the beginning of the literacy hour has a positive impact on listening and speaking skills. In one session pupils retell the story of Cinderella with good use of adjectives which keeps the rest of the class entranced. Throughout the key stage pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils continue to attain above the national average. They are articulate, use a wide range of vocabulary and discuss and question with confidence.
- 74 Standards in reading are good throughout Key Stage 1. By the end of the key stage, pupils of higher and average ability read accurately, fluently, with good expression and high levels of enjoyment. They describe a story they have read and talk about the characters, often referring to the text, although some average attainers are reticent. Lower ability pupils show poor accuracy, fluency and understanding, but all enjoy reading. Their knowledge and use of letter sounds are well developed. All readers report that they read regularly at home and receive good support from their parents. The number of Key Stage 1 library books is adequate, but the widely dispersed classrooms make it difficult to group all the books for efficient use. Standards in reading are good throughout Key Stage 2. The school uses a recently acquired, commercially developed reading scheme with positive results. Parents praised the scheme at their meeting with inspectors. Pupils throughout the key stage are highly motivated by the possibility of earning points for completing a book and showing good levels of comprehension. Teachers like the easy method of checking at which point pupils are reading in the scheme, and to what extent the pupils understand what they read. It also benefits pupils through the use of computers to answer questions and record achievement. The scheme encourages independent work by the pupils, and the range of suitable books at each level of development enables pupils to follow their preferred areas of interest. By the end of the key stage, higher and average attaining pupils discuss books and authors, express opinions and preferences and develop interest in an increasingly wide range of children's and adult literature. Most understand how to use reference books to support their work in other subjects. Many belong to the local library. The school library is adequately supplemented by books on loan from the local authority, and most pupils understand how to locate reference books. Lower attainers show enjoyment of reading and read with reasonable fluency at appropriate levels for their abilities. However older pupils report that they do not read regularly in school to adults. Reading records are detailed, regularly updated, and well understood by both pupils and teachers.

- 75 Standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 are above the national average in the lessons observed and from the scrutiny of work from the autumn term. Generally, pupils use capital letters and full stops accurately, and higher and average attainers start to use adjectives to heighten the interest in their stories. They show good understanding of different forms of writing such as instructions, poetry and composing spells. Some start to develop a sensitive feeling for words, for instance "a swirling puff of silver smoke". The lowest attainers achieve much less, with short sentences, poor spelling and little use of adjectives. Handwriting varies according to the pupils' ability. Higher and average attainers use joined writing and it begins to flow evenly and fairly neatly. Standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with the average. Pupils write for a variety of audiences. For example, they compose Haiku to celebrate the millennium, and the higher attainers keep closely to the correct metre and succeed in building vivid word pictures. Pupils also write imaginatively, using description well and also change focus effectively to write newspaper reports. Reading does not feature strongly during the literacy hour since extra time is given to it elsewhere on the timetable. It is unclear whether the time gained in the literacy hour is dedicated to developing pupils' ability to write longer pieces of work, but evidence suggests that this is not the case. This would explain the drop in attainment between work seen at Key Stage 1 and that observed at Key Stage 2. Punctuation is accurate and used well for effect, but there is little use of paragraphs and the neatness of handwriting varies widely from good to very untidy. This applies wherever literacy is used across the curriculum. The standard of spelling also varies among pupils. Key Stage 2 follows a phonographic scheme implemented two years ago to improve standards. Its success has yet to be proved. There is no consistent homework policy for learning spellings. Pupils apply their literacy skills to other subjects well. They give concise answers in their science work, and write appropriately in history. Because work in rough books is so untidy, pupils draft in their "neat" books which has the unfortunate effect of lowering the general standard of presentation in these books. Information technology is used effectively as an editing and writing tool, and for presenting items such as lists in a variety of fonts.
- 76 The previous report stated that standards were broadly in line with those expected nationally, so the school has been successful in raising standards at the end of both key stages in all areas of the subject covered in the National Curriculum tests.
- 77 Overall, teaching is good. Of the lessons observed, 12.5 per cent were very good, 58.3 per cent were good and 29.3 per cent satisfactory. All teachers expect high standards of behaviour from their pupils which promote good attitudes to work. However, even in good lessons teachers do not all have consistently high expectations that pupils will present their work neatly. Where teaching is good, teachers plan carefully so tasks match levels of attainment and challenge the ability groups in their classes appropriately. They ensure that lessons proceed at a brisk pace, they involve learning support staff effectively and they make good use of resources such as overhead projectors to illustrate teaching points. Homework focuses principally on reading and is an area to be considered for further development because it is irregularly provided. Teachers know their pupils well. They assess their work through conscientious marking, and keep satisfactory records, but do not systematically assess the success of lessons. Analysis of work suggests that medium-term plans are not followed consistently across every year group in order to ensure that all pupils receive the same learning experiences.

- 78 At Key Stage 1, 20 per cent of lessons were very good, 60 per cent were good and 20 per cent satisfactory. Pupils' rate of learning is closely affected by the quality of teaching they receive. Consequently, progress is good overall, through the key stage and observations suggest that writing standards are improving this school year due to careful teaching. Teachers plan conscientiously and clearly for their mixed-age classes and succeed in targeting each year group, so that the younger pupils are stimulated by the older ones, who in turn are not held back by being with younger pupils.
- 79 At Key Stage 2, 12.5 per cent of lessons were very good, 56.3 per cent were good and 31.3 per cent satisfactory. Learning, through the key stage, is good in reading as enthusiasm is generated and maintained by the accelerated reading programme. Lowest attainers, particularly towards the end of the key stage, report that adults do not hear them read frequently. In writing, progress is satisfactory through the key stage and good in individual lessons where teaching is good. For example in a Year 6 class, pupils discover for themselves the rhyme, form and rhythm used in limericks, and compose their own lines. However, teachers do not consistently plan work for different levels of attainment in sufficient detail, to be sure of extending the highest attainers to achieve at levels appropriately higher than the rest of the class. This was well illustrated in a small part of a Year 6 lesson about letter sounds which clearly proved too easy for the higher attainers and it is unsurprising that they learned nothing during the brief session. Year 6 benefit from classes specifically designed to improve knowledge, skills and understanding before they sit the National Curriculum tests.
- 80 Management of the subject is devolved to a co-ordinator for each key stage, although due to changes in the size of the school, the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator teaches in Key Stage 2 this year. She feels that it does not have an adverse effect on her efficiency since she sees her colleagues regularly. Both co-ordinators are keen to become more effective and they view the appointment of the new headteacher as a positive move forward for their subject. Their role is underdeveloped. They see year groups' medium-term plans, but they do not monitor weekly planning. They do not monitor pupils' work for consistency or progress, nor do they visit classes during the literacy hour. They are pleased with results of the accelerated reading scheme, and think that the phonographics programme is raising standards. However they were not consulted before it was put in place, and there are no systems for monitoring its success. The school has adopted the basic structure of the literacy hour, but individual teachers' plans are not always detailed enough, nor is short-term planning systematically consistent across each year group. There is no policy of evaluating the success of lessons. Assessment of pupils' attainment is a further area for development in the subject. Basic systems are in place for most classes, but analysis of results is not conveyed in detail to teachers throughout the school, so they are not aware of an individual's rate of progress through the school. For example, Year 6 teachers were unaware of their pupils' National Curriculum test results at Key Stage 1 in 1996. Although no marked difference in attainment by boys and girls was observed during the inspection, there was a lack of awareness that this had been the case with the previous Year 6. The co-ordinators are aware that there is much to be done in their subject.

## MATHEMATICS

- 81 The pupils' attainments in the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 were above the national average. These results were broadly in line with the average for similar schools. Ninety-five per cent reached the nationally expected Level 2, and just over a third of pupils achieved the higher than expected Level 3. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection although there was a dip in results in 1998 with a further rise in 1999. The inspection findings show that the standards of the pupils currently in Year 2 are as high as those in 1999.
- 82 The National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 2 were above the national average, and were broadly in line with the average for similar schools. Ninety-two per cent of pupils achieved the nationally expected Level 4, and almost two fifths achieved the higher than Level 5. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection but test results from the last three years show that girls are out-performing boys to a significant degree. The inspection findings show that the standards of pupils currently in Year 6, although in line with the national average, may not be as high as the previous year. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
- 83 By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils have developed sound number concepts. Well paced mental sessions at the start of each lesson help pupils to develop their knowledge of addition and subtraction facts, doubling numbers up to twenty and counting in twos, fives, tens and hundreds. One lesson opened with a very brisk and lively mental session where pupils counted in tens and doubled numbers, responding enthusiastically and largely accurately. The pupils' written work, often based on work sheets, shows that there is much consolidation of basic number work. They understand how to identify hundreds, tens and units in three digit numbers, and can order these numbers. Some work with numbers containing thousands. They readily identify odd and even numbers and can name two and three dimensional shapes, pointing out their properties. Strategies used to work out answers to questions are evident in their work. Standard units of length have been introduced and pupils clearly understand how to estimate and measure the length of classroom objects.
- 84 By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have an increasing knowledge and understanding of the facts of mathematics. They are developing a mathematical vocabulary, readily understanding and using terms such as 'multiple' and 'factor', and are encouraged to draw on this when talking through problems and suggesting strategies for finding solutions and the operations of number involved. This was particularly apparent with the higher attainers in Year 6 who had looked at division as repeated subtraction, and were tackling problems involving not only division but also money, time and standard measures. Other Year 6 pupils, although understanding division as repeated subtraction, were slow to work out multiples of numbers using a recall of multiplication tables, and were often careless with subtraction. Pupils have a clear understanding of reflection, translation and symmetry, negative numbers and simple probability. They use correct measures, for example millimetres to measure the thickness of a book and metres to measure the perimeter of a room. Pupils are able to gather information and create bar charts to compare their findings. Numerical skills are developed satisfactorily in other areas of the curriculum; computer programs are used, for example, to consolidate number work and to gather information for analysis. The use and application of mathematical techniques is evident in science. Oral work is a part of all lessons and successfully promotes the use of a mathematical vocabulary.

- 85 Overall, the quality of teaching is good. 38.9 per cent of lessons were very good, 33.3 per cent were good and 27.8 per cent were satisfactory. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection when a third of the lessons at Key Stage 2 were less than satisfactory. The implementation of the numeracy hour has improved the teaching. Teachers encourage the use of a developing mathematical vocabulary that is aided by the mathematical dictionaries which pupils compile. Careful questioning by teachers encourages pupils to put their mathematical understanding into words. Weekly learning objectives are shared with pupils, and are referred to in the conclusions to lessons. Teachers are beginning to assess pupils' learning against these objectives, recording those who have not reached them or have exceeded them, as a guide to future planning. Work is well marked but there are few comments to advise pupils on how to improve. The management of pupils in lessons is good and teachers have a good rapport with their classes. Homework is set but quantity and consistency throughout the school are not evident.
- 86 At Key Stage 1, teaching in 60 per cent of lessons was very good and 40 per cent was good. All the lessons are planned effectively; for example work is matched carefully to the pupils in the mixed Year 1 and 2 classes. Lessons have clear learning objectives and work is matched to pupils' different ability levels, including those with special educational needs, ensuring that provision is made for all pupils to make progress in mathematics. Evidence of careful planning was further seen in lesson where pupils, looking at two, three and four digit numbers and ordering them, worked productively in groups. The scrutiny of Key Stage 1 work showed an over-reliance on commercially produced worksheets which were often undated and unnamed and therefore did not give a clear indication of progress made.
- 87 At Key Stage 2, 33.3 per cent of lessons were very good, 25 per cent were good and 41.7 per cent satisfactory. In a Year 4, lesson tasks were well matched to ability, lower attaining pupils having a more practical task using measured strips of paper to add single digit numbers. Where teaching is graded as good or better, teachers have a good knowledge of the subject, lessons are well planned and prepared, time and resources are well used and the pace of lessons helps pupils to maintain interest. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson where a quick-fire bingo session was used to sharpen pupils' mental skills before moving onto written problems which were carefully constructed and had to be finished in a set amount of time. Good progress was made. In those lessons where pace was slower and pupils did not have targets for work to be completed, less progress was made.
- 88 The subject is led by co-ordinators in both key stages whose roles lack development. There is no clear overview of the subject throughout the school. They have been involved in introducing the Numeracy Strategy, organising training, ordering new resources and setting up systems for planning and evaluating numeracy. However, there is little monitoring of teaching and work produced by pupils, to ensure the systematic build up of skills and knowledge. Pupils are assessed at the end of each year and given National Curriculum levels of attainment. However, teacher assessments for 1999, at the end of Key Stage 2 were insecure, being significantly lower than the actual scores achieved in national testing. Resources for teaching mathematics are good; learning support assistants are deployed effectively, working with groups in numeracy lessons.



## SCIENCE

- 89 Apart from a slight dip in 1998, results in science have been steadily improving since the last inspection. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests show attainment, at the end of Key Stage 1, to be above the national average and in comparison with similar schools is line with or slightly above the national average. At Key Stage 2, the improvement has also been maintained with standards in national tests above the national average, Level 4, and average when compared with similar schools. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
- 90 At Key Stage 1, pupils move through a balanced curriculum that ranges from life processes to materials, colour and light, electricity and forces. The potential problem of having classes with two year groups has been resolved by having a two year programme which has different content in each year, thereby ensuring that there is no unnecessary repetition of learning. By the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils classify materials successfully. This is usually achieved by experimenting with a variety of examples; for example, whether they are magnetic, have different textures or differing flexibility. Higher attainers can describe the similarities and differences of two objects and discuss their findings in a scientific manner; using a developing vocabulary which includes terms such as 'malleable', 'translucent', 'opaque' and 'fragile'. Most pupils know that some forces change the shape of objects, for example manually squeezing plasticene, or a ball. The majority knows about simple circuits and how electricity is used. Pupils' record their work accurately.
- 91 At Key Stage 2, the planning of the curriculum is equally thorough and interesting for pupils. Work covers a wide range of topics and the science curriculum is implemented fully. They have a good understanding of life processes, magnetism, electricity, materials and forces. The experimental approach to science in Key Stage 1 is carried on and further extended. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a thorough grounding in how to formulate ideas, and how to plan to prove or disprove their ideas. They understand, for example, that a sieve is required to separate salt from other materials. Whilst doing this type of experimental work pupils record their findings accurately and show that they can apply logical thinking to their work. Higher attainers self-correct when they realise they have made a mistake. Most pupils know and understand what an insulator does and how they are important in everyday life. Pupils know and understand the water cycle. A satisfactory proportion of pupils record their work in a way that they have designed, while lower attainers are supported by appropriate worksheets. Overall, pupils describe what they are doing and why, understand the results and interpret them accurately.

- 92 Overall, the quality of teaching is good, with 55.6 per cent of the lessons being good and 44.4 per cent satisfactory. In Key Stage 1, both the lessons were good. In Key Stage 2, 42.9 per cent of lessons were good and 57.1 per cent were satisfactory. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection when the majority of lessons were only satisfactory and some were unsatisfactory. All lessons are well planned with clear aims. In most classes pupils understand what they are doing and why, because clear objectives are outlined by teachers at the start. All resources are prepared in advance and no time is lost in starting the lesson. Pupils cover the factual elements but are also taught the necessary skills to enable them to cope with experimental work. Teachers use questions well to help pupils provide answers from their own experience or to help them understand new ideas. Teachers show an enthusiasm for teaching science and have a sound understanding of the subject. All good lessons were characterised by good planning, good relationships with their pupils and the opportunity for pupils to hypothesise. Equally good were the opportunities presented to pupils to prove or disprove their hypothesis by experimental means. The scheme of work ensures that pupils' learning is systematically built up and this combined with good teaching allows all pupils to make good progress. Pupils behave well and have an enquiring attitude towards science. Presentation is untidy, although this occasionally suffers from the need to get results down on paper quickly. At Key Stage 1, most particularly in Year 2, there is an over dependence on work sheets. However this does not have a significantly adverse effect on results.
- 93 The success of the science teaching is firmly based on a very comprehensive policy and scheme of work. It provides excellent guidance to the non-specialist teacher and is packed full of useful tips on methods and knowledge. Great care has been taken to ensure that all the necessary elements of the science curriculum are in place and an ordered process of when to teach these elements and at what level has been fully thought out. Pupils cover the factual elements but are also taught the necessary skills to enable them to move into simple experimental work that provides a good base for the Key Stage 2 programme. Work for pupils of differing abilities is also planned and every pupil has the opportunity to progress in line with their potential. A conscious effort is made to introduce pupils to new scientific vocabulary. This was well illustrated in a lesson that asked pupils to explore similarities and differences of materials. Pupils often knew the answers but lacked the necessary words. The new vocabulary was re-inforced effectively by the teacher throughout and at the end of the lesson. Pupils learn effectively by asking questions and discussing any conclusions they may have reached. For example, a good lesson on separating various mixed materials produced much interesting discussion and collaboration between groups of pupils. Indeed many lessons give pupils the opportunity to talk about the merits of their ideas in a way that would be difficult in other subjects. Assessment by teachers of pupils' individual progress and an evaluation of the topics taught is up to date and is done well. Teachers are able to give an immediate report on a pupil's progress and substantiate this with well kept records. The school is able to resource the planned curriculum and the careful planning of when a topic is taught means that there is no lack of resources at any time. The co-ordinator monitors planning but there is no direct monitoring of science teaching, or of the implementation of the curriculum across the whole school. There is very good co-operation between the teachers in the year or band groups.

## ART

- 94 Achievements in art are above expectations across the school. The previous report states that standards were good, and despite the reduced emphasis on non-core subjects in recent years, the school has managed to maintain standards.
- 95 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieve work of good quality because they concentrate carefully and are guided in technique by adults. They learn to mix colours for a desired effect, and to superimpose varying brush strokes such as tiny dots and “ducks’ feet” in white to create a very good impression of a patchwork quilt. Pupils extend the notion of colour mixing and mark making to create careful ripple designs on their patchwork. All pupils display deep interest and concentration on their work, and are proud of what they achieve. Pupils appreciate the paintings of masters such as Titian. Teachers ask carefully directed questions to encourage perceptive judgements and close observation of detail. For example, in one class, looking at the picture of Bacchus and Ariadne, pupils thought that he was throwing himself at her and that she was protecting herself because she holds an arm in front of her face.
- 96 In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to work very carefully and with concentration. In Year 3 pupils apply their knowledge of mixing shades of colour to create the sea, and of pattern to paint imaginary fish. In Year 4, they learn through well directed questions by their teachers, to observe the basic shape of a head, and where the eyes, nose, mouth and ears are situated; then how the shape and line of the hair frames the face. They also make large lifelike puppets of excellent quality to illustrate a story. In Year 5, they apply their knowledge to keen observation of Elizabethan portraits, highlighting the use of pattern on rich materials. Teachers use resources well, such as photographs and books to stimulate pupils’ interest initially, and develop it further by the judicious introduction of additional items such as a variety of richly coloured, modern material samples to extend pupils’ thinking about texture and pattern. In Year 6 pupils sketch in minute detail the texture of building materials, in preparation for making clay models of houses. There are good examples of work with clay and straws on display around the school.
- 97 Overall, teaching is good. In each lesson, teachers show themselves to be highly skilled in giving guidance on technique, encouraging keen observation and providing opportunities for pupils to express their individuality. All lessons are characterised by teachers having high expectations of their pupils, both of good behaviour and of their ability to concentrate and achieve their very best.
- 98 The co-ordinator is conscientious and knowledgeable. There is a detailed scheme of work with a two year programme of work and at present aspects of the new local education authority scheme are being considered by the staff for inclusion. The subject is timetabled for an hour each week throughout the school which is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has been into classes during the past two years and monitors pupils’ work by collecting samples across the school for matching to National Curriculum levels, in preparation for the new curriculum to be introduced in September. She monitors teachers’ planning sheets and keeps a record to ensure that there is no duplication in teaching and that a suitable range of activities are taught across the years.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

- 99 Due to timetabling arrangements only one lesson was seen in Key Stage 2. Pupil's previous work in the form of models, artefacts and plans were seen during the work scrutiny and afterwards in classrooms. Teacher's planning was also examined. Both indicate that on the limited occasions when pupils are given the opportunity to use design technology the standard achieved is in line with expected levels.
- 100 The policy, which is being up-dated, does not give guidance as to how design and technology fits into the whole school subject curriculum. There is no scheme of work and this makes it difficult to monitor the progress of pupils and of what exactly should be taught. Most work is done to support other subjects in the curriculum and this is often of a good standard. One class in Key Stage 2 designed and made models of Tudor houses and another class designed and painted a logo. Both of these were well done and supported their work in another subject; but both also illustrate the inconsistent approach to design technology. Unless the opportunity arises within a subject, design and technology has a low priority. As the opportunities vary both in the subject and areas within the subject, the variety and volume of design technology is inconsistent across any year. The co-ordinator is well aware of the problem and a new scheme of work should give opportunities to widen the scope of the teaching of design technology.
- 101 The planning for design technology is good. Teachers in year groups plan collectively, share ideas and ensure that there is at least consistency in what is being taught. All classes therefore have the same opportunities. Teaching is judged to be good. Teachers plan well in the short-term and demonstrate in the planning that they give thought as to how they can make the work for the pupils both relevant and interesting.
- 102 Resources are adequate in terms of consumables and there is a range of other resources.
- 103 A balanced provision has not been achieved in design technology and there is no process to monitor the curriculum and teaching across the school.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

- 104 Only one lesson of Key Stage 2 geography was observed during the week of the inspection. From the scrutiny of planning, samples of pupils' work and display and from discussions with pupils and teachers, it is judged that the standards of work of pupils are broadly match national expectations across the school, with higher standards seen in Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
- 105 In Key Stage 1, pupils make a study of their own surroundings, employing their direct experience and using practical activities. They produce hand drawn maps of the school, showing their route from classroom to office accurately and make use of symbols to portray the route and different areas of the school. Pupils make a study of their own locality and carry out a traffic count, tallying the numbers and types of vehicles in Post Street. By the end of the key stage, pupils are able to observe, record and communicate their findings satisfactorily. Some use their skills in information and communication technology to generate plans of their estates. In their cross-curricular work pupils combine their knowledge of history and geography to answer questions on land, air and space transport, making sound use of given

resources.

- 106 In Key Stage 2, pupils make a study of the island of St. Lucia, from the viewpoint of tourism. They describe the physical and man-made features of the island in poster or brochure form. Opportunities are taken to examine places and themes, develop their knowledge and understanding of them and relate their analyses to their own experiences and areas which interest them. Pupils improve their geographical and literacy skills by reading and asking questions and collecting evidence to describe features of places which are attractive to groups of people. They draw accurate maps of the island, use a key successfully to identify interesting features and make good use of language, including appealing adjectives, such as 'luscious' and 'romantic'. They describe correctly the weather, the rainforest, beaches and surfing and the facilities of the hotels. By the end of the key stage, the oldest pupils use their geographical skills well to study the continent of Europe and particularly the countries of the European Union. They take part in a 'brainstorming' session to gauge their present knowledge of Europe. Pupils have a good working knowledge of the countries that make up the Union, the European Parliament and the currency, the Euro. Learning is improved by their enthusiastic approach to finding out more and by making good use of the various resources available to identify all the member states and the main features that characterise them. Rapid progress is made as pupils use a blank map of the Continent to name and identify European Union and non-European Union countries. They are well motivated to work in pairs to research important and interesting facts about one of the member states which they will later present as a project to the rest of the class.
- 107 Since the last inspection the subject has maintained its standards with some areas of improvement evident in teaching and learning in Key Stage 2. The planning of geography is now thorough, with clear learning objectives for each activity. In Key Stage 2 there are regular opportunities for independent research. Planning now contains the appropriate programmes of study for geography, although the policy requires urgent review in line with the new curriculum in September.
- 108 The evidence from work scrutiny and the small number of lessons is that the teaching of geography is satisfactory throughout the school with some areas of good teaching, mainly in Key Stage 2. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject and the effectiveness of their teaching methods is good across the school. Teachers manage their pupils well and where planning is clear and expectations are high, the rate of learning increases. On the limited occasions teachers give opportunities for independent research, standards of work and the rate of learning also increases.
- 109 The current coordinator has been recently appointed and is keen to make a start on rewriting the geography policy and adapting the local education authority scheme of work in advance of the new foundation curriculum. She is aware of the weaknesses in overall leadership and in the lack of monitoring and evaluation of teaching. Together with the new management team of the school she expects to remedy this by providing guidance and oversight for the subject and with a detailed scheme of work to ensure pupils' learning is systematically built-up across the school.

## **HISTORY**

- 110 Two lessons were observed during the week of the inspection, one in each key stage. Discussions with staff and pupils, scrutiny of planning and work samples indicate clearly that pupils' standards of attainment across the school are exceeding expectations for their age. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

- 111 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils demonstrate an awareness of differences and similarities between the past and the present and can relate episodes from stories of the past. They study the lives of famous people from British history, such as Alfred The Great, Samuel Pepys the diarist, and from a different period of history and distance, the boy-king Tutankhamen. Pupils appreciate why people in the past acted as they did. For example, their work on the life of King Alfred and his struggles to unite his peoples against the Vikings shows a mature understanding of his situation and reasons for his being distracted, thereby allowing the cakes to burn! By the end of the key stage, pupils are able to understand the chronology of events and begin to appreciate that the period in which 'The Great Fire of London' took place was a hundred years after the Tudor monarch, Elizabeth. Their written and illustrative work about the location of the fire, the architecture of the buildings and the damage to the city, shows a good understanding of the main points of the story and the events and characters. Pupils appreciate the importance of the Pepys' diaries as first-hand evidence of the fire.
- 112 By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' study of the Ancient Greeks increased their learning by means of observing quality art and design, producing artefacts and models, such as Greek pots, vases and ships such as the triremes. They know many aspects of the Ancient Greek society, their gods, painting, music and temples, their epic stories and even their diet. Pupils have a good knowledge of Greek society and describe some of the main events and people. By the end of the key stage, pupils evaluate historical sources and know that events and people can be portrayed differently and, sometimes, incorrectly. In their work on the Tudors, especially at the beginning of the monarchy, they understand that 'history is often written by the victors'. By means of historical sources, a video programme and discussion, the pupils reflect upon the accuracy of 'eye-witness' accounts and secondary sources, such as a Shakespeare play. They question the reputation of the last Plantagenet king, Richard the Third and using drama techniques explore the motives of some of the main characters of the time. This imaginative use of documentary evidence, drama and discussion enables pupils to think of the historical characters as real people and leads to good learning.
- 113 Since the last inspection the standards of history across the school have risen and attainment and achievement are good, with the rate of learning in some lessons very good. Most pupils are able to explain cause and effect and question historical interpretations. Pupils clearly enjoy their history work and learn from the techniques used to study it. Tasks are demanding and stimulating and often stem from visits and direct fieldwork.
- 114 The teaching of history is good. In 50 per cent of lessons it is very good and in 50 per cent it is good. This represents a distinct improvement since the last inspection. Teachers' expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are high across the school. All teachers are thorough and give time and thought to teaching the basic skills of historical enquiry and interpretation, together with an increasing understanding of chronology. The very good lesson was seen in Key Stage 2, where the teachers exhibit imaginative and effective teaching methods and planning, and by the increasingly secure management of their pupils are able to employ techniques which fully engage their curiosity and motivation, leading to a brisk rate of learning.

- 115 The management of the subject is effectively led by two co-ordinators who have written the recent policy and are now adapting the local education authority scheme of work for the whole school. Continuity of teaching and progression in learning between key stages and year groups has been planned and monitored by teams of teachers at two year intervals, but the co-ordinators and new school management appreciate that there are weaknesses. The subject leaders are building on the present good practice of planning tasks to match respective age groups and the use of assessment focuses at each half-term for classwork. Although time has not been made available in the past for classroom monitoring, work samples are rightly collected for evaluating and moderating pupils' work.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 116 During the course of the inspection only one directly taught class lesson in Key Stage 1, was seen. However a number of groups were observed working in different ways. Judgements have been based on observations made of groups and individual pupils, scrutiny of work, teachers' planning, records of assessment, discussions with staff and particularly the information technology co-ordinators. Pupils also contributed by explaining, with accuracy, what they were doing and how they had become proficient at that particular skill. There were a few occasions when computers, although switched on, could have been used more fully. Attainment is above average at both key stages. From the time that pupils start in the Reception class they have the opportunity to learn computer skills. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use a mouse with controlled accuracy, can load, save and print with help. They enter information and show that information as simple bar charts or pictograms and use simple word processing.
- 117 By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils can write, edit and print their own work. They are able to enter their own information onto a database and can represent this pictorially in a number of ways. Pupils use the computer to test and record their success in reading and this has had a good effect on attainment in both subjects. Pupils are prepared to work for longer periods so that they may take a test to give them a higher score. Word processing is used successfully for writing, poetry and providing information. Pupils use computers competently in mathematics, history, geography and design and technology. The amount of support varies with the quality of the software The National Grid for Learning enables pupils in Years 5 and 6 to access the Internet and other electronic services though there have been some problems with the maintenance of this facility. Pupils quickly grasp new skills and are good at collaborating with each other.
- 118 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have worked hard to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to teach information technology. These skills mean that staff are confident when teaching and this in turn fills pupils with confidence. Staff have a very positive attitude to computer technology and the school is fortunate in having some experienced teachers who willingly share their know-how and expertise. Good planning is evident in the year plans. The good joint planning means that all pupils have the same opportunity to follow the same curriculum. Although assessment is built into the scheme not all teachers are using it. Teachers are discerning and only use those computer programs that will be of benefit to pupils rather than using a program because it happens to be there.



119 The school is well resourced with an above average provision of machines: approximately one machine to seven pupils, which is a little better than the average. The school is hoping to have more computers in the near future. The information technology policy is very good. It views information technology as a learning tool for all other curriculum areas (with the exception of physical education) but it also sees information technology taught as a separate subject. It encourages teachers to vary their teaching strategies in accordance with the skills to be acquired and the work that pupils are doing. The policy has only been in operation since November but it is building on an already well-developed structure. The school has adopted the local authority scheme. This is an excellent scheme that is capable of guiding teachers easily and successfully through the information technology curriculum and provides for the systematic build-up of skills and knowledge. Management is good, overall. The coordinator is providing a clear direction for the subject to develop. However, the major limitation is the lack of opportunity for the coordinator to monitor teaching.

## **MUSIC**

120 Discussions with staff and pupils, the scrutiny of planning and observations of singing and playing, indicate that standards of attainment are generally above that expected for their age across the school and occasionally well above that expected. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

121 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils respond by their movements to a regular beat. They listen to a piece of martial music, such as the Coronation March, and begin to tap the rhythm, enjoying the activity. Pupils are sensible and accurate and know that this music is played in a parade. Many recognise various instruments that are playing, such as the drum, trombone and trumpet and understand the latter make up the brass section. Pupils appraise different pieces of music and recognise and identify high and low sounds and also the change of sound when two notes are played together. In a singing practise containing all Key Stage 1 pupils and led by one of the two music co-ordinators, standards of concentration, accuracy and personal performance are high, and indeed impressive. Pupils learn and memorise new songs and perform with understanding and clarity. These objectives were fully met, exceeded and enjoyed by the 124 pupils present. They listen with total concentration to the teacher-sung, syncopated rhythms and repeat with increasing accuracy. Pupils volunteer to play tambourines as an accompaniment, whilst the rest sing with gusto, clarity and good diction. By the end of Key Stage 1, the standards in the performance and appraisal of music are good. They are able to read lyrics, listen and sing well, including the ability to sing in two part rounds and appraise sounds and the musical elements in pieces of music.

- 122 By the end of Key Stage 2, the whole of the Year 6 pupils were observed in a singing lesson, taken by one of the two music co-ordinators. All pupils perform confidently and accurately, both in singing and playing. They sing two part songs well and are able to maintain their part in relation to others. On the basis of this excellent lesson and of the good provision for music throughout the school, it is judged those standards of attainment by the end of the key stage, for all pupils are above that expected for their age. Pupils' performing and listening skills are extended by means of singing two part rounds, the playing of improvised accompaniment and listening to the playing of chord structures. The pupils' response to the teaching is excellent; there is good humour throughout the session and pupils sing with gusto and with no inhibitions. The excellent attitudes and teaching in this lesson enable the pupils to learn a great deal, at an outstanding pace.
- 123 Since the last inspection the standards of music throughout the school have been maintained and, in some areas, improved. The two music co-ordinators work very well together and complement each others' strengths, resulting in strong music standards throughout the school. Resources for the teaching of music are now good in quantity and quality.
- 124 The quality of teaching across the school is good. In Key Stage 1, 50 per cent of lessons were very good and 50 per cent were satisfactory. In Key Stage 2, the one lesson seen was excellent. The teaching of the two music specialists on the staff, the effective control of large groups of pupils in both key stages and the added luxury of a specialist room for music all contribute significantly to the good learning taking place. In both key stages, teachers' preparation and planning is at least good and often better, leading to clear and realistic learning objectives. Basic skills are thoroughly and enjoyably taught, using humour and a variety of strategies to draw the best from all the pupils. Informal assessment is carried out for older pupils particularly well, with thought given to providing music designed to gain their interest and enhance performance. There is a large take-up of music tuition, both in and out of school that reflects the encouragement given by all staff.
- 125 The provision for and contribution of music cannot be understated. There are over 80 pupils receiving instrumental tuition from peripatetic music specialists for woodwind, brass, violin and guitar, with extra tuition for recorders and singing and there is strong competition for places in the school's Concert Band, containing 24 players. Pupils play in the school orchestra for assemblies and the choir has sung with the Huntingdon Orchestra. The concert band takes part in a production each year and puts on a 'Victorian Music Hall' in alternate years, events eagerly anticipated by its pupils and parents. Musicians from the school also make a great contribution to the Godmanchester Community Association's events and the subject can justly be said to be strength of the school. The two co-ordinators have produced a good policy and scheme of work, which is of practical help to the other class teachers, and they provide advice and support to any teacher who requests it. Although there have been no opportunities for in-class monitoring of music, all classes have assessment focuses in lesson planning and there is constant evaluation through the many pupil performances. Music is a subject where there is automatic striving for improvement by both pupil and teacher. The purpose-built hall for music is an outstanding resource, helping pupils improve their music skills, and represents an improvement since the last inspection.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 126 Although it was not possible to observe the full range of work in a physical education; scrutiny of planning and a variety of schemes of work and discussions with the subject coordinators and pupils, all indicate that the school delivers an appropriate curriculum. Lesson observations were restricted to Key Stage 2, and most of these were swimming. However, lessons were seen also in orienteering, games and gymnastics.
- 127 Standards have at least been maintained since the last inspection and there is an improvement in swimming. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are agile and nimble. They travel using hands and feet; climb and balance successfully and throw and catch competently. They put out and away the apparatus for their indoor lessons, remembering to be sensible and aware of their own, and others, safety. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in swimming is well above the national expectation and the majority have a variety of water skills. For example, swimming underwater for extended periods and diving for submerged objects. In gymnastics, pupils are agile, move easily and improve their work through appropriate and rigorous practice. Pupils are confident, sensitive and clear in their judgements about classmate's performance. Pupils are improving their knowledge and use of compass bearings to aid their work in orienteering. In games, pupils' football skills are developing well, most particularly in passing, dribbling and shooting.
- 128 Overall, pupils are taught well. In Key Stage 2, 71.4 per cent of lessons were good and 28.6 per cent satisfactory. Particular strengths in the teaching of swimming include detailed planning, very good stroke tuition, high expectations and very clear instructions. Pupils' learning is positively promoted by these strengths, especially the improvements in stroke production, through the breaking down of techniques and the subsequent practice, which is carried out over relatively long periods with regular reviews. High expectations are evident in terms of hard work and good technique and supported by effective assessment within a lesson. In gymnastics, planning and objectives are clear and the learning is improved by the sensible and searching use of questioning. For example, Year 4 pupils were exploring ways of turning and rolling when they were asked: " How can we make this more difficult? " The answers showed that pupils thought about speed of turn, angle of turn, body position, speed of rolling and parts of body. Once the questioning was completed pupils experimented with the ideas raised in their answers.
- 129 The school recently appointed two coordinators who are providing satisfactory leadership and management. They have rightly identified that there is a need for a whole school scheme of work, but have recognised that they need to have opportunities to monitor teaching in order to gauge accurately the strengths and weaknesses of provision and practice. Their most immediate success is the monitoring of planning that they are undertaking and the gathering of information, which should show up any gaps in the programme. There is a high degree of commitment to further improvement. The accommodation is good and promotes above average learning, most particularly in swimming.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

- 130 Achievement by the end of both key stages is in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus, and are above those of the last inspection which were unsatisfactory.

- 131 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have limited understanding of Christianity and other world religions through looking at their special books and how occasions such as harvest, births and weddings are celebrated. They visit a church to see where and to find out how Christians worship, and learn about Jesus, his life and teachings.
- 132 At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a greater understanding of world faiths such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism and Christianity. They know what it means to belong to a group and the responsibilities this brings with it. Furthermore, they understand what it means to belong to a particular religion and how this can affect peoples' lives. Creation stories from different religions provide significant challenges for pupils' understanding. They increase their knowledge about Jesus and Christian worship, and the response of Christians to the natural world. Year 6 pupils understand the importance of knowing about other religions, and the tolerance that people need to show towards different faiths and their practices. As part of a series of lessons on Judaism, pupils learned about the features of a synagogue and very good progress was made.
- 133 Where lessons are well planned, pupils show a keen interest in and enthusiasm for religious education. In lessons that are not carefully planned, pupils switch off and make little progress.
- 134 Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory; 20 per cent of lessons were excellent, 20 per cent good, 40 per cent satisfactory and 20 per cent unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 1, 50 per cent of lessons were satisfactory and 50 per cent were unsatisfactory. The unsatisfactory lesson focussed on why the Bible is a special book. Pupils were shown different bibles and talked about their importance to Christians. The objectives, however, were lost when the book being used brought in many other aspects of Christianity, and a millennium candle was introduced. Pupils did not do any written work and they made unsatisfactory progress towards the planned learning objective. In Key Stage 2, 33.3 per cent of lessons were excellent, 33.3 per cent were good and 33.3 per cent were satisfactory. In the excellent lesson, the main strengths were the careful research, and the building on previous good work about the Passover and the Exodus. These were linked to the features of a synagogue, for example the importance of the scrolls and the special place where they are kept. Good use was made of posters and pupils were able to relate their knowledge of church features to a synagogue. Tasks were very well planned for all ability groups, lower ability pupils having a more practical but nevertheless relevant task. The scrutiny of work shows that the quantity and standard of pupils' recorded work varies considerably. With one hour per week for religious education, more consistent recorded work to consolidate discussion would give a clearer indication of pupils' progress. In Year 6, specialist use is made of a teacher who takes all the classes for religious education.

- 135 The co-ordinator has produced a new policy and scheme of work based on the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils benefit from religious education being taught as a discrete subject, and each class allocates one hour per week to the subject. These are improvements on the last inspection. However, there is little monitoring of the subject; teachers' planning and pupils' work are not scrutinised, and no lessons are observed for the quality of teaching. There is a monitoring sheet that teachers fill in after completing each topic, setting out the religious education covered the adequacy of resources and whether further help is required. This falls short of what is required to ensure continuity of teaching and progression of learning. There is no formal assessment of religious education. Resources are now good, with photopaks, posters and artefacts for major world religions. Some use is made of outside speakers, for example from a parent who talks to pupils about the response of Christians to world problems. Pupils visit local churches.