

## INSPECTION REPORT

**St Andrew's CE Aided Junior School**  
Brighouse

LEA area : Calderdale

Unique Reference Number : 107547

Inspection Number: 188688

Headteacher : Mr N T Robinson

Reporting inspector : Mrs C McBride  
2810

Dates of inspection : 22 – 25 November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number : 706865

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school :	Junior
Type of control :	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils :	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Waterloo Road Brighthouse HD6 2AN
Telephone number :	01484 712895
Fax number :	N/A
Appropriate authority :	Governing Body
Name of Chair of Governors :	Mr A Bolland
Date of previous inspection :	May 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Mrs J Overend, Lay Inspector		Equality of opportunity Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Mr J Hagan	Mathematics Geography History Physical education	Teaching Efficiency
Mr S Rigby	Science Information technology Design and technology Music	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress in reading. This is particularly good in developing research skills and in locating information.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

The quality of teaching in over half of lessons is good or very good.

Management and leadership provided by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors are strong.

The school promotes good behaviour and discipline. Pupils achieve good standards in this aspect.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good.

Support staff make a significant contribution to pupils' attainment and progress.

The school develops its staff well. There is a good attitude to change and a commitment to personal development throughout.

Relationships throughout the school are very good.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- Pupils' attainment in information technology is below expected levels and progress is unsatisfactory.
- Higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged in mathematics and science.
- The standard of work in design and technology is below that found in most schools.
- Arrangements for monitoring the work of the school are not rigorous enough.

**The school's strengths significantly outweigh its weaknesses. These will form the basis of the governors' action plan which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.**

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the weaknesses identified by the last inspection. It has maintained its areas of strength, such as its good levels of attendance, high quality provision for pupils with special educational needs and its good provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development. Staff development was noted as a strength by the last inspection and staff have maintained their commitment to continually improving the quality of teaching. This has resulted in higher quality lessons, particularly in science. Pupils' behaviour on the yard is also greatly improved. Subject managers are more effective in developing subjects by providing better schemes of work. The curriculum and teaching in mathematics, science and design and technology have improved significantly. Better guidance is now provided for teachers about what to teach and how to teach it. However, some lessons in mathematics and science still lack sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils. Key skills in design and technology are not yet developed well enough throughout the school in a systematic way. Improvements have also been made in the assessment of pupils' progress. Work still remains to be done in this area to remedy weaknesses in the way in which information is passed between teachers as children move to the next year group. The school makes much better use of its accommodation, particularly the library, but best use is still not made of all the space available. The school's curriculum for information technology was noted as weak at the time of the last inspection. Whilst some improvements have been made, this is still an area of weakness and results in low attainment and unsatisfactory progress. This has been identified by the school as a major priority for development.

The school is aware of its own weaknesses and has already made plans to address many of the issues raised by the inspection. The school is well placed for future improvement.

### Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in:	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	<i>Key</i>	
			<i>well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
			<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
			<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
			<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
			<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>
English	C	D		
Mathematics	C	D		
Science	D	E		

Pupils' attainment in national tests showed them to be keeping pace with 11 year olds nationally in English and mathematics, but falling behind in science. Against schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, results compared less favourably. In mathematics and science, this was because more pupils achieved higher than average levels in other schools. In English, more pupils in similar schools reached the average level or higher. Inspection findings are in line with test results.

In information technology, pupils' attainment is below expected levels. In design and technology it is below the standard seen in most other schools. In all other subjects, pupils achieve standards which are typical for their age.

### Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	7 – 11 years
English	Good
Mathematics	Good
Science	Satisfactory
Information technology	Unsatisfactory
Religious education	n/a
Other subjects	Satisfactory

Across the school, just over half of lessons are good or very good. The quality of teaching in the remainder is satisfactory. No teaching of information technology was seen during the inspection. Based on discussions with teachers and scrutiny of planning, it is judged to be unsatisfactory.

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

## Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good. Pupils are polite, helpful and well behaved.
Attendance	Good. It is consistently above the national average. Punctuality is also good.
Ethos*	Good. Pupils concentrate on their work and have positive attitudes to learning. Relationships throughout the school are good. Whilst the school is committed to raising standards, these are not yet high enough in mathematics and science.
Leadership and management	Good. The senior management team provides good direction for the work of the school. Governors support the work of the school well and act as a critical friend. Subject managers provide good quality guidance and support for other staff.
Curriculum	Satisfactory. Enriched well by out of school clubs. Good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Literacy is developed well overall. Higher attainers are not sufficiently challenged in mathematics and science. Provision for information technology is weak.
Pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with a variety of needs receive very good support and make good progress. Good quality individual education plans.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Provision for spiritual and social development good. Moral development is very good. Satisfactory provision is made for cultural development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good. School's commitment to developing its staff and staff seeking to continually improve practice are a strength. Space not used to best advantage. Shortages in resources for information technology.
Value for money	Satisfactory. Budget managed well and school efficiently run but school's results not as good as schools with similar intake of pupils.

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

## The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children enjoy school and are happy to come.</li> </ul> <p>Children make good progress and achieve good standards.</p> <p>Teachers are approachable and parents feel welcome.</p> <p>Children behave well and the school reinforces this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School supports pupils with difficulties well.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not enough homework is given.</li> </ul>

Inspection findings support the positive views of the majority of parents. Pupils are happy at school and their behaviour is good. The school has a strong moral code. The school has good relationships with its parents and values their support. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Sufficient homework is provided for children and their learning is often reinforced by the work they take home. Progress for higher attaining pupils in mathematics and science is not as good as it might be. Standards in information technology are below what is expected. They are lower in design and technology than seen in other schools.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

The headteacher, staff and governors should now address the following areas:

Raise standards in information technology by:

- providing more opportunities for pupils to use computers and develop essential skills;
  - raising levels of staff confidence and expertise in using computers;
  - monitoring teaching to ensure that the school's policy for information technology is followed more closely;
  - planning work which builds on what pupils already know and can do;
  - using information technology more effectively to support work in other subjects.
- (Paragraph references: 8, 20, 32, 33, 66, 69, 75, 86, 110, 124, 126-133, 149)

Increase levels of challenge for higher attainers in mathematics and science by:

- ensuring a better match of work for these pupils in mathematics lessons;
  - providing more opportunities for them to raise scientific questions and set up investigations;
  - offering them more independence in the way they record the results of investigations;
  - improving arrangements for passing on assessment information between year groups in both subjects.
- (Paragraph references: 6, 11, 21, 23, 29, 32, 93-113, 114 -125)

Raise standards and improve progress in design and technology by:

- providing more consistent and regular opportunities for pupils to design, draft and evaluate work;
  - ensuring that the agreed scheme of work is followed by all staff;
  - making resources more accessible to pupils.
- (Paragraph references: 8, 32, 33, 63, 69, 75, 138 -143)

Improve rigour of school's monitoring systems by:

- focusing monitoring activity more sharply on pupils' attainment and progress. For example, by regular scrutiny of work samples;
  - checking more carefully that the school's agreed subject policies are implemented in practice.
- (Paragraph references: 31, 33, 48, 61, 63, 91, 112, 131, 143)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the plan. These are indicated in paragraphs: 70, 159 (use of accommodation); 40, 48, 162, (assessment in non-core subject areas); 60 (governing body report to parents does not meet all statutory requirements); 52 (consistency in quality of reports to parents); 62 (sharpness of success criteria in school development plan).

## INTRODUCTION

### Characteristics of the school

St Andrew's CE Aided Junior School is situated near to the centre of the town of Brighouse, West Yorkshire. It is average in size for schools of this type with 254 pupils from seven to 11 years on roll. Fifty five pupils are on the school's register of special educational need, which is broadly typical of the number found nationally. Twelve per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals and this is lower than the national average. One pupil has English as an additional language. This is lower than in comparison to most schools.

The school's intake is drawn mainly from the local area of privately owned, terraced housing. Approximately 25 per cent of pupils come from council estates on the fringes of the area. A significant minority of families is not socially advantaged. The proportion of pupils entering the school at the expected level is below the national average for their age.

The school's overarching aim is to promote excellence within a caring, Christian community. Currently, its major development priorities lie in raising pupils' attainment to meet with national standards or better. A further focus is to improve provision in information technology.

### Key indicators

#### Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>1</sup>

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	32	31	63

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	19	21	21
	Girls	25	21	21
	Total	44	42	42
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	70 (61)	67 (57)	67 (49)
	National	70 (65)	68 (59)	78 (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	17	16	16
	Girls	18	19	19
	Total	35	35	35
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	56 (57)	56 (62)	56 (67)
	National	70 (65)	69 (65)	78 (72)

### Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions)

%

<sup>1</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year

Authorised absence	School	5.4
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised absence	School	0.5
	National comparative data	0.5

**Exclusions**

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

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

**Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	16
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **Attainment and progress**

In the 1999 national tests, pupils' results in English and mathematics were in line with national averages, but in science, they were below. The number of pupils attaining higher levels in English was similar to that found in most schools. In mathematics and science, approximately half as many pupils achieved higher levels. Against schools with a similar pupil intake, the school's results were below in English and mathematics and well below in science. More pupils in similar schools achieved the average or better in all three core subjects.

Between 1996 and 1997, pupils' average levels remained close to the national average in English and mathematics but have been consistently below in science. In 1998, results fell sharply in all core subjects when the group of Year 6 pupils taking the tests included a higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs.

The proportion of pupils entering the school with average levels in English, mathematics and science is generally smaller than that found nationally. The school has made improvements in the guidance it gives to teachers about what to teach and how to teach it. The quality of teaching has improved and progress for most groups of pupils is now faster than in previous years. This is enabling most average and lower attaining pupils to make satisfactory progress in most subjects. In mathematics and science, higher attaining pupils are still not stretched far enough. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

The evaluation of pupils' work during the inspection largely matches test results. By the age of 11, pupils' speaking and listening skills are average and they cope well with reading tasks in other subjects. Their attainment in locating information in non-fiction books is good. By the time they leave school, more pupils write competently in different styles. Standards of handwriting are good, whilst spelling is average. In mathematics, pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding of number, shape, space and measure. Their attainment in data handling and in problem solving requiring more than one-step operations, is weak. In science, pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of life processes and physical processes. Pupils' investigative skills do not develop as quickly as they might because lessons are often too strongly directed by the teacher.

Attainment for pupils in information technology is below average. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop important skills or to make sufficient progress. In design and technology, standards of work are below those seen in most schools. Pupils do not have enough regular practice in designing, and making and evaluating products. Although provision is better than at the time of the last inspection, standards are still not high enough.

In art, geography, history, music and physical education, standards are typical of those found in most schools. Pupils make satisfactory progress.

In swimming, pupils make good progress and most achieve the national expectation of being able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave the school.

In mathematics and science, the progress of higher attaining pupils is not as good as it could be. In some lessons, work is not sufficiently challenging for them. In mathematics, some tasks set for them mean that they mark time rather than extend their learning. In science, too few

opportunities are provided for them to raise scientific questions and use these as a basis for investigation.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, particularly when they work in small groups with support assistants. Pupils with English as an additional language make progress at the same rate as other pupils.

### **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

Pupils' attitudes to their work are good. They are enthusiastic learners who show interest and apply themselves well. They settle to tasks quickly, sustain their concentration well and persevere with more difficult work. They listen attentively to their teachers and are particularly willing to listen to the views of others.

The children are well behaved and the parents are fully justified in their positive views on this. Behaviour has improved since the last inspection, particularly in the playground. This represents successful work undertaken by all staff over the last year. Play is good natured. Pupils are polite and helpful and their good manners are often exemplary. This has a positive effect in making the school an orderly community where children are aware of their responsibilities and the way in which they should behave.

Lunchtime is a pleasant social occasion. Pupils respond well to expectations and this is seen in assemblies where they show respect and involve themselves appropriately. There have been no exclusions in the last 12 months.

Relationships are very good throughout the school. This is seen by the way pupils work so well together, sharing equipment, cooperating and supporting each other. Their personal development is good. Since the last inspection more opportunities have been provided for responsibility and for independent learning skills and pupils respond well to this provision. They put out equipment efficiently for physical education lessons and for assemblies; some work hard as librarians and those on the new school council show maturity in the suggestions they make on behalf of their peers. They respond readily to charity initiatives and show awareness of the needs of others. The wide range of clubs provided enhances pupils' personal development and their ability to work as part of a team.

### **Attendance**

Good attendance is a strength of the school and contributes positively to pupils' attainment and progress. The attendance rate is consistently above the national average and punctuality is good. The unauthorised absence rate is average.

Registration time is used appropriately and registers are well kept. Time keeping through the day is good and a prompt, effective start to the day is achieved. The school complies with statutory requirements for recording and reporting attendance.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

The quality of teaching is good overall. It is of good or very high quality in just over half of lessons. Of the remainder, all are satisfactory. This is an improved picture since the last inspection when one in five lessons was judged unsatisfactory. The school was set a key issue to improve

the quality of teaching, particularly in science and for the most part, it has successfully addressed this weakness.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge in most areas although confidence is not as high in information technology. Pupils' progress in this subject is unsatisfactory. This stems partly from gaps in teachers' knowledge of how best to use information technology to develop other subjects.

Planning for lessons is detailed and thorough. In most lessons, teachers are clear about what they expect pupils to learn or be able to do as a result. Teachers set work at different levels, usually for three ability groups within the class. In the majority of lessons, the work set offers a high enough level of challenge for pupils of lower and average attainment. In some however, the level is too low for the higher attaining pupils. This is most marked in some mathematics and science lessons when activities are insufficiently challenging and progress is too slow for this group.

Teachers manage pupils well. They create busy and purposeful classrooms where no time is wasted and pupils are expected to apply themselves to their work and sustain their concentration. This means that there is a positive approach to work throughout the school and teachers make maximum use of time to reinforce skills, particularly in literacy and numeracy. For example, pupils begin reading tasks as soon as they arrive in the classroom each morning. In a Year 3 class, it was necessary to organise the swimming timetable in such a way that there was a half hour between sessions. The teacher used this time very profitably in teaching a stimulating and interesting mental arithmetic session. Pupils made very good progress in ordering numbers and understanding the value of digits within larger numbers.

Most lessons move along at a good pace and teachers set time targets for pupils to work within. There is usually a good balance between the teacher talking to the class and pupils undertaking tasks. Pupils make less progress in some lessons because they are not given sufficient opportunity to work out answers independently and they are taken step by step through worksheets, for example.

Teachers deploy support assistants to very good effect. They are briefed well about each lesson and have a clear understanding of what is expected of the group they are supporting. This enables them to take on an important teaching role with lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs. It contributes significantly to the good and often very good progress made by these pupils.

The teaching of literacy is good or very good in two out of every three lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. Teachers are particularly successful at introducing new vocabulary to pupils and reinforcing this in subsequent activities. In most classrooms displays and visual aids are used effectively to introduce or consolidate new words.

During lessons, when pupils move into groups, teachers set them tasks with which they are able to work independently. This allows the teachers to work in a concentrated way with particular groups. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, the teacher set the class work in using dictionaries while she focused her attention on a higher attaining group. She was able to move the group on very quickly through higher reading skills with non-fiction books whilst the rest of the class concentrated on their research task and sharpened their skills in locating words.

Reading skills are particularly well taught. Teachers find many opportunities to give pupils practice in locating information and in learning to draw more subtle meanings from what they read. As a result, pupils make good progress in using reference skills and in understanding what they read.

The teaching of numeracy is good in two out of every three lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. Teachers are skilled at supporting pupils in developing mental strategies. They place a strong emphasis on encouraging pupils to explain the process they have used to find answers to mathematical problems. They put questions to the class which are phrased in such a way that pupils are able to use more than one strategy to work out the answer.

Work in most lessons is pitched at the right level for lower and average attainers and they make good progress as a result. In some lessons work for higher attainers is too easy and does not challenge them sufficiently.

Teachers use homework effectively to support pupils' progress. In some instances, they are set research work as part of a topic they are studying. At other times, they are set tasks that consolidate knowledge or skills taught in recent lessons. Most pupils read at home and spellings are learned or reinforced well through homework.

Marking of pupils' work is variable in quality. Some teachers follow the school's guidelines for marking pupils' work closely. Others have a more cursory approach and where this is the case, the comments on pupils' work do not inform them of how they can improve.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

The quality of the school's curriculum is satisfactory overall. All subjects within the National Curriculum are covered and the school has managed to maintain a good breadth to what it teaches whilst allocating sufficient time and attention to developing literacy and numeracy skills. The last inspection noted weak provision for mathematics, science, information technology and design and technology. Improvements have been made in all of these areas but weaknesses still remain. In mathematics and science, the curriculum does not always offer sufficient challenge for higher attainers. In information technology and design and technology, provision is not yet of a high enough quality to ensure that pupils either make adequate progress throughout the school or achieve the expected standards on leaving.

In most subjects, teachers follow national guidelines and are clear about the knowledge and skills they should be teaching. However, some guidelines are not followed closely in practice, for example, in information technology and design and technology. Whilst pupils undertake enjoyable and interesting experiences, they are too random and do not build well upon their previous knowledge or skills.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. They follow the same curriculum as the rest of their year group and cope well. They receive plenty of good quality support in developing literacy and numeracy skills and in making good progress against the specific needs identified in their individual education plans.

The school's provision for literacy and numeracy is good. The school is particularly successful in developing pupils' reading and writing skills through the other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils have sufficient time to read either independently or with the teacher. The numeracy skills needed to develop mental recall are taught well and pupils are given enough practice in developing methods of calculating and working with number.

The school's programme for developing pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Sex and drugs education is taught mainly through science but there is no scheme of work to ensure that all important aspects are covered in a systematic way.

A good range of extra-curricular activities enriches the quality of the curriculum. Sports, music and arts clubs are run and over 100 pupils take part in some form of activity after school hours each week. Seven members of staff, parents and support staff are also involved. These activities support the development of pupils' social skills and enable some of them to achieve higher standards in music and physical education. The library club boosts pupils' enjoyment and interest in reading a good range of books.

All pupils have equal access to every aspect of the curriculum and the school is careful to monitor its provision. For example, in ensuring that both boys and girls are able to take part in football and netball clubs.

Homework is used effectively to reinforce pupils' learning. Teachers set pupils a good range of interesting tasks in different subjects. This allows them to either consolidate work they have been doing in lessons or allows them to find out more about a particular topic.

The school's procedures for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory. Assessments undertaken each half term in English, mathematics and science allow teachers to locate the levels at which pupils are working and set targets for development. Assessments in other subjects are not as thorough.

Arrangements for passing on information between year groups are weak. Insufficient information is passed on and this results in pupils revisiting work at levels which are too easy for some; for example, for higher attainers in mathematics. Records in science focus more on the work covered rather than individual or group progress.

The results of progress tests are analysed very effectively and provide a detailed picture of the school's performance in adding value to pupils' achievements. The information generated is used to set targets for future performance and to pinpoint areas of weakness in teaching and learning.

### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. The parents are happy with the values promoted and with their children's responses. The provision for spiritual development is good. Through their work in religious education and the carefully planned assemblies and acts of collective worship, pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own beliefs, feelings, experiences and conduct. Children's own contributions to assemblies and classroom prayers are valued and the importance of caring for each other is strongly emphasised. Pupils also explore feelings and beliefs through their response to stories in the literacy hour and in listening to music.

Very good provision is made for pupils' moral development. This is an area of improvement since the last inspection. The highly effective self-esteem and behaviour policy clearly emphasises right and wrong. The whole school system of rewards helps them take responsibility for their own actions. In lessons such as history and English, moral problems are discussed. Their understanding and consideration for others are given a high profile through work in charity initiatives, and teachers provide good role models for this.

The promotion of social development is good. Opportunities are provided to work together in pairs, groups and teams so they learn to relate very well to each other. The older children look after the younger ones at wet play. Pupils who have difficulty relating to their peers are provided with extra opportunities for group discussions. Pupils learn about society through the school's links with the community as they contribute to their curriculum.

The broad range of extra-curricular activities promotes both pupils' social and cultural understanding. They experience traditional games and learn British traditions from their history topics. They go on visits such as to an art gallery to study Victorian paintings. The provision to help children understand other cultures has been improved through addition of other faiths in religious education and use of good displays and artefacts. This provision has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory.

## **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

Pupils receive good support and guidance. Staff provide good role models and know the pupils and their families well. Very good relationships enable pupils to seek advice or help confidently and parents are justified in their positive views of this aspect of the school's work.

Monitoring of overall progress and development has improved since the last inspection. It is now satisfactory. Pupils' records now include personal development. There has been improvement in assessment of core subjects but monitoring of progress in other subjects is weak. The monitoring and support of children with special educational needs are very good.

The procedures for promoting good behaviour contribute very well to the high standards achieved. The new whole school reward system is very popular and effective with pupils. The school is checking the effect of the new policy carefully and is pleased with the results.

Pupils' attendance is very closely monitored, problems swiftly addressed and good attendance encouraged through use of certificates. The school has very good procedures to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils. The coordinator ensures training and awareness levels are high. The health and safety committee regularly checks the school and assesses for risk. Good use is made of expertise that is available, for example to teach safety to the children.

Arrangements for child protection are good. The coordinator has ensured staff are well aware of issues and of the correct procedures. Governors are extending awareness of this aspect to parents in the new school prospectus.

## **Partnership with parents and the community**

Parents feel that they are welcome in school and encouraged to be involved. They are given good quality day to day information through newsletters, the brochure and the prospectus. The curriculum information is also good including topic booklets for each year, literacy and numeracy booklets and curriculum evenings that have been appreciated. However, while annual reports are detailed, they are inconsistent in how clearly they show the degree of progress made and in setting targets for future development. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed through reviews and consultations.

Parental involvement in the school is good and makes a contribution to attainment and progress. Parents help in school with hearing readers, supporting swimming, in the library and with work on computers. The school makes appropriate use of homework and enables parents to help with this through the policy information and guidelines it provides.

Links with the community are wide ranging and have a positive effect on pupils' progress. There are close links with the local church which enhance the curriculum and personal development of pupils. Sponsorship from local firms has funded library refurbishment. There is a helpful link to Friends of the Earth, which has improved pupils' understanding of environmental issues facing the local area and has supported work undertaken in local studies.

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Leadership and management**

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher and deputy headteacher form an effective management team and set a clear educational direction for the work of the school. The headteacher is successful in establishing and maintaining a strong ethos of professional development within the school and in building and maintaining very good relationships between the whole school community. The deputy headteacher provides an excellent exemplar for staff both in classroom practice and as a subject manager. The strengths outlined in this area by the previous inspection have been maintained.

Overall, the school has made a satisfactory response to the issues raised in the last inspection. This has been achieved by maintaining a strong commitment to staff development and continual improvement in the quality of teaching. Results of national and school-based tests have been carefully analysed, and targets which aim to raise standards have been set. Recent targets are ambitious but the school is keen to challenge its own current performance and the value it adds to pupils' attainment on entry. Strong efforts have been made to boost the progress made in Year 3 in the first term, particularly by lower attainers. The school has allocated extra funding to extend this to other year groups later this year.

Pupils' behaviour on the playground has improved significantly. Teaching quality has improved and pupils have more opportunities to extend their own learning. Although the school's provision for mathematics and science has improved, higher attainers are not sufficiently stretched. The curriculum in information technology and in design and technology remains weak.

The school manages its provision for literacy and numeracy well. Staff have received good levels of support in implementing new national initiatives and these have resulted in better quality lessons in mathematics and English.

The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. There are good systems in place for identifying pupils, setting up plans to meet their needs, supporting them during lessons and reviewing their progress.

The governing body makes a good contribution to the school's work. Many of the governors are involved in the daily life of the school within their various areas of expertise. One governor, for example, has monitored teaching in literacy, whilst others have roles as support assistants or oversee the school's arrangements for health and safety. Governors are successful in acting as a critical friend to the school and in holding it to account for the standards it achieves. The school's performance is regularly discussed and the governing body are involved in setting targets. Most statutory requirements are met although there are some omissions in the governors' annual report to parents.

Subject managers are more effective in their roles than at the time of the last inspection. They are now more active in monitoring and supporting developments within their areas of responsibility. Whilst information gathered from monitoring activities is successfully used to address weaknesses in teaching or the curriculum, there is insufficient rigour in checking on pupils' progress or sampling the work they produce.

The school development plan is of good quality overall. However, some success criteria are not sharp enough in identifying the expected benefits of proposed action in terms of pupils' attainment and progress.

For the most part, the school meets the mission and aims it has set itself. Most policies are rooted in practice although in some subjects, for example, in information technology and design and technology where pupils' progress is weakest, all teachers do not follow them consistently

enough.

## **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

There is an adequate number of suitably qualified and experienced staff in the school to meet the requirements of the curriculum. There are also enough support staff to work with pupils in small groups or as individuals during lessons. They make a significant contribution to the good progress of pupils with special educational needs and lower attainers.

The school promotes staff development very effectively. The annual round of staff development interviews is productive and helps to identify individual training requirements. All staff attend a good range of courses and this has a positive impact on teaching and learning. For example, the deputy headteacher has been involved in a management training programme which has led to a careful analysis of the school's test results and setting of future performance targets. Since the previous inspection, the school has implemented a national literacy initiative and staff have been trained in its approach to teaching. The quality of teaching has improved as a result, particularly in the way lessons are organised and run. The school has included support staff and midday supervisors in its training programme. This has improved the way pupils' behaviour is managed throughout the school.

Whilst the school's resources are adequate overall, there are significant shortages in information technology. The school does not have enough hardware and software resources to make the further developments necessary to raise standards in the subject. There are good levels of resourcing in literacy and numeracy. The school's good range of books has helped to promote improved standards in reading. For example, there is a good selection of non-fiction texts including reference materials such as dictionaries and thesauri, which enables all pupils to have ready access and to practise skills in searching for information. The library is well organised and accessible. It has a good range of books and pupils' interest and enjoyment are supported well through selecting books and being guided in their choice.

The main school building is spacious and well maintained by a committed workforce. The school is surrounded by a generous amount of grassed and hard surface areas. Some seating and markings for playground games have been added for pupils' use that has improved their opportunities for social development.

### **The efficiency of the school**

The school deploys its staff very effectively. For example, classroom assistants are well briefed and play a major role in supporting pupils with special educational needs.

Learning resources are used to good effect to enhance teaching and learning in most subjects. However, those available for design and technology are not fully utilised and pupils have insufficient access to information technology resources to develop their skills.

Overall, the school has made a satisfactory response to the previous inspection. For example, it has improved the use of its library. However, there still remain some weaknesses in its use of accommodation. The outdoor area, for example, is not used well enough to develop children's physical skills. Too often teachers opt to use the hall for games lessons. The space is limited and it restricts pupils in the practising of their skills and in the time they can actually spend on activities. It limits the progress pupils can make in this aspect of physical education, particularly in the older junior classes.

Good use is made of time. There is a prompt start to the school day and break times do not extend beyond the time allocated for them. Subject leaders and the coordinator for special educational

needs put to good use the time they are given to support and oversee the development of their areas of responsibility.

The quality of financial planning is sound. Finances are linked closely to the targets in the school development plan. The governing body demonstrates a good knowledge of the budget. Governors are actively involved in the long-term strategic planning process. They debate the likely impact of spending decisions in terms of what it will do for the pupils in terms of their standards or progress they might make.

The school's administration runs smoothly and routine organisation is good. This enables teachers to concentrate on their teaching with very little disruption to lessons. The most recent auditor's report found the budget to be well managed. It contained very few recommendations and the governing body has made an appropriate response to them.

The funding the school has received for literacy and numeracy has been used effectively to increase resources. For example, pupils have access to a wide range of good quality information books, which successfully supports the development of their research skills. Funding allocated for pupils with special educational needs has provided good quality support for these pupils. They receive a high level of attention and as a result they make good progress.

The cost of educating pupils is below the national average. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work are good. When they enter the school, fewer pupils have average attainment than in most schools. By the time they leave their attainment is in line with national averages in English and mathematics but below average in science. Against schools with a similar intake, fewer pupils achieve higher levels in mathematics and science and results in all three core subjects compare less favourably. Standards in information technology and design and technology are not as high as they should be. The school is giving satisfactory value for money.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

#### **English**

The school's results in national tests for 11 year olds over the past few years show pupils' attainment as being close to the national average. This has been a consistent picture overall with an occasional dip, such as in 1998 when results fell below average. In this particular year group, 30 per cent of pupils were on the school's register for special educational needs. Compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the school's results in 1999 were below average although the number attaining higher levels was similar. There has been no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

Inspection findings are that the attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 6 is in line with the average for their age, although fewer pupils are likely to attain higher levels than in the previous year.

Pupils' speaking and listening skills are average. Most are confident speakers who contribute readily to class work. They read aloud clearly and can adapt their speech to different audiences. For example, they read their own reports on school football matches at assembly. They are good listeners and give their full attention to teachers and other members of their group.

Progress throughout the school is good and pupils have plenty of opportunities to practice speaking skills. Teachers are good role models and reinforce the need to pay attention to punctuation such as commas when reading aloud. They encourage pupils to use expression in their voice and coach them in doing this when they read aloud as individuals or as part of a group.

Pupils in Year 6 are average readers for their age. They understand what they read and cope well with the demands of reading across the other subjects of the curriculum. Higher attainers and most average attainers also draw inference from what they read and explain well, for example, the reasons why certain characters behave the way they do in books. Higher attainers read an adequate range of books and a good number of pupils are members of local libraries. By Year 6, many pupils have developed preferences for certain books and some are also looking critically at articles in newspapers. For example, higher attainers in a Year 6 lesson showed that they could differentiate between balanced, factual reporting of an incident and a more sensational style.

Pupils' attainment is strongest in locating information in non-fiction books. They use these skills competently within other curriculum subjects. For example, in history lessons they look up facts about ancient Egypt and pick out the most important details which they record accurately. They are competent at using dictionaries and other aids for writing.

Progress in reading is good. All pupils are acquiring skills at a good pace through working with a variety of texts including poetry and non-fiction. Teachers support them well in developing reference and library skills. Year 3 pupils, for example, learn how information is presented and understand why bold text or captions are used to highlight important points. Higher attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 move on fast in this aspect through guided reading sessions with their teacher. In Years 5 and 6, teachers ensure that there are adequate opportunities for pupils to research information and take notes. The school encourages an interest in books and a wide range of texts is covered in lessons. Most teachers are skilled at developing pupils' understanding of the way in which characters are developed and how writers use language to

express feelings and build tension.

By the time they leave the school, most pupils write competently in different styles. Their grammar and punctuation is mostly correct and higher attainers are starting to use punctuation, such as commas, within sentences. Although some of their narrative work shows imagination and interesting ideas, most pupils do not use a wide range of vocabulary. Their spelling is mostly correct, but they are not generally using more difficult words or extending sentences into more complex ones. Their handwriting is neat and legible although not all use pens.

Progress in writing is satisfactory. Pupils gain experience in using different writing forms through work in other subjects. This is developed better in some classes than others. In Year 3, teachers support writing well by using specific frameworks for different writing styles. For example, when pupils are recording work in science and they write a report on what they have done, teachers guide them well in presenting this in a specific way. Although the teacher provides a structure for the pupils' work, the information is recorded in their own words. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher worked with a lower attaining group to develop a story. The teacher provided them with a clear format for organising their thoughts and recording their ideas. This is not a consistent approach throughout the school and progress is slowed in some science and history lessons where pupils simply copy texts. Older pupils are developing writing skills well by proof reading their work and drafting it until they have a good copy.

Pupils with special educational needs make good and, at times, very good progress in all year groups. They are part of the main group for the lesson introduction and then work in small groups, guided by support staff to practice literacy skills. They return to the main group as the lesson is drawn together. Their reading improves at a good rate and they make particularly good progress in recording and presenting their ideas in an organised way.

Information technology is not used effectively to develop work in reading or writing. In some lessons pupils use computers to draft and edit their work but, overall, many opportunities to extend literacy skills are not taken; for example, in using computer graphics to present work in different formats and styles.

The quality of teaching in two thirds of lessons is good or very good. In the remainder it is satisfactory. In Years 3 and 4 it is consistently good or better.

All teachers have secure subject knowledge and plan lessons thoroughly. They are mostly very clear about what it is they hope pupils will gain from a particular lesson. Where lessons have shortcomings, this is not the case and the teacher's ideas are too broad.

Classes are managed well. There is no unnecessary movement or time wasted during lessons. All teachers organise pupils well when they are working in groups. This enables them to focus their attention on a particular group and closely guide their work without too many interruptions. Teachers place a high emphasis on developing pupils' vocabulary and for the most part they do this well. They introduce the correct terms and reinforce words that pupils should know. For example, in a Year 4 poetry lesson, the teacher used the terms 'stanza' and 'inference'. She talked about the 'form' of the poem. Pupils had heard these terms before and knew what she meant. Most teachers use display to good effect in reinforcing key vocabulary. In the Year 3 rooms, there are good examples of the way in which scientific vocabulary is consolidated by displays of key words.

Teachers are good at motivating pupils and stimulating their interest. They attempt to make even the driest grammar work interesting. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, the class was studying sentences. The teacher asked pupils to hold up different words on cards to form sentences.

Whilst they stood at the front of the class, other pupils told them which ones should be reordered or removed to make sense of the sentence. The class enjoyed the activity and made good progress in understanding that certain words played a key part in making the sentence correct.

Pupils' work is marked frequently enough but some teachers do not follow the school's marking policy closely enough. Higher attainers in particular, in Years 5 and 6, are not always made aware of how they can improve their work and teachers' comments are too bland. This is an area that has not shown significant improvement since the last inspection.

Overall, many of the strengths identified in the previous inspection have been maintained and the school has built upon these, for example, with improved assessment procedures and increased library use. The national literacy initiative has been carefully introduced and staff training has kept pace well with the new working methods required. This has resulted in better quality teaching through clearly planned lessons and higher expectations of pupils' attainment.

## **Mathematics**

The school's results in national tests for 11 year olds have remained static over the last four years with the exception of 1998 when there was a significant drop. A significant percentage of this year group were on the school's register for special educational needs. In the most recent tests 1999 the school's results indicated a return to the national average. However, when compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the school's performance is below average and fewer pupils attain higher than average levels when compared to other schools nationally. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls.

The attainment of the current Year 6 classes is average. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of number. They recognise the value of each digit in a number and can explain that when a number is multiplied by a hundred, for example, that each figure moves two places to the left. Most have good instant recall of their times tables. They use this knowledge well, for example, to work out percentages. They can round decimal numbers to the nearest whole number quickly.

Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measure. They understand formulas and correct units of measurement, showing this, for example, when calculating the areas of circles. Attainment is weakest in data handling and problem solving requiring more than one-step or operation.

Progress is satisfactory overall. It is better for pupils with special educational needs and lower and middle attaining pupils than it is for higher attainers. This is because the match of work is better for middle ability groups and the support given to lower attainers through using other adults is very good. Higher attainers are not always sufficiently challenged by some of the activities. When this occurs they tend to mark time rather than make new gains in knowledge and understanding. Best progress is made in number. Pupils in Year 3 learn about the value of each digit in a number through partitioning numbers involving hundreds, tens and units. They are improving their mental arithmetic skills through practising the doubling and halving of numbers. In Year 4 they build on these skills and improve their mental strategies. For example, they are learning that when trying to calculate one fifth of 80 they could work out one fifth of 40 and double the answer. Pupils in Years 4 are learning about fractions and developing their understanding that the number on the bottom tells them how many parts the whole is divided into. They are using this information to help them put a set of fractions in order of size.

Progress varies between classes. Best progress occurs when there is a better match of work for all three ability groups within the classes. For example, in parallel Year 5 classes, pupils were doing work on calculating perimeters. In one class the higher attainers undertook an exercise that was too easy for them. In the other class they were expected to make estimations of the perimeters of each shape using measuring skill to calculate the actual perimeter and record the answers, which involved them in using decimal numbers. This exercise challenged pupils and they made really good progress as a result. In this lesson the teacher had a very clear understanding of what different ability groups of pupils would learn by the end of it. This ensured that the level of challenge was appropriate for all pupils.

During the inspection a teacher in Year 4 having evaluated the work undertaken on fractions in one lesson, increased the challenge for the higher attainers significantly in the next lesson. As a result, they made very good progress and were able to calculate accurately fractions of amounts of money such as three fifths of 80 pence.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Teachers set demanding work for these pupils and ensure that they are well supported during lessons. These two factors are significant reasons why these pupils do well. For example, in Year 3 the pupils were well supported by the classroom assistant as they played a mathematical game 'fraction snap' which helped them to improve their recognition of a variety of fractions.

Pupils have very positive attitudes to mathematics. Their response during lessons is good. They listen attentively, settle quickly to their work, applying themselves well to their activities and persevere even when problems occur. They concentrate for sustained periods of time and show enjoyment of the subject. They have good relationships with one another and their teachers. They handle resources carefully and work well together. Homework is used effectively to support the development of their capacity for personal study.

The quality of the teaching is good. Approximately two thirds of lessons are of good or very good quality and the remainder are satisfactory. All teachers plan and prepare lessons thoroughly. They have good control of their classes and use adult helpers very effectively to support, for example, pupils in the lower attaining groups. Work is well matched for these pupils and for the middle ability groups. Whilst activities are planned for all three ability groups the teachers are not always successful in getting the best match and challenge of work for the higher attainers within their classes. This is the most significant reason why the school's results do not compare as well with similar schools. The recording of pupils' previous progress is not effective and as a result some teachers are not sure what pupils already know and can do. As a result some work is too easy for some pupils.

Good use is made by teachers of open questions to make pupils consider a variety of answers. For example in Year 3, the teacher asked pupils 'to give two numbers that added up to ten'. They ask pupils to explain how they have worked out the answer and through these approaches they help their pupils to improve their knowledge and understanding of mental strategies.

Whilst teachers' subject knowledge is secure there are occasions when too many ideas are introduced that are not directly linked to the learning intention. In a Year 3 lesson on fractions the stated intention was 'to recognise and find fractions of shapes' but the teacher introduced the idea of ordering fractions and this confused some of the pupils.

All teachers are good at developing pupils' understanding of mathematical vocabulary. Pupils are taught the meaning of mathematical language. For example in Year 5 they clearly understood what perimeter meant and in Year 6 pupils learn how to identify using correct terminology

angles such as obtuse and reflex.

Resources are used effectively to support learning. In a Year 3 lesson the teacher had made jam sandwiches and used them effectively to help pupils understand, that to make a half, each part must be equal. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher made good use of a counting stick to support pupils' development of their skills of estimation and mental arithmetic. 'Show me' cards are well used by teachers to assess how well their pupils are doing, for example in their instant recall of tables.

Homework is used to support pupils' work and help them to consolidate their knowledge and understanding of work covered in class.

Whilst pupils' work is marked regularly the quality of it varies. At its best pupils are given a clear indication of how well they have done or how they might improve their work. Good use is made by teachers of their assessments on pupils' progress against the key objectives. These evaluations are used to make adjustments to the planning of future work, for example in one class the evaluation identified problems pupils experienced with reading scales and the need for further work on this aspect.

Teachers are making good use of a variety of tests to assess pupils' performance periodically. The quality of the mathematics curriculum has improved since the last inspection. It is now planned using the national numeracy framework and there is far less reliance on worksheets. It is not dependent on any one particular commercial scheme of work.

There is a weakness in the system for recording pupils' progress and in the effectiveness of the records teachers receive when pupils transfer to the next year group. The school is well aware of this weakness and plans are in place to rectify this situation and ensure teachers have a much better understanding of what their pupils know and can do against each key objective. The school gives sufficient time to the teaching of numeracy.

The application of mathematics in other subjects of the curriculum is satisfactory. However, information technology is not used effectively to support learning in mathematics.

Leadership of the subject is very good. Teachers have been given the opportunity to observe demonstration lessons taken by the subject leader. These lessons have helped teachers to improve their own practice. The subject leader has used non-contact time efficiently and effectively to support the development of the staff and the curriculum. The school is well prepared to implement the national numeracy initiative.

The analysis of data is being well used to assist in the setting of groups for mathematics and in the target setting process. The school has set itself ambitious targets, for example for its Year 4 pupils by the time they leave the school. Systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' progress are in place but they are not fully effective. The weakness occurs because the system is not focusing sharply enough on pupils' attainment and progress. For example, whilst the school is confident that it is planning work for different ability groups, it is not checking that the level of challenge within these activities is demanding enough of its higher attaining pupils.

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The quality of teaching is much better. Pupils' attitudes to work are good, they are not restless nor are they wasting their time. Teachers' expectations of pupils have improved but there is still a weakness in the match of work for the higher attainers. The quality of the curriculum has improved. There is far less reliance on the use of a commercial scheme of work and they are not using outdated textbooks

or worksheets.

## **Science**

Pupils' performance at 11 years in national tests was below the national average between 1999 and 1998. Results in 1998 fell sharply due to the large number of pupils with special educational needs in the year group who took the tests. This picture improved in 1999 but results were still below the average for schools nationally and below those of schools with pupils from a similar background. Although there is a picture of improvement in the numbers of pupils attaining the average for their age overall, fewer pupils achieve higher levels than in most schools.

Inspection findings are that for the current group of Year 6 pupils, their attainment is in line with the national average. Since the previous inspection, the school has implemented an agreed science policy and scheme of work. This has improved coverage of the subject. With careful monitoring of what has been taught, the results have shown in higher standards of work and better attainment and progress for most pupils although there is still some underachievement by higher attainers.

By the time they leave the school, pupils' knowledge and understanding are secure across the areas of life processes, materials and physical processes. For example, pupils are able to clearly explain the relationship between sound and human hearing. They can also explain the processes involved in evaporation and condensation and make accurate predictions about the effect of a range of temperatures on a substance.

Most pupils competently describe the elements of a fair test. They show an appreciation of the effect variables can have on a result. They record and measure results accurately.

Most pupils are making satisfactory progress, particularly in gaining knowledge and in developing observational skills. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils noted carefully the effects of light and shadow. As a result, they were able to explain the movement of the sun and the effect it had on the length of the shadow.

Pupils' investigative skills do not develop at the same pace however. Lessons are often strongly directed by the teacher and leave insufficient scope for pupils to pose relevant questions that will lead them to an investigation of their ideas. Some teachers are more skilled than others at encouraging pupils to do this. For example, in a Year 3 lesson on magnetism, the teacher led a discussion about magnets and what the class had noticed when handling them. She recorded the children's views and any questions they asked. These were then used to form the basis of a series of investigations. One group chose to find out how strong magnets were by seeing how many paper clips different ones picked up. Another tested them to see if the magnetic force worked through various materials such as paper.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they work in small groups with support staff. Their confidence to offer explanations and record what they have noticed increases and they consolidate what they have learned well.

Higher attainers are not challenged well enough. In many lessons, they undertake experiments already decided by the teacher and copy the results of experiments written in the teacher's words rather than their own.

The quality of teaching is good overall which is a marked improvement from the time of the previous inspection report. This has been achieved through an increase in staff confidence and knowledge about teaching science. Also the introduction of a scheme of work has outlined

clearly for them what should be taught to each year group. All lessons are planned with a clear idea of what it is that pupils should know, understand or be able to do as a result of the teaching. However, records of pupils' previous attainment are not detailed enough to inform teachers of knowledge or skills already acquired. Therefore when planning lessons, work is not always matched closely enough to pupils' needs, particularly those of higher attainers. At the start of each lesson, teachers recap work done in previous lessons well. This supports pupils well in consolidating and reinforcing scientific ideas and learning.

Lessons are well organised and equipment is ready to hand. Resources are stored carefully on trolleys and are accessible to teachers and pupils. This improvement has occurred since the last inspection and has made a marked improvement in the pace of lessons and time spent locating equipment. Teachers organise groups effectively so that they are able to discuss and cooperate when working on tasks. This also ensures that teachers can focus their attention on specific groups to check on progress and make timely interventions to correct mistakes or redirect work when needed.

The use of information technology to support work in science is weak. For example, there is insufficient use of data handling to record the results of experiments.

Since the last inspection, responsibility for the subject has changed. The present coordinator has made several changes that are steadily paying off in an improving picture of teaching and its impact on pupils' attainment. For example, areas of knowledge where staff lack confidence are identified and in-service training is provided to improve the situation.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **Information technology**

Attainment of the older pupils is below the level expected and throughout the school progress is unsatisfactory. Although there is a computer in each classroom, pupils have insufficient opportunity to develop the necessary skills to achieve a sound standard of achievement. Most acquire basic word processing skills by the time they leave the school. They are able to operate the main keyboard functions, save and file their work on floppy discs but their experience is limited.

Progress in data handling is weak overall. Although some work is undertaken in representing graphical information as bar charts and line graphs, this is not done with enough regularity to ensure that pupils make steady progress in learning to record information using information technology. Little work in modelling or control technology is undertaken.

Some pupils are aware of the wider uses of information technology and are knowledgeable about how to access the Internet, and they have communicated with others using e-mail. They understand how to use the Internet for researching information for project work or for homework topics. Where children have access to computers at home, they develop key skills quickly, but this potential is not built upon in school.

Little direct teaching of the subject was observed during the inspection. Judgements about the quality of teaching are based on scrutiny of teachers' plans and the quality of attention given to pupils working on computers. Teaching is unsatisfactory. Teachers do not allow for pupils' current progress and attainment to be reflected in their planning. For example, pupils on entry to school have some experience of the key skills in word processing but work in this area is

repeated.

Overall subject knowledge is weak and the school has set out plans for a programme of staff training to address this issue.

A policy for information technology has been drawn up and a list of skills to be taught to pupils in each year group has been agreed. This is not monitored rigorously enough in practice and has a limited influence on the quality of teaching and learning.

The school has made slow progress in upgrading its resources and although new software has been purchased to support work in other subjects, important national initiatives have not been yet been introduced.

The development of information technology is seen by the school as one of its key priorities and future developments are mapped out in the school development plan. Many targets contained in the plan are directly related to issues raised by the inspection.

### **Art**

A limited number of lessons were observed during the inspection. Evidence has also been drawn from pupils' work samples, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers. Standards are similar to those found in most schools and progress for all pupils is satisfactory.

Children's skills develop steadily and they experience a wide variety of media including paints, pencils, textiles and chalks. The oldest pupils have acquired sound skills in observational drawing and they produce detailed drawings and designs. For example, pupils in Year 6 illustrated and drew designs for an Egyptian wall hanging. They selected appropriate figures and representations of the period and produced them carefully and accurately showing a good sense of proportion and scale.

Younger pupils use colour well and develop the skill of producing different textures with paint. They study the work of other artists and create paintings in the same style and attempt to copy their techniques. Pupils in Year 3 for example, paint in the style of Van Gogh. Year 4 pupils have produced striking work based on Renoir's painting of umbrellas and Monet's study of water lilies. Too little three-dimensional work is undertaken throughout the school; for example, in using clay or other modelling media.

In the lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory. Teachers plan interesting activities. They prepare materials and resources well and provide good guidance to pupils by suggesting improvements to work as it is in progress. Teachers' plans for individual lessons are detailed in describing activities that will take place during lessons. However, they do not place sufficient emphasis on the skills to be taught or how work will build on what pupils already know and can do.

### **Design and technology**

Only two lessons were observed. Additional evidence has been drawn from scrutiny of teachers' lesson plans and discussions with teachers and pupils.

For most pupils, lack of regular practice and the opportunity to build upon skills they have acquired results in standards of work which are below those typical in most schools. Although pupils in some classes make good progress in individual lessons, over time their progress is unsatisfactory. Pupils have successfully produced work to a good standard in textiles, construction and book making but these experiences are too random. Older pupils, for example,

make wall hangings related to their work on Ancient Egypt.

Children respond well to the subject and enjoy the practical tasks and sharing of ideas. They listen carefully to instructions and work well together. Although children are keen to undertake practical tasks and see some of their ideas as a final product, they are held back by their weak skills in working with tools and materials. For example, some Year 6 pupils were unable to saw softwood strips safely and efficiently.

In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good. Teachers were clear about what they wanted the class to achieve. They prepared resources carefully and organised the children in groups to make the best use of the equipment available. Adult helpers were well briefed and pupils made good progress in developing key skills. In Year 3 for example, children succeeded in making linkages between different lengths of card with split pins because they were supported well in small groups.

The subject is well resourced with good quality tools and materials but these are not accessible to pupils and they have too little opportunity to select equipment for themselves.

The school's policy and scheme of work sets out the skills which need to be taught to each year group. However, teachers do not follow this in a logical and coherent way. This means that whilst pupils undertake some interesting work that develops their skills, there is an inconsistent provision between year groups and classes and work does not build on what they can already do.

### **Geography and history**

Standards of work are similar to those found in most schools and pupils make satisfactory progress overall in both history and geography.

Pupils make best progress in developing their sense of chronology. In Year 4 pupils develop their understanding of chronology through placing Tudor kings and queens in the correct time sequence. In Year 5 they apply this understanding as they sequence events that took place in Victorian times. Teachers use highly effective methods to support the development of this knowledge. For example, in a Year 6 class the teacher asked pupils to produce their own time line from ancient Egypt to the present day. Pupils had produced paintings of famous people and events over time and displayed them in chronological order. As a result of this and similar activities, pupils develop a good understanding of chronology and can correctly locate periods of time from the Ancient Egyptians to the present day. They learn to use abbreviations such as BC and AD and they know how they can find out about the past and are able to draw evidence from a variety of sources.

Pupils make satisfactory gains in knowledge and understanding of historical facts. For example, in Year 3, pupils study homes in the times of the Celts and are able to compare them with their homes today. Year 5 have a good understanding of what life was like in Victorian times and can describe similarities and difference in schools then and now. In each year group pupils can recall facts about famous people and events they have studied. Pupils in Year 5, for example, knew about the Great Fire of London how it started and the fact that it rid the city of a disease carried by the rats.

Sound progress is also made in geography. Pupils develop their mapping skills well and by Year 6 they are able to locate places and features on maps of the world and use four figure coordinates. In Year 3, pupils learn to draw simple routes and see the relevance of this type of work because it is applied to practical situations. For example the teacher set them the task of answering the

question “How do I get to the swimming baths?” They successfully produced simple route maps to the baths on which they identified significant landmarks. Pupils make satisfactory progress in learning about physical features. For example, in Year 4 pupils study rivers and are able to show they understand the meaning of terms such as source and mouth as they label drawings of the route of the River Calder. In Year 6 they can identify on maps the start of a river and plot its route to the sea, but they are less secure in understanding about how rivers through erosion cause the formation of waterfalls and valleys.

Good progress is made in learning about environmental issues. Pupils in the lower juniors carry out surveys to find how attractive an area around the school is and how they can improve their immediate environment. Older juniors are able to suggest a number of ways in which the environment is damaged, for example, through pollution, and make suggestions for improving this situation. Through studying rainforests pupils can explain why it is important that we do not destroy them as well as developing their understanding about different climatic conditions.

Throughout the school pupils are making sound progress in developing their skills of research in both subjects. They are using a variety of sources to locate information and, for example, in a Year 4 geography lesson pupils did this very effectively to draw up a fact file about rivers around the world. In a Year 5 history lesson pupils drew on a range of information to produce a play script which focused on what it was like in Victorian schools. However, information technology is not well used to support the development of these skills further.

The last inspection report made reference to a minority of pupils being distracted and inattentive but this is no longer the case. Pupils’ attitudes to work are good. They show interest in lessons and concentrate well on the tasks they are given. All pupils behave well in lessons and are good at sharing resources with one another.

The teaching of these subjects is never less than satisfactory and approximately half of lessons are of good quality. In the best lessons the teachers are very clear about what they expect children to learn or be able to do and they plan very relevant and interesting activities. They explain to pupils the relevance of the work to them. Teachers’ subject knowledge is secure. Good use is made of secondary sources to support pupils’ understanding and progress. For example, in Year 4 the teacher made very good use of aerial photographs to help pupils plot the journey of a river from its source to the mouth. In both subjects teachers make sure the pupils are given plenty of opportunities to develop and apply their literacy skills. For example, in Year 5, pupils produce newspaper type articles of life in Victorian times. They impress upon pupils the need to set out historical facts within their articles and that they will assess the quality of the work against this criteria. Whilst these types of activities support pupils in organising and communicating their work, it is less effective in some classes because the quality of teaching is not as good. Some teachers place too much emphasis on the use of worksheets and pupils completing comprehension type exercises, which involve them in inserting a missing word.

## **Music**

Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and are typical of those found in most schools.

Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the key stage. They develop a good understanding of rhythm and older pupils progress onto more complicated pieces, clapping and playing rhythmic patterns which they have arranged themselves. They are able to perform using a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments and keyboards. Younger pupils can keep a steady beat and stay together when they are playing.

Pupils are developing a sound knowledge about different composers. After listening to a piece of music, younger pupils can talk about how it makes them feel. Older pupils can recognise how different composers use instruments to create a particular effect.

Many pupils take part in extra-curricular activities such as recorder groups. Participation in the choir enables some pupils to achieve good standards in singing. They clearly enjoy singing and perform competently with a good sense of pitch and tone. There are further opportunities for pupils to learn other instruments under the guidance of local authority peripatetic music teachers.

The quality of teaching is good, with some staff possessing a high level of skills within the subject. The choir is supported by an accomplished pianist and most lessons are lively and purposeful. Teachers transfer their enthusiasm to the children and motivate them well. Teachers make good use of the musical resources available and ensure that pupils have access to instruments during lessons and many opportunities to perform. Pupils often perform in assembly or in church and at school productions. During assemblies the whole school listens to a range of musical styles from different periods. These opportunities enhance children's enjoyment of music and increase their confidence in performing and developing musical appreciation.

### **Physical education**

Dance was not taught during the inspection. Standards in gymnastics, games and swimming are similar to those seen in most schools.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in games. In Year 6 they work well as members of a team for example, when they play small-sided games of attack versus defence. They are able to dodge, pass and move and sustain energetic activity for appropriate periods of time. Their skills of aiming and shooting are appropriate for their age. They are all appropriately kitted for their sessions and understand the effects of exercise on their bodies.

Best use is not made of the accommodation to support pupils' progress and learning in games. Too often teachers opt to take these lessons in the school hall and not use the outdoor facility. As a result, particularly for the older pupils, progress is hindered. They are working in a restricted space and have to sit and wait for turns. This limits the time that they can spend practising as well as the level of challenge within the skill practice.

Progress made in gymnastics is satisfactory. Pupils learn how to put out their own gymnastics apparatus and understand how to carry it safely. They are learning how to travel in a variety of ways and improving their skills of balancing. For example, in Year 5 pupils improve the range of ways in which they can balance on different points and patches and then work with a partner to extend these ideas.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Some teachers present themselves as very good role models by changing for the lesson, whilst some do not wear appropriate footwear for their lessons. All teachers ensure pupils understand the importance of working in silence and issues related to health and safety. In the better lessons the teachers emphasise the importance of developing correct techniques and ensure that pupils spend the majority of the time practising their skills. For example, in a Year 4 class the teacher reinforced the technique of the forward roll and made good use of pupil demonstration to ensure pupils understood what was required. In gymnastics, the best work occurs when pupils are given the opportunity to transfer work they have done on the floor onto the apparatus.

Procedures for assessing and recording overall attainment and progress in games, dance and gymnastics are unsatisfactory.

## **Swimming**

The inspection of this school included a focused view of swimming, which is reported below.

### **The standards of swimming**

The vast majority of the current Year 6, which comprises 66 pupils, has already achieved the national expectation of being able to swim 25 metres. Most pupils will have reached this goal by the time they leave the school as, with the exception of one pupil, the remainder can all swim. All pupils are water confident. They are making good progress over time, given that most of them could not swim when they entered the school.

The quality of instruction is satisfactory. In the lessons observed one instructor spent more time supervising the pupils than instructing them. Much of the instruction is done at an individual level, with pupils being given the maximum amount of time available to practise their techniques and improve their range and quality of the strokes. Subject knowledge is secure.

Resources are used to good effect. For example, all pupils requiring armbands have access to them and rubber bricks are used to develop pupils' confidence in going below the water level to retrieve objects. They are given opportunities to develop important skills such as treading water.

The school provides good support for poor or non-swimmers. For example in Year 3, the teacher and adult helper get into the water to swim alongside and support individual pupils who are less confident. The classes are divided into two ability groups and each group has their own qualified instructor.

The school has scheduled swimming on to the timetable for all classes. Therefore the poor and non-swimmers are given opportunities each year to make progress.

The curriculum is appropriate. Teachers do not plan the lessons because this is the responsibility of the swimming instructors, whose services the school buys. Appropriate emphasis is given to the teaching of water safety and survival, although no activities for this aspect are undertaken in the classroom. All year groups are allocated swimming time. Year 3 have a weekly lesson each term. Years 4, 5 and 6 have a weekly lesson for one term within each academic year. There are no after school clubs for swimming but the school does participate in the local swimming clubs gala.

The assessment arrangements for swimming are good. The pupils are regularly assessed against the local education authority's swimming awards scheme. Checks on progress are made regularly, during swimming sessions, and pupils are awarded certificates indicating the level of their award. The achievements needed to gain the level are set out on an overall assessment chart. These assessments focus on more than just the distance the pupil can swim. For example, they include water safety skills and pupil abilities to get in and out of the pool unaided. They provide good evidence of pupils' progress over time. Unfortunately the instructor with responsibility for this school was absent at the time of the inspection and no planning or records were available for scrutiny. Whilst records are maintained for all pupils the lack of availability of these records is a significant weakness as there are no duplicate copies kept at the baths or in the school.



## PART C: INSPECTION DATA

### SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

Four inspectors spent the equivalent of 14 days in total in the school. In making judgements about the work of the school, they drew from the following evidence base:

- \* Observation of 43 lessons; this amounted to 31 hours spent observing lessons.
- \* Sampling pupils' work from different ability levels within each year group.
- \* Hearing pupils read; 24 were heard in all.
- \* Attendance at assemblies.
- \* Observation of lunchtimes and break times.
- \* Discussions with the headteacher on a daily basis.
  - \* Discussions with subject managers about their areas of responsibility.
- \* Discussion with support staff and supervisory staff.
- \* A meeting with parents which 16 attended.
  - \* The responses to questionnaires sent to parents about the work of the school for which there were 112 returns.
- \* A meeting with governors of the school.

### DATA AND INDICATORS

#### Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with Statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y3 – Y6	254	4	55	30

#### Teachers and classes

##### Qualified teachers (Y3 – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	9.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

##### Education support staff (Y3 – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked each week	114

**Average class size**

Average class size:

32

**Financial data**

Financial year:

1998/99

	£
Total income	353,852
Total expenditure	371,115
Expenditure per pupil	1,467
Balance brought forward from previous year	36,494
Balance carried forward to next year	19,231

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

250

Number of questionnaires returned:

112

### Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	23	72	4	1	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	42	49	6	2	1
The school handles complaints from parents well	13	64	20	2	2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	30	67	4	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	23	68	6	3	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	32	65	2	1	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	29	62	8	1	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	25	67	3	3	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	23	68	8	1	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	17	69	12	3	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	52	44	3	2	0