

INSPECTION REPORT

Bitterne Manor Primary School

Southampton

LEA area: Southampton

Unique reference number: 116089

Headteacher: Nigel Williamson

Reporting inspector: Chris Ashton
21187

Dates of inspection: 13th – 17th March 2000

Inspection number: 188760

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Quayside Road Bitterne Southampton
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Ann Young
Date of previous inspection:	1 st – 4 th July 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Chris Ashton	Registered inspector	Information Technology Physical Education Children aged under five	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? – The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? School data and indicators
Elizabeth Forster	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Brian McCutcheon	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	How high are standards? – Pupils' attitudes' values and personal development
Sandy Wellstead	Team inspector	English Music Religious education Special educational needs English as an additional language	
David Westall	Team inspector	Science Art Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Bitterne Manor Primary School is a community school serving the Bitterne area of Southampton and provides education for children aged 4 to 11. In recent years there have been a variety of different intake numbers which has led to some year groups needing two classes, and some mixed age classes. The intake number has now been standardised at 30 pupils per year. Currently there are 245 pupils on roll, which is broadly average in size when compared with schools nationally. There is an imbalance of boys and girls with only 108 boys and 137 girls. There is no apparent reason for this beyond reflecting the local community. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals (19%) is broadly average. A higher percentage of pupils (3.6%) have English as an additional language than in schools nationally; the main first languages spoken are Punjabi, Gujarati and Farsi. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs (23%) is also higher than the national average. The number of pupils with statements of educational need is broadly average (1.6%). The attainment on entry to the school has been broadly average in recent years, although this year's reception intake has entered with higher than average attainment in some areas of learning. The school's main priorities for development include raising the quality of teaching and standards of achievement, developing home-school links, including homework, and improving after-school provision for pupils.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Overall, the school provides an acceptable standard of education for pupils, although this is considerably better in Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1. Children receive a good start in the reception class. Pupils leave the school with broadly average standards of attainment as a result of good teaching in Key Stage 2. Although the overall educational direction and leadership provided by the headteacher has some shortcomings, the school's ethos is a strength, and this is promoted well by the headteacher and staff. This contributes to pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' personal development is very well promoted and pupils relate very positively to each other and the adults in the school;
- A very positive ethos has been developed which is successfully promoted by the headteacher and staff;
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good across the school, particularly so at Key Stage 2;
- Teaching at Key Stage 2 is good overall, with very good and excellent teaching evident which contributes to pupils making good progress;
- The school's emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good;
- Standards achieved by pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 in physical education and design and technology are above those expected for pupils of this age;
- The support for talented pupils in English at Key Stage 2 is good.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics, science and writing at Key Stage 1 are below average;
- The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 has some weaknesses ;
- A curriculum requirement in information technology, controlling, modelling and monitoring, is not taught sufficiently across the school so making overall standards in the subject below expectations. There is also insufficient up to date equipment to support, fully, the teaching of the subject;
- There are some weaknesses in the leadership provided by the headteacher in respect of the curriculum, the management of change and communication with governors, staff and parents;
- Insufficient time is allocated to science, design and technology, geography and history at Key Stage 1 to ensure breadth in pupils' learning in these subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in July 1996 and since then has made satisfactory progress in addressing the weaknesses identified at that time. The action taken to address most of the key issues from the last inspection has been successful. Across the school, and particularly at Key Stage 2, lesson planning is now a strength, with clear, appropriate learning objectives that are shared with pupils at the beginning of each lesson. Since the last inspection a teacher has been appointed to co-ordinate the support for more able pupils. This work is successful in Key Stage 2, with good practice observed in English. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. The very good and better teaching has been maintained, but now there is far less unsatisfactory teaching. Curriculum guidance has been developed, often by adopting the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's schemes of work. Provision for children aged under five has improved significantly, although there are still some issues to address about how the curriculum is organised and planned. The work of the governing body has developed significantly since the last inspection; governors are increasingly aware of their role and responsibilities, and have been appropriately involved in the school's strategic planning. Together with the headteacher, governors have agreed a job description for him, which did not exist at the last inspection. The school's assessment procedures and practice are good and have improved since the last inspection. Target-setting and the involvement of parents are good features. The policy and guidance, however, has not caught up with practice and is out of date. Recently the school has paid good attention to improving attendance and punctuality, and this focus has had positive results.

STANDARDS

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

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

Overall, in Key Stage 2, the results last year were lower than in previous years, although the school improved results in English. The lower results are mainly explained by the absence of some pupils who were likely to achieve the average standard on the days of the tests. As a result the school did not meet its targets last year. The work of current Year 6 pupils suggest that they will achieve broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science in the National Curriculum tests this summer. Standards are below average in information technology due to part of the curriculum not being covered. In religious education standards achieved are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus for the subject. Standards are above average in design and technology and physical education. In art, history and geography standards are in line with expectations for pupils' ages. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards in music. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards achieved in mathematics and science are below average. In English, standards overall are in line with expectations, but in writing they are below. As in Key Stage 2, standards are below average in information technology due to part of the curriculum not being covered. In art, design and technology and physical education average standards are achieved. In religious education, geography, history and music there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards. Children in the reception class are on course to achieve above average standards for five year olds in the mathematical, physical and personal and social areas of learning. In the language and literacy, creative and knowledge and understanding of the world areas of learning standards achieved are likely to be in line with expectations of five year olds.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils show positive attitudes to school, particularly at Key Stage 2. They are keen to learn and show good levels of interest in what they are being taught.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is good overall, with very good behaviour observed in several Key Stage 2 lessons.
Personal development and relationships	The school promotes, very successfully, pupils' personal development. Pupils have positive relationships with each other and adults in school. Pupils are aware of the needs of others and take care of each other.
Attendance	Attendance is in line with the national average, and the school is working hard to reduce the level of unauthorised absence.

One of the school's strengths is promoting pupils' personal development through its emphasis on personal, health and social education, and the expectations set by staff about behaviour. Pupils have positive attitudes to what they do in school. Relationships are good, and the awareness shown by pupils to those around them is also good. Doors are always held open for others to pass through and pupils show good care and consideration for those who are unwell or feeling unhappy.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Across the school, over twenty percent of teaching is very good or better, seventy-six percent is satisfactory or good and over three percent is unsatisfactory. At Key Stage 2, teaching in English and mathematics is good overall, with some excellent teaching in literacy lessons. At Key Stage 1, the overall teaching of English is satisfactory, although there are some weaknesses in teaching mathematics and science. Across the school, literacy and numeracy skills are taught satisfactorily, with stronger teaching in Key Stage 2. Teaching satisfactorily meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and the talented and gifted pupils. Particular strengths in teaching, especially in Key Stage 2, include very good lesson planning with clear and appropriate learning objectives which are shared with pupils, very good management of pupils, good pace to lessons and often good subject knowledge for the lessons taught. The effect of these on pupils' learning is to maintain pupils' interest and concentration, provide appropriate levels of work to meet the needs of individuals, and enable them to make good progress in many lessons. In the small percentage of unsatisfactory lessons, in Key Stage 1, the weaknesses include slow pace, lack of clarity about what is to be learnt and low teacher expectations. These lead to pupils making less progress than could be expected and, at times, losing interest in what is being taught. The teaching of children aged under five is good overall, due to the teacher's enthusiasm and high expectations, well-planned and focused lessons and good team work between staff in the reception class.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum has breadth, but is not as well balanced as it could be. At Key Stage 1, there is insufficient time given to science, geography

	and history and across the school not all the information technology curriculum requirements are fully covered.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good which helps these pupils make satisfactory progress overall, and good progress in Key Stage 2
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Sound provision is made, with the school using the Local Education Authority service to support pupils with English as an additional language
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision is made in these areas of pupils' development. An understanding of cultural diversity, as well as a focus on pupils' own cultural heritage, is a feature of the school's work.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is generally good attention to pupils' welfare with good procedures for promoting good behaviour, attendance and the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress.

The school has satisfactory links with parents. The information provided by the school is clear and, overall, parents are satisfactorily involved with the work of the school. The main weaknesses in the curriculum are due to the lack of time devoted to some subjects, particularly at Key Stage 1. The lack of equipment in information technology makes it difficult for staff to cover the controlling, monitoring and modelling requirements of the curriculum. The staff care well for pupils and there is consistency in expectations about pupils' behaviour from staff, which contributes to the good standards of behaviour in the school. The emphasis on personal, health and social education contributes well to pupils' personal development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has articulated a clear vision for the school, which contributes to the positive ethos. However, there are weaknesses in his curriculum leadership and, on occasions, his communication with governors, staff and parents has shortcomings. Subject leadership varies in its effectiveness, partly as a result of the overall leadership of the curriculum. The headteacher's management of change is not always as successful as might be expected.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are becoming increasingly effective in their role. They are clear about their responsibilities and fulfil them except for ensuring that the headteacher is appraised.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is becoming increasingly clear about how to evaluate its performance. It is involved usefully in a school self-evaluation programme with officers of the Local Education Authority, and is beginning to analyse performance data using information technology to good effect.
The strategic use of resources	Sound use is made, overall, of resources to support the school's development, although the strategic plan is not fully costed.

The school's accommodation is good and used well. The staffing is adequate to teach the National Curriculum and support pupils' learning needs. Learning resources are adequate in all subjects except information technology. Many of the computers are outdated and there is a lack of equipment to support pupils' learning about control, monitoring and modelling. The governing body and senior staff are aware of the principles of best value, although they need to be developed in practice, and always seek to get good value for money from expenditure.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good quality teaching • Approachable staff • High expectations that the staff have of pupils • Their children like school and make good progress • The school enables their children to become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework • Extra-curricular provision • Being well informed about how their child is getting on • The close involvement of parents • The leadership and management of the school

The inspection team agree with the positive views that parents have of the school. The team also agrees that aspects of leadership and management have shortcomings. However, the team does not fully agree with the parents other negative views of the school. Homework is satisfactory, although it lacks consistency from one year group to another; extra-curricular provision is judged to be satisfactory; and the target-setting process for pupils, which involves parents, keeps them informed about their child's progress. Although more information could be given about the curriculum, the information provided by the school overall is satisfactory. Parents' involvement in the school could be improved but, overall, it is judged to be satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The standards achieved by children aged under five are likely to be above those expected of five year olds in the mathematics, physical and personal and social areas of learning. In the language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative areas of learning children are likely to achieve standards in line with expectations of five year olds.
2. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, pupils achieved above average results in writing when, compared with schools nationally and similar schools, and below average results in reading and mathematics. In science, where there are no national tests, the teachers' assessment of pupils standards was well below the national average. However, the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels of attainment was well above average in writing and close to the national average in reading and mathematics. In science, teacher assessment of pupils' attaining higher levels was also close to the national average.
3. When considering the school's results over the last four years at Key Stage 1, attainment in reading and writing is close to the national average, whereas results in mathematics are well below. Girls have achieved less well than boys in reading, similar results in writing, but better than boys in mathematics. These results are different from national trends, but there are no obvious reasons for this after considering the school's overall provision.
4. At the end of Key Stage 1, the inspection findings are that pupils are achieving broadly average standards in English, although in writing these are below average, and below average standards in mathematics and science. In English, pupils listen and speak well and show that they have an extensive vocabulary. Many pupils read appropriate texts fluently, use phonics successfully to work out unknown words, and more able pupils use inference to understand the meaning of stories. In writing, many pupils are not confident with sentence structure, punctuation or spelling and some have not mastered accurate letter formation.
5. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieved average results in the 1999 National Curriculum test results in English, mathematics and science, when compared with schools nationally. When compared with similar schools the results in English were below average, but average in mathematics and science. Pupils attaining higher levels of achievement in the tests were also in line with the average in similar schools, but the number attaining the expected level was below the average of similar schools.
6. At Key Stage 2, over the last four years, the school's trend in attainment in English, is better than schools nationally. In mathematics, the school's results have always been above the national average, although last year there was a fall in the overall result, so that now the school's results are close to the national average. In science, the results have fallen in the last two years, from a position of pupils achieving well above the national average to now being close to the average. Taking the three subjects together, over the last four years, the school's results have shown a rising trend, but less so than nationally. Overall, during the last four years, girls have out-performed boys to a higher level than that found nationally. An analysis of the school's results, especially for last year, suggests that the needs of the more able pupils are being well met, but the school has not been as successful in ensuring, overall, that all pupils are sufficiently challenged in their work.
7. The inspection findings, at the end of Key Stage 2, indicate that pupils are likely to achieve average standards in English, mathematics and science. In English, pupils write for a wide range of purposes using a breadth of form, style and vocabulary, although some pupils'

writing is hampered by technical and secretarial weaknesses. Handwriting and presentation are overall strengths in Key Stage 2. Pupils speak clearly and listen carefully to those around them, which enables them to respond appropriately to questions and discussions. Pupils read a wide range of books with interest and successfully find information to support learning in most subjects. In mathematics, pupils have a sound understanding of the number system, can interpret data accurately, and understand measures and shape and space satisfactorily. In science, pupils show a sound understanding of materials, parts of the human body and magnetism. They are also able to investigate successfully through sensible predictions and careful recording of results.

8. Last year, the results at Key Stage 1 were less good than at Key Stage 2. This is explained somewhat by the nature of last year's Year 2 cohort, which had a third of its pupils on the special educational needs register, (this is higher than for the school generally). The school has set challenging targets for achievement in both key stages, but did not meet them all last year. There is already concern that pupils this year will not meet the science target at Key Stage 1.
9. At the end of both key stages, in information technology, the standards observed in lessons are in line with expectations, but as the school does not cover the controlling, monitoring and modelling aspects of the curriculum sufficiently, the overall standards achieved by pupils are below those expected. At Key Stage 1, pupils are gaining confidence using word processing and art programs and some have analysed data using a simple data base. In Key Stage 2, pupils confidently use a range of programs to support their learning such as word processing, spreadsheets and databases. They have also established the school's web site.
10. In religious education there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards at Key Stage 1, but at Key Stage 2 standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Older pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of world religions and Christian traditions. They are able to draw parallels between religious teachings and their own lives.
11. At Key Stage 1, there was insufficient evidence to judge standards in geography, history and music. In art, design and technology and physical education, pupils attain standards that are in line with their ages and capabilities. At Key Stage 2 in art, geography and history, pupils achieve standards that are in line with their ages and capabilities, and in physical education and design and technology standards are above average. In music, insufficient evidence was available to make an overall judgement, although the standard of work observed was in line with pupils' ages and capabilities.
12. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards in line with their capabilities in all subjects, at both key stages, and those with English as an additional language achieve standards expected of them for their ages, where standards overall are in line with expectations or the national average. During the inspection, no significant difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls was noted.
13. Overall, the school has set challenging targets for pupils to achieve at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Progress has been made in achieving these at Key Stage 2, although not in every subject, but at Key Stage 1 the school has some way to go to meet all the targets set. However, the emphasis that the school has placed on analysing results' data and modifying the curriculum to address any weaknesses is beginning to make a difference to standards in those subjects where there has been under-performance.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. In all year groups, pupils, including those with special educational needs, demonstrate

consistently very positive attitudes towards the school. They take a keen interest in their lessons and are eager to join in discussions and ask and answer questions. They respond well to challenge and pace in lessons and present their work with care. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to the contributions of other class members. They collaborate well together and share resources sensibly. They are particularly good at taking turns in information technology lessons when several may have to work with one computer. Pupils have mature and sensible attitudes to working independently and show initiative in planning and organising their own work. They try hard to meet the targets set for improving their work.

15. Overall, across the school, pupils' behaviour is good, with some very good behaviour observed in some Key Stage 2 lessons. They quickly learn the standards expected of them and respond positively to the school rules. They are aware of the difference between right and wrong and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Pupils who find it less easy to meet these high standards accept the need for behaviour targets in lessons and are usually successful in meeting them. Last year, two pupils were excluded on several occasions, but so far this year there have been no exclusions. Pupils move around the school in a calm and orderly fashion and their sensible behaviour in the dining hall makes lunchtimes a pleasant social occasion. Inappropriate behaviour or bullying is rare and there is no evidence of sexist or racist behaviour. Pupils take care of school property and appreciate and value their interesting school grounds.
16. Relationships in the school are a strength and this benefits pupils' learning. Adults and pupils trust each other and show mutual respect and consideration. Pupils with special educational needs respond positively to the sensitive support provided by teachers and learning assistants and they are fully integrated and valued members of the school community. Pupils are confident, courteous, friendly and have high self esteem and this creates a harmonious and caring community. Pupils are sensitive to others' feelings, value contributions from all, respect different beliefs and are generous in their praise of effort or success. The youngest pupils learn very quickly how to work collaboratively and these good habits are sustained throughout the school.
17. Pupils willingly carry out a range of responsibilities, which they do effectively and with no fuss. They are perceptive to what needs to be done and will, for example, organise additional chairs or the use of the overhead projector without prompting. They take a pride in being helpful to their teachers and are considerate to others in holding doors open and looking after the needs of younger pupils. Pupils develop a strong sense of social responsibility and are keen to support various charities. They were particularly successful in devising their own ways of raising money for Comic Relief last year.
18. The school is successfully addressing the below average levels of attendance and poor punctuality identified in the previous OFSTED inspection. Attendance is now in line with the national average although levels of unauthorised absence are still higher than in most schools. Registers are correctly completed and fully meet statutory requirements. There has been a significant improvement in punctuality, with few pupils arriving after the prompt start to lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. Overall, across the school the quality of teaching is good. Out of 58 observations only two were judged to be unsatisfactory (3.5%). Twenty-five lessons were judged to be satisfactory (43%), 19 lessons judged to be good (33%), 9 lessons were judged to be very good (15.5%) and three lessons were excellent (5%). However, this overall positive picture masks a significant variation between Key Stages 1 and 2. Teaching in the early years is good overall, with a range of teaching from satisfactory to good; five out of seven lesson observed were good. In Key Stage 1, teaching is satisfactory overall, but teaching varied

between unsatisfactory and good. It is a cause for concern that teaching in Year 2 has weak elements which contributed to the 13 percent of unsatisfactory teaching in the key stage. A similar percentage of good teaching was observed, this all being in Year 1. At Key Stage 2, teaching is good overall with several very good and some excellent lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed in Key Stage 2.

20. The overall good quality of teaching in the early years is due to a range of features. The teacher manages the children very positively and works very hard to ensure that they are fully involved in the learning opportunities created for them. The partnership between the reception class staff is very good, with both contributing effectively to children's learning. This teamwork helps ensure that lessons run smoothly and that all children are supported in their learning. The teacher has high expectations of children, which contributes to the good progress that many make in lessons and the overall sound progress made in the class. Good attention is paid to developing children's literacy and numeracy skills, with the teacher being skilled in developing vocabulary. In most lessons, the meanings of words are discussed, which children find interesting, and this encourages them to gain confidence in using language.
21. The enthusiastic, energetic and often good humoured teaching, well planned lessons and commitment of the early years' team to children's learning, ensures that children enjoy what they do, are willing to experiment and are confident in their work. In the lessons where teaching is only satisfactory, the organisation of the lesson does not fully meet the needs of all as well as the better lessons. The structure of satisfactory lessons, which too closely follow the literacy and numeracy lessons expected in Key Stage 1, are not as successful in meeting the needs of all children in the class, which vary in age from four and a half to five years old. Occasionally, children sit for too long listening to the text and word level work, or the mental / oral starter to a mathematics lesson and the following introduction to the main activity, and they lose interest and concentration. Where the teaching strategies are modified by the early years' team, to meet the children's needs more closely, better quality teaching results.
22. At Key Stage 1, there is an absence of very good and excellent teaching, and this impacts unfavourably on pupils' learning. The standards achieved by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are barely in line with average standards in English and below the average in mathematics and science. The teaching of literacy is sound, although it has yet to make a positive impact on standards in writing, and there are weaknesses in teaching numeracy and science in Year 2. In information technology, music, physical education and religious education, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. However, in design and technology, history, geography and art, there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the overall quality of teaching.
23. In lessons where teaching is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1, there is a lack of pace, and the teacher's expectations are insufficiently high to challenge pupils' thinking. Time is wasted in moving from one part of the lesson to another, which contributes to a drift in what happens, with some pupils losing concentration and interest in their work. This lack of pace, together with a lack of clear organisation in some lessons and pupils not responding as quickly to instructions as could be expected, contribute to unsatisfactory progress made by pupils in these lessons. In most satisfactory lessons and the good lessons, these weaknesses are not present, or if some are evident, they are outweighed by the strengths. In these lessons pupils are managed satisfactorily, lesson planning is clear and teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge. Overall, pupils are mostly interested in their work and teaching in this key stage, particularly in Year 1. Teaching is often successful in motivating pupils to learn and encouraging them to concentrate on their work. This contributes to satisfactory progress being made in most subjects, although in mathematics and science progress is unsatisfactory, due mainly to unsatisfactory teaching in Year 2.
24. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is a strength of the school and contributes

significantly to the overall good progress that pupils make and the broadly average standards achieved by them at the end of the key stage. There are particular strengths in teaching literacy, numeracy and physical education in Key Stage 2. Overall, sound teaching is evident in information technology, although the lack of coverage of all aspects of the subject means that standards achieved by pupils are below those expected by the end of the key stage. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about teaching in art, design and technology, geography and history. In music and religious education, the teaching observed was satisfactory.

25. The many strengths in teaching at Key Stage 2, include clear planning, with appropriate learning objectives which are shared with pupils at the beginning of each lesson. These strengths combine to create lessons with good pace which engage pupils successfully in learning, and support them in making good progress. Another consistent strength is how well pupils are managed. Teachers have very positive relationships with pupils and seldom have to remind them how to behave. Pupils want to do well in lessons and work well with their teachers. Clear routines are established in classrooms, which are well organised, and lessons are also well prepared; together these mean that little time is wasted in moving from one part of a lesson to another so that pupils have the maximum amount of time to study. In most subjects, teachers' knowledge is also good, which enables them to extend pupils' learning by asking searching questions which challenge pupils' thinking. The school has successfully introduced a range of strategies in Key Stage 2 to help address the learning needs of underachieving boys.
26. An example of a very good lesson in Key Stage 2, which included many of the good features listed above, was a Year 4/5 gymnastics lesson. The teacher's planning was clear, with challenging, but appropriate, learning objectives and a well thought through structure for developing pupils' skills. The activities planned were very suitable to lead to progression in pupils' learning. Good attention was paid to health and safety issues, and the clear routines that had been established for working in the hall meant that every minute of the lesson was fully used to develop pupils' skills and performance. Very good attention was paid to warming up for the lesson, with the teachers' subject knowledge clearly informing pupils about the muscles that were going to be used in exercise and the effect of exercise on their bodies. The content of the lesson built on earlier learning and this enabled pupils to make good progress. As routines were well established, little time was wasted in getting out apparatus, and due attention was paid to safety of all pupils. The teachers' high expectations and excellent management of pupils enabled most to refine their work and develop their skills to a significantly higher level than at the beginning of the lesson.
27. Overall, pupils with special educational needs are taught satisfactorily in classes in Key Stage 1, and well in Key Stage 2. The quality of support provided by the special needs co-ordinator and by learning support assistants is good, whether pupils are supported in the classroom, in smaller groups or individually. All teachers and support staff are very aware of pupils' individual needs, and plan their work accordingly. The pupils benefit from sharing the more advanced work taught to classes, for example, during shared text work at the beginning of the literacy hour. In addition, independent work is usually tailored well to meet their specific needs, and, in common with all their peers, these pupils also benefit from the setting of individual targets for literacy, which are regularly updated. The quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs has a very positive impact on their learning and on the standards they achieve. Overall, they make sound or better progress in Key Stage 1 and good, or better, progress in Key Stage 2. By the age of eleven, they are achieving standards which are commensurate with their capabilities. The school is successfully focusing its teaching for more able pupils, the gifted and talented, and particularly good provision for these pupils is made in English at Key Stage 2.
28. The very few pupils in the school for whom English is an additional language make sound progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. Only one pupil qualifies for additional support from the local authority's bilingual support team. The quality of the

support offered is good, and the pupil, in the early stages of learning English, is making good progress.

29. Overall, across the school, pupils have good attitudes to learning and in Key Stage 2 very good attitudes are evident. Good or better teaching overcomes the difficulties that some pupils have with their learning. Without this quality of teaching, it is unlikely that the progress some pupils make, or the standards they achieve by the end of Key Stage 2, would be as good as they are.
30. Since the school's last OFSTED inspection several improvements have been made in the quality of teaching, which indicates that there has been sound progress since that time. The percentage of high quality teaching has been maintained and the incidence of weak teaching has been significantly reduced. Lesson planning is judged as a strength in this inspection, particularly at Key Stage 2, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Teaching in the early years is now more clearly focused on covering the areas of learning than in the previous inspection, although on occasions the curriculum is organised and taught too closely to National Curriculum requirements. Teaching is characterised now by high expectations of children in the reception class. Measures introduced in response to criticisms raised in the last OFSTED report about underachievement by more able pupils have resulted in considerable improvement in test results. The improvement is especially marked in English and mathematics, where, between 1996 and 1999, there was a substantial increase in the percentages of pupils achieving higher standards at the ages of seven and 11. However, in some subjects, for example science, the more able pupils are not always suitably challenged by the work they are given, particularly in Key Stage 1.

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

31. The curriculum for children who are under five is satisfactory, overall, but is better matched to the needs of those who are ready to start the statutory curriculum than to those who are not. As a consequence, the less advanced learners are sometimes required to sit and listen to their teacher for too long, and would benefit from more opportunities to learn through well-focused play activities.
32. The curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 meets statutory requirements, except in information technology, where controlling, monitoring and modelling are not covered in either key stage. Ample time is allocated for the teaching of literacy and numeracy, and the implementation of the national strategies for these key skills is generally having a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. The breadth and balance of the curriculum in Key Stage 2 is sound, although the development of pupils' geographical and historical knowledge and skills is inhibited by the relatively small amount of time allocated for the subjects. In Key Stage 1, there is a range of weaknesses in the balance of the curriculum. For example, insufficient time is allowed to develop pupils' skills and understanding in science, and this has a detrimental effect on standards. Pupils also have insufficient experience of working with a range of art media, including paint. Little emphasis is given to the development of pupils' geographical and historical skills, and Year 1 pupils have few opportunities to develop their design and technology skills, for example, by making simple models using recycled materials.
33. The length of teaching time is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, but is below the recommended minimum for Key Stage 2. The reduced teaching time for Key Stage 2 pupils, affects several subjects such as geography and history which have very limited time allocated at present, and controlling, monitoring and modelling are not taught in information technology.
34. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. All pupils with special educational needs enjoy their full entitlement to the whole curriculum and to the range of extra-curricular opportunities provided. Work planned for these pupils draws on

the combined skills and knowledge of class teachers, the special educational needs co-ordinator, support staff and, where relevant, outside agencies and specialists. Good account is taken of pupils' individual strengths, as well as their needs. Support for pupils with learning difficulties associated with literacy and numeracy takes many forms, and is effective. The few pupils with learning needs associated with emotional and behavioural factors, and a pupil with a physical disability, all receive good support from those staff specifically deployed to meet their needs. These pupils are helped, wherever possible, to play a full part in daily activities.

35. Pupils, for whom English is an additional language, are encouraged and helped to play a full part in every aspect of school life. A particularly positive feature of the work of the school is the use, by teachers, of pupils' wider experiences of different religions and cultures. In this context, pupils with English as an additional language are sometimes encouraged to take a lead in classes, sharing their language, their religious customs and their beliefs with their peers. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and to extra curricular activities. The school is particularly good at ensuring that multi-cultural elements are included in the curriculum, and there are many opportunities to learn about art, music, literature and religions from around the world.
36. The school provides a sound range of extra-curricular activities, comprising mainly sporting and musical opportunities. A mathematics club has just started, and pupils are able to attend a French club which charges fees. A good range of educational visits are provided, and pupils also benefit from learning from visitors to the school, including theatre groups. These opportunities enhance the curriculum.
37. The school makes effective provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Healthy eating and the dangers of smoking are addressed through the science curriculum and personal, social and health education lessons; and the police visit to talk to pupils about a range of issues relating to drug abuse. The school provides appropriate sex education for Year 6 pupils, with the help of the school nurse.
38. The school sees itself as an active member in the local community and the partnership it has built up is mutually beneficial. The school invites a wide range of visitors, particularly from the emergency services, to contribute to the programme of personal and social education. Staff and pupils helped establish the nearby nature reserve and pupils make occasional visits to it. Parents or local experts are encouraged to run clubs, for example football training is supported by the local professional football club, and the school makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood community group's efforts to improve local facilities for children's play. There are very good relations with the after school club run on the premises. Pupils are encouraged to think about others in the community through charity fundraising and by entertaining local elderly people who are invited to school productions. The school has benefited from contributions from local industries. For example, support towards the development of the grounds, new computers and other equipment. The school's participation in the local schools' cluster group enables staff to share in professional dialogue with their colleagues and to plan for a smooth transfer of pupils to secondary school. The school's policy of publicising its successes in the press helps raise its profile and encourages pupils to be proud of their efforts.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

39. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
40. Acts of collective worship comply with statutory requirements, are regularly led by local Christian ministers, and occasionally by representatives of other major faiths. For the most part, assemblies make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Work in religious education provides pupils with knowledge and insights into values and beliefs, and

enables them to reflect on their own feelings and experiences in ways which develop their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge. For example, during the inspection, Year 3 pupils were successfully involved in role-play where they gained very valuable insights into the story told by Jesus about the widow's mite. In response to the teacher's skilful questioning, pupils fully realised that giving all that one owns, however little, counts more than giving only a fraction of one's wealth. Work in science encourages pupils to respond to the wonder of the world around them, as was evident, during the inspection, when children in the reception class gazed with awe at the tadpoles emerging from a clutch of frog-spawn. Elements of pupils' music-making also have a spiritual dimension, and nowhere was this more evident than in the accomplished playing of cellists during one assembly.

41. The school has a strong moral and social ethos. Pupils are effectively taught the principles which distinguish right from wrong. Both religious education and personal, health and social education are used to good effect to encourage pupils to consider right and wrong actions and their impact on the feelings of others. This also helps them to appreciate the need for laws and rules to guide their daily lives and to ensure their safety. Pupils are involved in drawing up class rules each year, and all seem fully aware of the few, although relevant, school rules. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good, and all teachers provide good role models by valuing pupils' responses and by seeking their views. Care and concern for others are encouraged in lessons and in daily routines. They also extend into extra-curricular activities, for example, to the positive links with, and support for, people in the local community, and also to the enthusiastic ventures undertaken by pupils to raise funds for local, national and world-wide charities. Pupils are encouraged to work together co-operatively, to take responsibility for a wide range of school and classroom duties, and to use their initiative, for example, when setting up equipment or when organising fund-raising events.
42. Pupils' cultural development is promoted effectively through a range of musical and sporting clubs, both during lunch-times and after school. Teachers also introduce their pupils to a wide range of literature during the use of shared texts in the literacy hour. Multi-cultural awareness is promoted well through the curriculum, for example, through the use of music from a range of world cultures, through the study of past civilisations and cultures in history, and through the study of major world religions and religious practices.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. Bitterne Manor is a caring community which provides good support for all its pupils. Adults get to know the pupils well and are sensitive and supportive to their pastoral and learning needs. Relationships are built on mutual respect and encouragement, and there are high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning.
44. Teachers maintain individual pupil files to track their academic progress and to note any pastoral, behavioural or attendance issues. This ensures that any significant changes in pupils' performance or attitudes are quickly identified and addressed. All staff are aware of child protection concerns and have helpful guidelines on identification and appropriate procedures to follow. Pupils are regularly reminded about issues of personal safety.
45. The school is good at promoting high standards of behaviour. Pupils new to the school quickly learn what is expected of them and develop the confidence to deal with all aspects of school life. The school rules are simply worded and there is a clear understanding, by all pupils, that they should take responsibility for the way in which they behave. Those who find this more difficult have specific targets in lessons and their efforts to meet them are appropriately recognised and praised. Pupils are confident to raise any concerns about the occasional instances of bullying either with an adult or by using the 'bully box', thus ensuring that incidents are properly investigated. However, the school does not maintain any separate record of racial incidents so cannot effectively monitor its prevalence.

46. The school has worked hard to improve levels of attendance and punctuality and these are now at acceptable levels. Registers are regularly monitored and the importance of good attendance is now strongly promoted in school documentation. The school works closely with the education welfare officer to follow up the few families whose children still have poor attendance records or are consistently late.
47. There is a strong commitment to pupils' personal and social education and generous amounts of curriculum time are allocated for it. A well-planned programme includes 'circle time' each week and this helps pupils express their own feelings and become sensitive to the feelings of others. The school makes good use of visiting public services to educate pupils about fire and railway safety, and the community policeman, who visits regularly, makes a significant contribution to pupils' awareness of personal and road safety issues. Drugs and sex education also receive appropriate attention. This programme helps pupils develop confidence and high self-esteem, which has a positive impact on their attitudes to learning.
48. The school has well-established procedures for medicines, accidents and emergencies and maintains appropriate records. The school's policy for health and safety is sound and it is well promoted in lessons involving the use of equipment or apparatus. However, the school has not carried out any fire drills during the last year; this is a significant shortcoming. The school and grounds, which are clean and well maintained, are regularly inspected for safety hazards and incorporate effective security measures.
49. The last OFSTED inspection, in 1996, identified the need to develop procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress and standards. In particular, it judged that the school needed to review and implement a whole school marking and assessment policy. Overall, the school has made good progress in addressing weaknesses in assessment. A range of effective strategies are in place, and most are being used well. However, while a sound marking policy has been formulated, the school has not updated its assessment policy, which was written before the last inspection, and it does not reflect the mainly good practice in the school. As a consequence, it has no real value to staff.
50. The school makes sound use of assessments to inform early planning for reception children and to provide a baseline for future assessments. Across the school, the results of the National Curriculum tests and tasks and non-statutory assessments are studied carefully by the subject leaders, and their analysis of the mathematics and science results in Key Stage 2 is particularly rigorous. Overall, the school makes good use of the information it gains from statutory and non-statutory tests to inform future planning in Key Stage 2, and broadly satisfactory use of assessment information in Key Stage 1. Teachers set realistic and appropriate targets for pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum assessments in English, mathematics and science in Year 6. However, the targets for pupils' attainments in these subjects are too optimistic in Key Stage 1; and there is little evidence of the identification and use of specific strategies to enable pupils to achieve such challenging targets in Year 2.
51. In English, mathematics and science, well judged individual and group short term targets are regularly set for, and shared with, Key Stage 2 pupils, and their parents are made aware of these targets. Teachers regularly discuss examples of pupils' work in English and mathematics in order to agree standards and to promote consistency in their judgements; this is good practice. Overall, the quality of teachers' marking is satisfactory, and it is sometimes good in Key Stage 2 when pupils benefit from valuable feedback which helps them to improve their work. Teachers keep pertinent notes of the significant achievements and needs of individual pupils, and these usefully inform planning, particularly in Key Stage 2. Procedures for recording pupils' progress are sound, across the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. The school has built up a sound partnership with parents. They value the openness of the school and find teachers easy to talk to. Inspection findings support their positive views about the quality of teaching and the high expectations of pupils. From the time when the youngest children start school, parents are encouraged to share concerns with the school and to support their child's learning. Targets for improvement are sent home twice a term and parents have regular opportunities to discuss how their children are progressing. This is good practice. End of year written reports give a sound view of pupils' strengths and areas for development.
53. The documentation provided by the school gives parents a good indication of its activities and new parents have a useful starter pack to explain school routines. Parents are sometimes consulted about reviewing policies and practice, such as homework, but are not always given much advance warning about planned changes. The school gives parents summaries of what will be studied each term, and workshops to explain initiatives, such as the National Literacy Strategy, have been well attended. Overall, there is little evidence to support parents' views that they are not generally well informed.
54. The home-school agreement is in place but the absence of specified frequency and amounts of homework to be set may be the basis for parents' concerns. However, inspection evidence shows that appropriate amounts of homework are being set and marked. The use of home/school diaries is variable across the school and this suggests that a minority of parents are not giving their full support to hearing their child read regularly at home.
55. Parents are encouraged to help in school and some are able to assist in classes, share their expertise or accompany trips. Parents also help with some of the sound range of extra-curricular activities found in the school. The parents' association organises a variety of fundraising activities, which result in useful additional resources and equipment for the school, such as computers.
56. The school, through the special educational needs co-ordinator, works hard to establish positive links with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. All parents are informed of their child's special educational needs when these are first identified. They are subsequently informed, and where possible consulted, when the child's progress is reviewed and new targets are set.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. The headteacher and staff have established a very positive ethos in the school through the headteacher's clearly articulated and widely promoted vision for developing pupils' learning: "We aim to develop all that is most worthwhile in each child". The regular programme of monitoring teaching and learning by senior staff, and some subject leaders, is beginning to contribute to the useful process of school self-evaluation. This, in turn, is enabling the headteacher and staff to identify strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision and then to find ways of improving areas of weakness. For example, the curriculum has been modified in certain respects to raise the level of pupils' achievement in subjects where National Curriculum test results have been lower than those achieved in similar schools. The deputy head is providing useful information technology expertise in analysing data and is contributing significantly to this area of the school's development. This work is beginning to have a positive effect on teaching and learning, particularly at Key Stage 2.
58. However, the curriculum leadership provided by the headteacher lacks sufficient focus to ensure that the curriculum as a whole is fully developed. In several subjects, the staff who have responsibility for them are insufficiently supported by the headteacher, whose focus is

mainly confined to subjects in the school's strategic plan. As a result, overall curriculum development is not well planned, and subject leaders are not as effective in their roles as they could be. More positively, the headteacher and staff are clearly making good progress in a number of key areas of the school's work. These include target setting for individual pupils, raising the quality of teaching and strategic planning. However, even with this good progress, at times the headteacher's leadership is insufficiently focused and clear to ensure a consistency in improving the work of the school.

59. An issue that was raised by staff, governors and parents, which at times causes them concern, is the effectiveness of communication between the headteacher and themselves. The headteacher is aware that communication could be improved, but the current unsatisfactory nature of communication, in some instances, reduces the school's overall effectiveness in a variety of areas. For example, although the partnership between the headteacher and governors has developed significantly since September 1999, when the governing body increased its membership, there are still some occasions when the governing body is provided with insufficient information from the headteacher in order to fulfil its responsibilities readily.
60. The school's strategic plan is the driving force behind its development. The planning process was led by the headteacher and, appropriately, fully involved governors and staff. The strategic plan has mainly resulted from the staff and governors identifying areas of weakness and agreeing a way forward to improve the school's provision for pupils. The headteacher is very aware of the milestones towards achieving the actions listed in the plan, and monitors progress carefully. The milestones have been agreed with staff, and staff-meeting time is sensibly planned with the priorities in the strategic plan firmly in mind. Although, overall, there is some delay in completing actions, the school is still on track to make the necessary progress. This should lead to improved teaching and a rise in standards. However, in spite of the well planned strategic development of the school, the headteacher does not always manage the many changes in education smoothly, to ensure that staff are well prepared for the changes in expectation that regularly take place.
61. The governing body is becoming increasingly aware of its role and responsibilities and is taking a proactive approach to monitoring the work of the school. The governing body committees are developing their work and governors are clear about the importance of their role. Governors are developing a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses through a range of effective actions which keep them in touch with the work of the school. These include: regular meetings between the headteacher and chair of governors; individual governors linked to members of staff, so keeping up to date with developments in subjects; and subject leaders and other teachers with management responsibilities being invited to make presentations about their work. With the exception of headteacher appraisal, the governing body meets its statutory responsibilities. Since the last OFSTED inspection there have been noticeable improvements in the work of the governing body. The headteacher now has a job description, and the involvement of governors in agreeing the content of the strategic plan has been successful. Governors are now quite clear about their monitoring and evaluation role, which was criticised in the last inspection, and take appropriate action to be well informed about the work of the school.
62. The staff are working hard to raise standards. They are becoming more aware of the trends in achievement of pupils at the school, and other issues about standards, through using the range of data which is available. Increasingly, information technology is being used effectively to analyse data, the results of which lead to useful target setting for pupils and classes. This analysis of data is in its early stages and the school does not use as many opportunities as it could to check on pupils' progress during a key stage. Some of the data analysis is made too late to make a real difference in standards, for example, it has only very recently been fully recognised that the current Year 2 pupils are unlikely to meet the school's targets for science this summer.

63. The leadership of special educational needs provision is delegated, in terms of day-to-day management and development, to the capable and experienced special educational needs co-ordinator. She is effective in her role, draws successfully on the skills of all the support staff, liaises well with class teachers, and has been instrumental in establishing coherent systems and procedures for special educational needs work throughout the school. She ensures that staff receive appropriate training to fulfil their roles, and she seeks appropriate help for pupils, or advice for staff, from relevant outside agencies whenever necessary. There is a strong sense of team-work amongst all teaching and support staff. Learning support assistants are well briefed by teachers before lessons, and make relevant assessments of pupils' progress. These are used to good effect by teachers to plan suitably challenging work for the pupils' next steps in learning.
64. The special educational needs co-ordinator also has oversight of English as an additional language provision and, in this capacity, ensures that appropriate support is available for those pupils who need it. Although the school has not updated its policy for equal opportunities to take account of factors, other than gender, it is nevertheless successful in its aim of developing all that is most worthwhile in each child. The staff have had no recent training in awareness of issues relating to equal opportunities and this may account for the occasional use of non-inclusive language when talking to groups of pupils. The co-ordinator responsible for the more able has successfully promoted strategies in Key Stage 2 to ensure that appropriate work of sufficient challenge is planned for them.
65. Overall, sound use is made of the school's resources to support pupils' learning, including specific funding to support particular groups of pupils, such as those with special educational needs or to develop information technology facilities using central government funding. However, there are some weaknesses in the strategic plan, since the priorities for action are not fully costed. As a result it is difficult to see how senior staff and governors can be confident that funding is allocated appropriately to support all the school development priorities. Nevertheless, the headteacher, staff and governors are very clear about the school's major priorities and they know that these need to be supported by allocating funding to them. Best value principles are not yet embedded in the decision making process of governors and senior staff, although they are aware of the need to ensure good value for money in the decisions that are taken. The finances are managed efficiently on a day-to-day basis by the administrative officer, who is well organised and effective in her role. The very recent audit report of the school (February 2000) has an action plan attached to it, which the school is following, to address the minor weaknesses found in its financial and resource management.
66. The school has sufficient teachers and they have the experience and expertise to cover the age and ability range of the pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally secure, and sometimes good, and all have a good understanding of the requirements of the literacy and numeracy hours. However, some teachers are less secure with their knowledge and understanding about geography. Classroom assistants develop positive relationships with all pupils particularly, those with special educational needs. They are well briefed by teachers and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. The governors appropriately follow local authority guidance on staffing arrangements. Although formal procedures for teacher appraisal are currently not in place, the headteacher meets with staff annually to discuss their professional development and set targets for the year ahead, which is good practice.
67. Staff and pupils benefit from working in a light and attractive building which includes a good hall, shared communal areas and a specialist room for music and drama. Recent improvements include the imaginative use of roof space to create a small information technology room. The school library is centrally situated and is easily accessible to all pupils. Teachers take care to create stimulating displays of pupils' work in classrooms and the main corridor and the school environment enhances pupils' learning. Overall, effective use is made of the accommodation, which is kept in a good order of cleanliness by the

caretaker and cleaning staff. The school grounds have been thoughtfully developed and provide an excellent resource to support learning in a range of subjects. A rota ensures that all pupils have an equal opportunity to use all the facilities at playtime.

68. The range and quality of learning resources are satisfactory, overall, but staff know that there is a need to continue to update those for information technology. Resources for geography and history, although currently satisfactory, will not support the planned introduction of new units of work. Outside play equipment for children aged under five is limited.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

What could be improved

- Standards attained by pupils in Key Stage 1 in mathematics, science and writing
- The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1
- The information technology curriculum across the school
- The leadership and management provided by the headteacher in curriculum, management of change and communications with governors, staff and governors
- The breadth of the curriculum in Key Stage 1

What should the school do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and standards in writing, mathematics and science at Key Stage 1, particularly in Year 2, by ensuring that:
 - sufficient attention is paid to teaching basic writing skills such as spelling, sentence structure, punctuation and grammar and handwriting (paragraph 81);
 - time is created for pupils to demonstrate and explain their thinking during science and mathematics lessons (paragraphs 93, 99);
 - teachers have sufficiently high expectations of all pupils so that they are challenged in their learning (paragraph 23).
- Ensure that the National Curriculum requirements for information technology are fully met across the school by:
 - providing sufficient equipment for the controlling, modelling and monitoring aspects of the subject to be covered so that pupils develop their knowledge and skills to at least the expected level of attainment (paragraphs 33, 120, 125);
 - ensuring that teachers are knowledgeable about these aspects of the subject (paragraph 125).
- Improve the effectiveness of the headteacher's leadership by:
 - ensuring that he has a good understanding of curriculum development across the school in all subjects (paragraph 58);
 - establishing systems which enable his response to the many changes in education to be well timed and managed (paragraph 60);
 - improving communications between the headteacher and governors, staff and parents so that school development priorities and relevant information are shared and understood by all concerned (paragraph 59);
 - completing an appraisal of the headteacher's work (paragraph 61).
- Improve the coverage of a range of subjects at Key Stage 1 so that pupils have access to a wider range of knowledge and skills by:
 - ensuring that the science curriculum is covered in sufficient depth, particularly in Year 2 (paragraphs 32, 101);
 - reviewing the amount of teaching time allocated to the foundation subjects, in particular design and technology, geography and history (paragraph 32).

OTHER ISSUES THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Reviewing the length of teaching time available for pupils at Key Stage 2 (paragraph 33).

- Ensuring that the organisation of the curriculum for children aged under five fully meets all their needs by:
 - implementing the early years curriculum consistently, but continuing to take into account the needs of the more able children by planning learning using the early stages of the National Curriculum when necessary (paragraph 31, 70);
 - ensuring that the provision for outside play facilities is improved to include a range of climbing apparatus and equipment to help children develop their confidence and physical skills (paragraphs 68, 77).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	58
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	15.5	33	43	3.5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils (January 2000)

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	245
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	47

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	49

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance (1998 / 1999)

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.7

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.8
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	24	24	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	19
	Girls	17	21	22
	Total	34	38	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (78)	79 (79)	85 (71)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	19	20
	Girls	20	21	18
	Total	39	40	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (86)	83 (89)	79 (75)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	18	13	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	12
	Girls	12	11	12
	Total	22	21	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (58)	68 (89)	77 (89)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	15	13
	Girls	13	12	13
	Total	25	27	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (70)	87 (89)	84 (92)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	5
Black – African heritage	3
Black – other	2
Indian	8
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	222
Any other minority ethnic group	5

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	9	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.28
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.7
Average class size	30.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	182

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	424095
Total expenditure	417961
Expenditure per pupil	1706
Balance brought forward from previous year	2062
Balance carried forward to next year	8197

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	245
Number of questionnaires returned	109

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	34	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	45	6	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	48	7	1	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	42	18	5	2
The teaching is good.	56	38	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	48	17	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	28	2	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	36	4	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	36	46	15	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	39	43	13	5	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	45	6	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	35	23	0	3

Other issues raised by parents

Comments that were made in at least four responses include: the teachers are approachable, there are some concerns about the mixed aged classes, the headteacher is not sympathetic to parent's concerns, and there are concerns about continuity in Year 6 teaching.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

69. Children aged under five, start school in the September of the school year before they are five. The youngest children initially attend on a part-time basis and by the end of the Autumn term all attend full-time. At the time of the inspection, over half of the children were still aged under five. Although the attainment on entry to the school is usually broadly average, this year's cohort entered school with above average attainment in some areas of learning. These include the personal and social, mathematical and physical areas of development. The overall quality of teaching is good, characterised by enthusiastic and positive presentation. Clear routines have been established and expectations are high in lessons. However, in some lessons, the organisation does not fully meet the needs of all children. In these lessons, there is too much time spent listening to the teacher and too little time developing understanding through play and other activities which more closely meet the needs of individuals.
70. Since the last OFSTED inspection, improvements have been made in teachers' planning which clearly identifies what children will learn in the various areas of learning. However, this area of provision still has room for improvement, which will be supported when the reception class is clearly in the foundation stage from September 2000. High expectations are evident in all lessons. However, these are very occasionally too high for some children, as a result of following a National Curriculum organisation of lessons, rather than an early years approach to learning.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

71. Children in the reception class are on course, overall, to achieve standards in line with, or slightly above, those expected of five year olds, with several older and more able children already working on the early stages of the National Curriculum. Children are developing a good understanding of the skills involved in reading and writing. All know how a book should be used and understand that print conveys meaning. Many children are able to read several words, and some are able to read simple books accurately with a good sense of story and meaning. Children are learning initial sound phonemes and use this knowledge well when they are working out unknown words in their reading. Many children are able to write their names accurately and a range of other words independently. Some children's writing is clear and they know how to use word books to look up words that they want to write. However, this area of literacy is less well developed, overall, than reading. Children listen carefully and most speak clearly when answering questions. They are confident in discussion and show good understanding of the range of issues that they learn about in their lessons. For example, a lesson about frog-spawn, which a child had brought in to school, showed that most children fully understood the needs of living things and were very interested in knowing what would happen to the eggs once they had been placed in the school pond.
72. The good progress that most children are making is due to good teaching in this area of learning. The reception staff work well as a team and devote much time to extending children's vocabulary and developing their understanding of language. A modified literacy hour, which includes the focus on a text and some word level work, helps children to understand stories and how language can be used to express their thinking. The classroom is set up well to promote writing, with a writing area that many children use. And there is a satisfactory range of books for children to browse through. There are many opportunities created for children to listen to each other and adults, and also develop their abilities to ask questions and discuss aspects of the world around them.

MATHEMATICS

73. Children are developing a good understanding of number and other aspects of mathematics. They are on course, overall, to achieve standards above those expected for five year olds. Many children are able to identify, two and three dimensional shapes accurately, some quite complex such as pyramids and triangular prisms. In one lesson, many children accurately sorted shapes using one or more attributes. An example of a good understanding of properties of shapes was demonstrated by a group of children who had brought together cylinders, spheres, circles and other objects, which had rounded surfaces. They were able to say what the similarity was between the variety of shapes collected. Children also count to twenty and many add numbers to ten accurately. Concepts such as longer, taller and shorter, and heavier and lighter are understood by many children. Some are able to show the position of clock hands for o'clock times accurately. They are also able to complete repeating patterns accurately and see simple patterns in numbers.
74. The teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory overall, with good attention paid to developing children's understanding of number. Resources to support learning are well organised, and are made available in sufficient quantity so that all children have opportunities to work practically to help them understand the concepts being taught. The teaching is characterised by high expectations of children, but at times the lesson structure follows too closely the full mathematics lessons expected for older pupils. At times, the very focused teaching gives insufficient opportunity for all children to work at their own pace and, in this respect, has some shortcomings.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

75. Children have a sound understanding of the world around them and are likely to achieve standards in line with those expected of five year olds. They use computers confidently with many able to use some of the function keys to amend their work. Their understanding of the natural world is developing satisfactorily for their age, with most understanding what will happen to frog-spawn and what it needs to survive. When they visited the school pond, to put in the frog-spawn brought into school by a child, they showed interest in the pond life and plants in the area. They are learning about the weather and are completing an experiment, which shows how the sun bleaches paper. They are aware of their environment and several pupils talked about what they saw on their way to school. Teaching in this area of learning is good, with the teacher's good subject knowledge helping children to make sense of the world around them.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

76. Children are likely to achieve standards in line with those expected for five year olds. There are less opportunities for them to develop their creative skills on a day-to-day basis than for other areas of learning. However, opportunities for role-play, drawing, painting and music enable children to experiment with ideas, which help them to develop their understanding of colour, pattern, shape, rhythm and their imagination. Useful links are made between areas of learning, for example, by using play dough to make letter shapes. The children involved in this activity enjoyed playing with the material and some completed letter shapes accurately. The overall quality of teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory, with adequate opportunities created for children to develop their imagination. In a music lesson the teacher had high expectations of children, with the activities leading to simple composing from work on 'sound sandwiches'. However, from the teacher's planning it is clear that less emphasis is given to this area of learning than others.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

77. Children are developing physical skills well and are likely to achieve standards above those

expected for five year olds. However, the reception class provision in this area of learning has some shortcomings. There is a lack of easily accessible outside play provision to develop climbing and co-ordination skills in a secure and dedicated play area for the under fives. This is overcome to a greater extent by the class making use of the school's playground climbing equipment during certain sessions, and the class having regular physical education lessons in the hall. The shortcoming of this approach is that all children have to be involved at the same time, although this does not appear to cause children any difficulties. Many children use apparatus in the hall confidently and are well co-ordinated when jumping and balancing. In one lesson children were learning how to land after jumping. All showed a good degree of awareness of their bodies and the space around them and they made good progress. Many children use pencils and other small hand tools with a good degree of accuracy; they manage buttons and other clothing fasteners well when undressing for physical education. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good, although the formality of physical education lessons could cause some younger children to be unnerved if the teacher is insufficiently aware of the needs and confidence of individuals. In the lesson on landing following a jump, good attention was paid by the teacher to warming up for exercise and the importance of health and safety issues when exercising.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

78. Children are on course to achieve standards above those expected for five year olds. They are already very aware of the needs of others, understand the needs for rules and play together positively and with care. They are interested in what others are doing or saying and listen carefully to each other. They are able to negotiate to avoid conflict and are prepared to accept that they do not always get their own way. Most children are able to undress and dress with little adult help, manage independently at lunchtime and understand and follow the routines that are established in the classroom. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. The teaching across the early years' curriculum always takes account of opportunities to develop children's personal and social skills. The attention to thinking about others, getting on well together in the classroom, taking turns and helping each other in all lessons, ensures that personal and social development is given a high priority.

ENGLISH

79. The school's analysis of its assessments in language and literacy for children under five in the reception class shows that, year on year, there are significant variations in the standards achieved. For example, children currently in the reception class attain standards which are broadly average for their age, in language and literacy. However, at the same age, those pupils currently in Year 2, achieved standards which, overall, were below average. The standards attained in reading in the 1999 National Curriculum assessments, at the end of Key Stage 1, were below the national average, and also below the average for similar schools nationally. Overall, pupils did better in writing than in reading. The results in writing were above the national average, and also above the average for similar schools. While the percentage of pupils attaining higher levels in reading was close to the national average, the percentage attaining higher levels in writing was well above the national average.
80. Approximately a third of the pupils currently in Year 2 have been identified as having special educational needs and are listed on the school's register of special educational needs. Findings of the current inspection show that, while pupils in this cohort have made generally satisfactory progress in speaking and listening and in reading, their progress in writing has been less marked. While standards in English as a subject are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, standards in writing are below average, and pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable.

81. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils listen well and speak Standard English satisfactorily for a wide range of purposes in English and in other subjects. They have acquired an extensive vocabulary of general and specialist terms which enables them to speak with precision about a wide range of ideas, both in English lessons and throughout the curriculum. Most pupils in Year 2 read texts appropriate for their age, fluently and accurately. More able pupils use a range of strategies effectively to work out unfamiliar words, and also use inference well to work out 'hidden' meanings in books. However, a small, but significant minority of pupils of average and below average attainment, have an insecure grasp of word-attack skills, and often lack the range of phonic awareness necessary to tackle unknown words. Some also experience difficulties understanding inference in the texts they read. In writing, very few pupils currently achieve above average levels of attainment, and a significant number fall just below, with some well below, the expected standard. Their writing has many weaknesses in areas such as sentence structure, punctuation, spelling, grammar and handwriting, even though they may have interesting ideas to communicate. A few pupils still produce 'emergent' writing and have not yet fully mastered either accurate letter formation or the use of space between words. Through the work of a part-time teacher and through special educational needs provision, the school is currently addressing the learning needs of these pupils well, and their recent work shows signs of good progress. Overall, however, standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 remain below average.
82. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests in English, at the end of Key Stage 2, were broadly in line with the national average, although below the results of 'similar' schools. The percentage of pupils exceeding the standard expected was close to the national average, and testifies to the good strides made by the school, since the last inspection, in addressing the needs of the more able pupils. Findings from the current inspection confirm high achievement by the more able pupils, by the end of Key Stage 2, in all aspects of English. Overall, written work in this key stage has many strengths, particularly in regard to its range and to the mastery of form, style and vocabulary demonstrated by pupils, as they match their writing to various planned purposes. The writing of average and lower attaining pupils continues to be marred more by technical and 'secretarial' weaknesses than by stylistic features. Handwriting and presentation are strengths in Key Stage 2. Standards in speaking and listening and in reading are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of the key stage. Pupils use reference and higher order reading skills well to locate information, for example, in history, and make succinct notes in their own words. They understand, and discuss, a range of genres and text-types. While the more able pupils also demonstrate considerable skill in the critical evaluation of texts, pupils of average and lower attainment sometimes struggle to understand hidden meanings in what they read. Very few pupils read widely enough in their independent reading, whether from the work of significant contemporary authors and poets, the classics, or non-fiction texts.
83. The school has set, and is in line to achieve, a target of 70% of its pupils at Level 4 or above in English at the end of Key Stage 2 in the year 2000. The target set for the end of Key Stage 1 is much higher, and, given the significant weaknesses in pupils' writing, it seems unlikely that the target will be met.
84. Between the last OFSTED inspection in 1996 and the national assessment results in 1999, the school substantially raised the proportion of pupils attaining above average standards at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. The range of purposes for reading and writing has increased. The presentation of pupils' work has improved, and is now a strength in Key Stage 2. Overall, the Literacy Hour is being implemented satisfactorily in Key Stage 1, although it is not yet having the impact on pupils' attainment in writing that it should. In Key Stage 2, the Literacy Strategy is implemented very rigorously and is raising standards in all aspects of pupils' work. There has been some useful monitoring of standards and teaching, with appropriate feedback to individual teachers. Higher order reading skills are being

introduced, and are taught well, particularly in Key Stage 2. Pupils' word-attack and word-building skills are improving, but there are still shortcomings in this area, and the introduction of phonics lacks a systematic and ordered approach, particularly in Key Stage 1. The school has taken important steps towards involving parents more closely in their children's reading, with the production of written guidance in the form of a booklet. As funds allow, and the stock of reading books increases, suitable texts are once more becoming available to sustain a home-school reading partnership of the type preferred by parents.

85. In lessons seen during the inspection, the teaching of English was satisfactory in Key Stage 1, and good or better in Key Stage 2, with a significant proportion of very good and excellent teaching. Strengths of the teaching include detailed planning, with very clear learning objectives that are communicated to pupils. Activities are suitably matched to pupils' different needs, including pupils with special educational needs and more able pupils. The good relationships between teachers and pupils contribute to learning taking place in a climate of trust and mutual respect. Teachers manage behaviour well, give clear explanations and instructions and use sharply focused questions to extend pupils' thinking. On-going assessment is used effectively to plan appropriate work for all pupils. In the best lessons, teachers' understanding of the Literacy Strategy requirements is very good indeed, and this is often accompanied by a thorough knowledge of each pupil's strengths and weaknesses. In lessons such as these, teachers have high expectations, and the literacy targets set for each pupil and for groups of pupils inform the teaching at every step. As a result, the teaching builds progressively on pupils' existing skills and understanding. In particular, the teaching has a strong impact on the development of pupils' vocabulary, on their knowledge about language, and on their capacity to apply to their writing what they learn, from their reading, about style, form, structure, and the use of language for effect.
86. Relative weaknesses in the teaching, particularly in Key Stage 1, are associated with a lack of pace, lower expectations, and insufficiently challenging work for more able pupils, particularly during shared activities at the beginning of lessons. The significant weakness in the teaching of writing is evident in the overall standard of pupils' written work at the end of the key stage.
87. The range of visits and visitors planned to enrich pupils' experience of English is a strength, as are the extra-curricular activities such as book-week and annual drama productions. The school library is well organised and is a useful resource, although its location, in a through-way, militates against its use as a learning base by whole classes. The use of information technology in English is underdeveloped.

MATHEMATICS

88. On entry to Key Stage 1, the attainment of most pupils in mathematics is broadly average. The results of the 1999 Key Stage 1 National Curriculum assessments indicate a significant improvement on those achieved by pupils in 1998 although the percentage of pupils reaching the national standard remained below average. The proportion of pupils exceeding this level was close to the national average. The school's results were below the national averages from 1996 to 1999 and well below in 1998. Overall, the 1999 results were below the national average and also below those achieved by pupils in similar schools.
89. Inspection findings show that, throughout Key Stage 1, pupils including those with special educational needs, make slow progress in the key learning objectives for this age group. They make broadly satisfactory progress in their learning about measures, shape and space, but their knowledge and understanding of the number system and of calculations is less secure. Pupils in Year 2 make spasmodic and mainly unsatisfactory progress in developing their numeracy skills. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in

mathematics is below average.

90. In the 1999 Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests, the percentage of pupils achieving and exceeding the standard expected was broadly in line with the national average. Overall, these results were close to the national average and in line with those achieved by pupils in similar schools. The performance of pupils from 1996 to 1999 shows that they have consistently achieved standards higher than the national average, and achieved very high standards in 1998. While the national trend rose in 1999, the school's results dipped to reflect the national average.
91. Inspection findings broadly reflect the 1999 results. At the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils achieve the nationally expected standard and a significant minority demonstrate higher attainment. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make mainly good, and otherwise satisfactory, progress in the key learning objectives for Key Stage 2. At the end of the key stage, most pupils have a sound understanding of the number system and of measures, shape and space and can handle and interpret data. They make satisfactory progress in learning to apply these mathematical skills to solve problems.
92. In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is broadly satisfactory in Year 1 but unsatisfactory in Year 2. In Key Stage 2, teaching is mainly good or very good, and otherwise sound. Throughout the school, teachers plan conscientiously, using formats based on the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. Learning objectives are clearly defined and these are appropriately shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons. As a consequence, they clearly understand the purpose of their learning and their response is mainly good. Teachers make effective use of assessment to inform their planning and, in Key Stage 2, tasks are well matched to pupils' capabilities. The setting arrangement in Years 4 and 5 also helps to ensure that the work for these pupils is appropriate. Targets are set for groups of pupils to work towards, on a weekly basis, and half-termly targets are shared with parents. This is good practice, has been well received by pupils and has a positive effect on their learning. Resources are well prepared and appropriate, and instructions and teaching points are clearly explained. Good use is made of mathematical display and, in Key Stage 2, teachers actively and effectively promote the use of the correct technical vocabulary. Classroom assistants are carefully briefed and well deployed and provide at least satisfactory, and often good, support for pupils. Pupils with special educational needs respond particularly well to this additional help and, as a consequence, make sound progress in their learning in both key stages. Satisfactory use is made of homework to support pupils' learning in school.
93. All teachers have implemented the recommended three-part numeracy lesson, but currently this is more securely established in Key Stage 2. In the more effective lessons the introduction, consisting of a variety of short oral and mental activities, is well paced and teachers use skilful, targeted questioning to probe pupils' understanding and to extend their thinking. Lessons also include a plenary session, although there is some variation in the quality of the use of this time to summarise key ideas and vocabulary. In less successful lessons, in Key Stage 1, insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to demonstrate or to explain their thinking. In addition, time is not used efficiently in these lessons and pupils are insufficiently challenged. As a result they do not achieve as well as they should.
94. The subject is very effectively managed by the co-ordinator, who is well informed and enthusiastic about mathematics. She has attended appropriate training, including that for the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, and sets a very good example in her own teaching. With the assistance of the deputy headteacher she has conducted a very thorough audit of mathematics in order to establish priorities for development, and maintains a good overview of the subject. The co-ordinator has observed teaching in both key stages and provided valuable feedback for teachers. Test results are scrutinised to identify weaknesses in pupils' learning and the progress that they are making across the school is carefully monitored. Appropriate staff training for the numeracy strategy has taken

place and teachers have benefited from observing lessons led by the co-ordinator, assistant headteacher or Local Education Authority numeracy consultant. Parents have been kept well informed about the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy.

95. A helpful draft policy for the subject has been formulated following the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and planning is being monitored and adjusted as the strategy is progressively implemented. Resources for mathematics are satisfactory.

SCIENCE

96. The results of the 1999 Key Stage 1 teacher assessments in science were well below the national average and well below the results achieved by similar schools. The results of the 1999 Key Stage 2 statutory tests were broadly in line with the national average and the results of similar schools. However, the results were lower than those achieved, in Key Stage 2, in 1997 and 1998. The school attributes the lower results in 1999 to weaknesses in the attitudes to learning of some pupils, and to the absence of two average attaining pupils during the statutory tests.
97. Inspection findings show that, on entry to Key Stage 1, the scientific knowledge and understanding of most pupils are broadly average. In Key Stage 1, pupils make spasmodic and mainly unsatisfactory progress in their scientific learning; and their overall standards are well below average at the end of the key stage, as a result. While there are weaknesses in teaching which contribute to pupils' unsatisfactory progress, the limited time allocation for the subject also restricts their progress and standards. Overall, current standards are a little lower than those identified in the 1999 teacher assessments.
98. In Key Stage 2, pupils' progress increases, and is sound, overall, for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Good progress is sometimes made and, at the end of the key stage, most pupils reach the expected standard and a significant minority do better. Current standards are a little higher than those shown in the 1999 Key Stage 2 test results. The difference between the progress made by pupils in the two key stages, results from more effective science teaching in Key Stage 2, and more time being allocated for the subject in this key stage.
99. In Year 1, there are few examples of pupils' science work recorded in their books since last September. However, evidence from pupils' books from last term suggests they have made some progress in learning about the basic properties of common materials, and that they are currently making adequate gains in developing their observation skills and their knowledge about the growth of plants. In Year 2, pupils recorded only a few examples of science work last term. Most have made limited progress when using worksheets to develop their understanding of the life cycle of the frog, but make satisfactory gains when revising their knowledge about the names of the main parts of plants. In the current term, they made satisfactory progress when listing the things which use, or do not use, electricity; but their knowledge about simple electrical circuits is below average. Pupils' gains in identifying similarities and differences between humans are restricted by weaknesses in their teachers' questioning skills and by the slow pace of the lessons.
100. In Year 3, there is evidence of a substantial quantity of work since last September. All pupils make sound progress when learning about dental care, and conduct systematic investigations to discover the effects of different liquids on immersed eggshells. They demonstrate satisfactory prediction skills, and record the results of their experiments clearly when investigating which tights will stretch the most, and which types of paper are best for mopping up spills. They have a satisfactory grasp of the principle of fair testing, but their skills in evaluating their investigation results are sometimes underdeveloped. Pupils make sound progress when learning about magnetism, and when developing their knowledge about forces by completing simple experiments. In Years 4 and 5, pupils understand that

sound is caused by vibration, and make good progress when conducting experiments to discover which materials are the best insulators of sound. They understand the importance of healthy eating and the need for exercise. Pupils achieve sound standards when conducting experiments to discover the effects of exercise on the heart rate, and develop a satisfactory knowledge about the human skeleton and the circulatory system. In Year 6, pupils understand the function of muscles and consolidate their learning about the human skeleton. They are able to construct series and parallel circuits, and draw accurate circuit diagrams using the correct symbols. They demonstrate sound investigation skills by planning and conducting experiments systematically and recording their results clearly. However, most do not have a clear understanding of the difference between a description and an evaluation of their findings.

101. In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is broadly satisfactory in Year 1 but is unsatisfactory in Year 2. Teachers' lesson planning is sound across the key stage but, in Year 2, expectations about pupils' potential attainment, especially of more able pupils, are too low and the teacher's questions lack sufficient focus to promote specific scientific skills and understanding. In the last OFSTED inspection, the teaching was satisfactory, across the school, but did not always meet the needs of more able pupils. In Key Stage 2, the current teaching is sound, overall, but has good features. Planning is very thorough and clearly identifies what pupils are to learn. In this key stage, teachers are particularly effective when providing instructions and in their lesson preparation. As a consequence, pupils listen attentively to their teachers, behave well in science lessons and demonstrate positive attitudes. In the best lessons, teachers use good questioning skills to probe pupils' understanding and to assess their future needs. Key Stage 2 teachers are making effective use of the recently introduced scheme of work provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, but Key Stage 1 staff do not allocate sufficient time to make adequate use of the guidance.
102. The science co-ordinator is conscientious and has secure subject knowledge. She has successfully promoted recent improvements to teachers' planning, and has correctly identified the need for more science work in Key Stage 1, after studying examples of pupils' work. The co-ordinator has carefully analysed the results of the statutory teacher assessments and tests in science and identified areas for improvement. These have been appropriately shared with staff, and have resulted in improvements in pupils' skills in recording the results of their investigations, in Key Stage 2. Resources for science are satisfactory.

ART

103. In Key Stage 1, pupils' overall progress in art is just adequate. In Year 1, they demonstrate satisfactory standards when drawing self-portraits and make sound progress when creating a large class picture of houses, using fabric crayons. In Year 2, pupils achieve satisfactory standards when using crayons to create bold interpretations of characters in stories, and attain mainly sound, but occasionally good, standards when drawing plants from direct observation. Overall, Key Stage 1 pupils demonstrate drawing standards which are satisfactory for their ages. However, pupils, including those with special educational needs, have insufficient opportunities to experiment with a range of media, and their progress is particularly inhibited by a lack of regular opportunities to paint.
104. In Key Stage 2, pupils' progress is much more secure, and is sound, overall, and good in Year 3. As a consequence pupils generally achieve standards which are satisfactory for their ages, but Year 3 pupils often produce high quality work. Year 3 pupils make good progress, for example, when mixing their own paint colours to create carefully observed pictures of flowers, from direct observation. They benefit from discussions about the paintings of Georgia O'Keeffe before creating their own imaginative interpretations of flowers, which reflect elements of the artist's work. Year 3 pupils also achieve well when

discussing the work of Rodin and Moore, and create their own expressive clay sculptures. Their pastel drawings and three dimensional masks, depicting characters from stories, also demonstrate standards that are above average. In Years 4 and 5, pupils make satisfactory progress when drawing a range of objects from direct observation, and their shading skills are sound. They create self-portraits, using pastels, which also demonstrate satisfactory standards. In Year 6, pupils make sound progress when studying the work of the Impressionist painters, and when creating their own paintings in the Impressionist style. The last inspection found that pupils' progress was variable, but satisfactory overall across the school, and standards were judged to be satisfactory in both key stages.

105. Insufficient lessons were observed to make a secure judgement about the overall quality of teaching in art. However, the drawing lesson observed in Year 2 was satisfactory and the two lessons seen in Year 3 were characterised by very effective planning and confident, good teaching. In all lessons observed, the teaching motivated pupils well, and they concentrated and persevered with their tasks, as a result. While pupils' drawing skills are soundly promoted by the teaching in Key Stage 1, pupils' progress would benefit from more time being allocated to the subject, and for a wider range of opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and understanding about art. In Key Stage 2, the art curriculum is soundly based on the useful scheme of work formulated by the conscientious and well-informed co-ordinator. As a consequence, pupils are able to experience a range of art media and begin to make connections between their own art and the work of famous artists.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. In Key Stage 1, pupils' progress, including those with special educational needs, in design and technology is unsatisfactory in Year 1, but is broadly satisfactory in Year 2. No examples of pupils' work were available for examination in Year 1, reflecting the lack of opportunities for pupils to develop making skills, for example, through creating simple models from recycled materials. In Year 2, pupils achieve satisfactory standards for their ages. They demonstrate sound making skills when creating simple puppets using fabric and papier-mâché, and have learned basic stitching skills.
107. In Key Stage 2, pupils' progress in designing and making is mainly good, and their standards are mostly a little above average for their ages. In Year 3, pupils make good progress when designing toys which move by the use of pneumatics, and their completed products are imaginative and above average. In Years 4 and 5, pupils create designs for models, which incorporate simple cams to facilitate movement. These represent achievement which is good for Year 4 pupils and sound for Year 5 pupils. Their finished models demonstrate making skills which are satisfactory for both year groups, and many pupils are able to make perceptive written evaluations of their work. In Year 6, pupils achieve good standards when designing model vehicles which are powered by an electric motor and controlled by a switch. Their designs appropriately identify the materials to be used and detail some construction methods. Their completed models have a carefully constructed wooden chassis, with corners strengthened by card triangles; and demonstrate making skills which are a little above average. In the last inspection, standards were judged to be broadly average across the school.
108. No design and technology lessons were taught during the inspection, so it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching. However, evidence suggests that Year 1 pupils need more opportunities to develop their skills in the subject. In Key Stage 2, teachers are making effective use of the guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, and this is having a significant effect on standards. The subject co-ordinator is providing sound support by giving useful advice to Key Stage 2 colleagues, but spends less time monitoring provision carefully in Key Stage 1.

GEOGRAPHY

109. As a result of timetabling arrangements, only two geography lessons were observed in Key Stage 2 and one in Key Stage 1. Judgements are made on evidence gathered from teachers' planning, from a scrutiny of pupils' work and from discussions with staff and pupils. The progressive development of pupils' geographical skills is uneven across the school and standards achieved by pupils when they leave the school, at the end of Key Stage 2, are just in line with those expected. Insufficient evidence was available during the inspection to make an overall judgement about pupils' attainment in Key Stage 1.
110. In Key Stage 1, the youngest pupils make broadly satisfactory progress when extending their knowledge of the school grounds and immediate area. They make simple maps and undertake some geographical observations, for example, when following a photographic trail along the quayside in front of the school. In Year 2, pupils appropriately undertake valuable fieldwork in the village of Minstead and have the opportunity to contrast and compare this small rural village with their own urban riverside location. As this work was undertaken in the Autumn term, insufficient evidence was available during the inspection to make a secure judgement about the progress made by pupils, including those with special educational needs.
111. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 make satisfactory progress in their learning, and acquire sound geographical skills, when studying different settlements and the reasons for their location. In the Summer term, these pupils also undertake valuable fieldwork based on the River Itchen, following its course from its source, past the school and to sea. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 increase their understanding of environmental issues in their own locality through a study based on the re-location of Southampton Football Club. They make good progress in their learning by using information technology to view maps of the two sites, visiting both and conducting interviews with those most affected by the change. Year 6 pupils make sound gains in extending their knowledge and understanding of contrasting localities overseas, through a study of Saint Lucia. They use maps to design their own brochures which identify the geographical features of the island. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in their learning.
112. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in this subject. Sound use is made of stories such as 'Katie Morag and the Two Grandmothers' to promote geographical vocabulary in Year 1 and satisfactory or better teaching was observed in Years 4 and 5. However, the amount of time allocated to geography in both key stages is significantly less than in most schools and results in weaknesses in long and medium term planning. As a consequence, the progressive development of pupils' geographical skills is spasmodic. The school has appropriately begun to incorporate elements of the helpful scheme of work published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, and this is beginning to have a beneficial impact on planning. However, some teachers lack confidence and knowledge in the subject.
113. The co-ordinator provides good support for her colleagues and has an overview of provision across the school. She has conscientiously prepared resource packs to support the study of localities and attends local support meetings in order to update her own knowledge of the subject. She recognises the need to increase the amount of time allocated to geography. Resources are satisfactory overall, but are not organised or sufficient to support the introduction of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority units of work.

HISTORY

114. As a result of timetabling arrangements, only one history lesson was observed in Key Stage 2 and none in Key Stage 1. Evidence was gathered from teachers' planning, from a scrutiny of pupils' work and from discussions with teachers and pupils. The progressive development of pupils' knowledge and understanding, and their historical skills, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Overall, pupils leave the school achieving standards in line with those expected. However, progress is more spasmodic in Key Stage 1, and insufficient evidence was available during the inspection to make an overall judgement about pupils' attainment in this key stage.
115. In Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning when exploring simple differences between the past and the present. In Year 1, for example, they compare homes or toys of today with those of the past and are beginning to develop an understanding of how things have changed. In Year 2, they extend their knowledge and understanding of important historical events, for example, the Great Fire of London and of famous people such as Florence Nightingale.
116. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 make mainly sound progress in extending their knowledge and understanding of Tudor times. They make large collage pictures of Henry VIII and his wives and investigate the reasons why this monarch married so many times. Year 3 pupils also study the Roman Invasion and respond well to good teaching about Boudicca's revolt and the battle between the Celts and Roman Army. As they progress across the key stage, pupils are increasing their knowledge of the similarities and differences in various periods of history; and their understanding of people and of change. Year 4 and 5 pupils focus on life in Victorian times and benefit from a visit to a local museum where they dress in period costumes and are able to use artefacts from this time, for example, to wash clothing. They make good progress in their learning when using information technology to write 'newspaper' accounts of young children at work in factories, as chimney sweeps or down the mines; and recognise the contribution made by reformers such as Lord Shaftesbury and Dr. Barnardo. In Year 6, pupils achieve satisfactory standards through their studies of Ancient Greece.
117. Insufficient teaching of history was observed to make a judgement about the quality of teaching in this subject. Teachers plan conscientiously and evidence suggests that they have secure, and sometimes good, subject knowledge. However, although teachers in Key Stage 2 make mainly good use of the limited time available, the amount allocated to history, in both key stages, is significantly less than in most schools and this constrains the development of appropriate enquiry skills.
118. The co-ordinator assumed responsibility for the subject last year and has appropriately encouraged the staff to improve planning for progression in pupils' learning by implementing guidance published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The monitoring of standards in the subject is, however, not well established.
119. Resources for history are satisfactory but are not organised or in sufficient quantity to support the introduction of new units of work.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

120. In the work that is covered by the school, pupils attain standards in line with what is expected at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. However, one strand of the information technology curriculum, controlling, modelling and monitoring, is not covered by the school, due in part to the lack of equipment, so that overall, the standards at the end of both key stages are below those expected.
121. At Key Stage 1, pupils in Year 2 use a range of functions successfully within an art program. They do this with confidence, with many pupils being able to create very striking

and colourful patterns. The lesson observed was one of a series where emphasis has been given to making links between art and computer effects, as well as ensuring that pupils understand how the particular program could be used to support their work. Younger pupils analyse data using simple databases and produce pictorial representations of their work.

122. At Key Stage 2, pupils have created their own Web-Site. They are able to use spreadsheets and databases confidently to analyse data and, using the facilities in the programs, and are able to produce pictorial representations of information such as graphs. Pupils use word processing and publishing programs to good effect to support their work in a range of subjects such as English and history. For example, linked to their study of Victorian life, pupils in Year 4/5 classes created newspapers and word processed accounts of how it might have felt working down a mine. They confidently use the computer keyboard to access a range of functions and also access many using a mouse accurately. Most pupils talk knowledgeably about computers and the programs they use and are able to clearly explain what they are doing.
123. At both key stages, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in the work that is covered. However, due to the lack of all of the elements of the National Curriculum being taught in the school, the overall progress in the subject is unsatisfactory.
124. In all lessons observed, at both key stages, the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory, with some good teaching evident at Key Stage 2. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge to cover the content of lessons and extend pupils' learning. This was demonstrated well in a Year 4/5 lesson. The teacher had planned that the main activity of entering data into a spreadsheet would take up most of the lesson. It quickly became clear that all pupils were very able at completing this task, and most had managed to finish this well before the end of the lesson. Due to the teacher's subject knowledge and careful planning, she was able to extend pupils' learning by moving them on to producing a range of graphs and entering formulas into the spreadsheet. This enabled pupils to make good progress in the lesson and clearly motivated many to want to do more. Many pupils were surprised that entering the names of cells into a formula with a command 'to add', would complete the addition of a range of data. The interest shown by teachers and their good management of pupils in the information technology suite, which could present many difficulties due to its layout and lack of computers, contributes to pupils being interested in what is being taught and the overall satisfactory progress they made in the lessons observed. Pupils are interested in the subject and are obviously keen to learn.
125. The school has created a useful new information technology suite through using nationally provided funding, some of its own resources and contributions from the parents' association and funding from the after school quayside club. This is not yet complete, with more computers planned to be added to the network and more printers available to use. This facility is enabling the teaching of many computer skills to be effective and it ensures that pupils have focused teaching times to consider how computers can support their work. However, this development does not compensate fully for the outdated computer equipment elsewhere in the school to support learning in other subjects; or the lack of equipment to develop pupils' understanding of control technology; or how information technology can be used to collect data through sensors to support work in science and geography. Overall, the resources in the school to support pupils' learning in information technology are unsatisfactory. However, the school has a clear action plan, which the knowledgeable subject leader has drawn together, to make the necessary improvements within two years, as funding is made available. This is an important commitment for the school to keep, if pupils are to receive their full entitlement to the National Curriculum requirements and it will be important that teachers are knowledgeable and confident about how to make the best use of such equipment.
126. Although there are still several shortcomings in the subject, which have not been

adequately addressed since the last OFSTED inspection, such as the development of control technology, there have been several improvements. These include a better use of information technology to support learning in other subjects and increased staff knowledge and confidence in teaching the subject. The knowledgeable subject leader has developed a clear action plan to improve provision and a useful policy, which commits the staff to using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work and the computer suite. However, in spite of the progress made by the school, the subject does not yet meet National Curriculum requirements or offer sufficient breadth and balance within the subject.

MUSIC

127. Too few music lessons were seen during the inspection to provide a secure evidence base on which to make overall judgements about standards or teaching in either key stage. One lesson was seen in Year 2, and one in Year 3. In addition, one lunchtime orchestra practice, a woodwind session taught by a peripatetic teacher, and musical contributions to assemblies, including singing, were seen. It is clear from this range of evidence that music enjoys a high profile in the school, and that the standard of singing is above average. The pupils enjoy singing. They demonstrate good control of pitch and volume, and their diction is very clear. Pupils in Year 2 attain sound standards for their age as seen in a lesson where they sang and composed short musical patterns using untuned percussion instruments. They display a sound understanding of duration and are able to apply their knowledge of short and long sounds when they select and play a range of instruments to accompany a familiar tune. Pupils in Year 3 also achieve appropriate standards for their age when appraising the changes in tempo in a South American composition: 'Winds of the Mountain.' They readily identify the sounds made by a range of musical instruments and understand and respond to the technical terms used by the teacher to describe the music. They are able to evaluate their peers' performances, indicating where the tempo of the music might be speeded up or slowed down to produce particular effects.
128. Those pupils who benefit from tuition given by peripatetic staff, and those who play in extra-curricular groups, including the orchestra, woodwind, brass and recorder groups, often achieve high standards of performance for their age. Of particular note are those pupils who play stringed instruments, and who, through their music, bring a spiritual quality to moments of reflection during assemblies. High standards of performance were evident in all extra-curricular musical activities observed during the inspection.
129. The teaching of music was sound or better in the lessons seen, and good in the extra-curricular activities. The teachers organise their lessons well, while the contributions made by support staff, parents and peripatetic tutors have a very positive impact on the quality and standard of pupils' experiences of music in the school.
130. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and well informed, with a very secure knowledge of the subject. She is active in developing music in many aspects of school life, including concerts and dramatic performances throughout the year. She provides valuable support and advice to staff, monitors teaching plans to ensure that the curriculum requirements are adequately covered, and gives an effective lead to extra-curricular provision. She is aware of the need to develop the confidence of some members of staff, and has plans to address the weaknesses that many pupils have in the use of notation. The subject is well resourced, with a wide variety of musical instruments available for pupils' use, and the range of music used to develop pupils' skills in appraising and composing, makes a strong contribution to their cultural development and to their understanding of multicultural diversity.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

131. The standards achieved by pupils when they leave the school are above those expected for

pupils at age eleven. The school ensures that all elements of the physical education curriculum are covered, although during the inspection only games, gymnastics and dance were being taught. Swimming, athletics and adventurous activities are all planned to be taught later this year. However, pupils in Year 6 have to be able to swim 50 metres before they are able to join in with the water based activities week in the Summer and last year only one pupil was not able to meet this standard.

132. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are becoming aware of the effect of exercise on their bodies and are able to sustain periods of physical activity. They are learning to work co-operatively in games sessions, as was seen in a Year 2 lesson where they had designed games using small apparatus. They are learning to comment on their own work and appraise the work of others with the effect of improving their physical performance. They make satisfactory progress and mainly enjoy what they are doing. However, they do not always listen to instructions as carefully as they need to and this leads to time being wasted and less progress being made.
133. At Key Stage 2, pupils achieve above average standards in games, dance and gymnastics due to the good quality teaching they receive in most lessons. Pupils are keen to do well and work hard in lessons. They are very aware of the importance of warming up for exercise and increasingly know which muscle groups are going to be used for different activities. They listen carefully to instructions and respond sensibly and quickly, which means that time is used well in lessons. Pupils make good progress overall, and in many lessons improve their performance considerably. An example of good progress was seen in a games lesson in Year 6 when pupils were working to develop their bowling and batting skills. Due to the well structured lesson and pupils using time well, many developed their skills significantly in bowling accurately and batting the ball in particular directions. Pupils are developing their dance skills well, by interpreting music as was seen in Year 3 lessons. Again the good teaching enabled pupils to make good progress in these lessons and improve their performance noticeably.
134. At Key Stage 1, pupils including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their learning, with most enjoying the subject. Occasionally their over enthusiasm slows lessons and consequently slows progress. At Key Stage 2, all pupils make good progress and enjoy physical education lessons. They make good use of time and quickly learn and develop their skills.
135. The quality of teaching is sound at Key Stage 1 and good overall at Key Stage 2, with some very good teaching evident. At Key Stage 1, the teaching ensures that pupils are clear about the importance of warming up and pay due attention to health and safety issues. Learning objectives are clear and, overall, the structure of lessons allows skills to be developed. However, the management of pupils is not always as good as it should be, particularly in Year 2, which leads to time being wasted by pupils, and time taken to give reminders to the class about noise levels and the expected standard of behaviour. At Key Stage 2, the good teaching is characterised by good organisation of the lessons; clear learning objectives, which are shared with pupils; good pace; good management of pupils; very good attention to health and safety issues and warming up for exercise. These many good features provide good quality opportunities for physical activity, which keep pupils motivated and involved in the planned work.
136. The last OFSTED inspection identified a few shortcomings in the subject which have been addressed. These included improving the range of equipment to support games skills development, attention to health and safety issues, increasing extra-curricular activities in sport and improving the opportunities for developing team games skills in Key stage 2. The equipment to support games is satisfactory in range and quality. Good attention is paid in all lessons to health and safety issues. The school is involved in a variety of local leagues for football and 'Kwik Cricket'. Extra-curricular provision also includes tag rugby, football training for boys and girls as well as gymnastics. In the Summer, cricket is offered as an

after school club. The improvements made are due, in part, to a subject leader who is clear about how to develop the subject and has an obvious interest in sport, and to teachers who work together well on promoting the subject in the curriculum.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

137. Only one religious education lesson was seen in Key Stage 1 during the inspection, and there was insufficient written work on which to base a secure judgement about the standards attained by the end of this key stage. In the lesson seen, in Year 1, pupils reach a sound level of knowledge and understanding when learning about the life of Jesus. They draw on previous learning to give brief accounts of the Nativity and of stories such as that of the loaves and fishes. They recognise Jesus as a hero to his followers, and can explain, in simple terms, that Jesus is a 'special person' for Christians.
138. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, achieving standards that are broadly average for their age in their ability to explore and respond to human experience, and in their capacity to investigate religious traditions. As they move up through the school, pupils acquire satisfactory knowledge and understanding of Christianity and of other major world faiths, including Judaism, Islam and Sikhism. However, evidence from the scrutiny of work strongly indicates that coverage of the subject is more substantial and rigorous in Years 3, 4 and 5.
139. For example, pupils in Year 3 demonstrate a good level of understanding in their work on Hinduism. They write knowledgeably about Hindu gods and symbols and, after a visit to a Hindu temple, record their views about its special nature as a place of worship. Their work also testifies to a fairly detailed knowledge of the life and work of Jesus, with recognition of significant times and events such as Advent, Easter and the crucifixion. In a lesson seen in Year 3, the pupils also demonstrated, very clearly, their understanding of the moral message embedded in the story told by Jesus about 'The widow's mite.' Pupils in Years 4 and 5 learn how the Israelites' need for guidance during their time in the wilderness was 'answered' by God's gift of the Ten Commandments to Moses, and draw parallels with the need for rules and laws to guide their own lives. Their written work reveals a sound understanding of the religious principles and practices central to Judaism. In Year 6, pupils are able to reflect on the religious beliefs and practices of Hindus, recognising, for example, that belief in the continuity of the soul or *atma* can be equated with a belief in reincarnation and also accounts, at least in part, for the Hindu practice of vegetarianism.
140. Since the last OFSTED inspection in 1996, the school has given increased attention to the study of Christianity and of other major world faiths. Nevertheless, coverage of the syllabus varies considerably from year to year. In this respect, the previous judgement that 'religious education needs to be better secured in the curriculum' still holds true.
141. The quality of teaching of religious education is generally sound, and sometimes good, with better teaching overall in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. In the best lessons seen in Key Stage 2, teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and are able to respond to pupils' questions and queries confidently and in some depth and detail. They make the learning relevant to pupils by drawing parallels between religious teachings and pupils' own lives. For example, in Year 3, the teacher makes a particularly effective comparison between the widow who gave all she had, a 'mite', and the potential for giving by pupils who receive varied amounts of pocket-money. Skilful questioning and practical demonstration, enable pupils to reflect deeply on the issue and make a very strong contribution to their moral, social and spiritual development. All teachers plan their lessons well and make pupils very aware of what they are intended to learn. In some lessons, however, as in Year 1, and in some of pupils' written work, for example, in relation to Ancient Greece in Year 6, a 'topic-based' approach detracts from the main focus on religious education.

142. The co-ordinator for religious education monitors teachers' planning for the subject and has drawn up a suitable action plan for its development. She is aware of inconsistencies in coverage year-on-year, but as yet, has had no opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching or the standards of pupils' work. Currently religious education does not have a secure place within the curriculum. It is not always taught separately, so that it is not always clear that the content of teaching is rooted in the locally agreed syllabus requirements. The school makes good use of visits to Christian churches, and other places of worship in the area, to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of religion. Representatives of various faiths visit the school to talk to pupils or to lead assemblies, and teachers also draw profitably on the religious and cultural knowledge and experiences of their pupils to develop ideas in lessons.