

INSPECTION REPORT

High Littleton C of E VC Primary School

High Littleton

LEA Area: Bath & North East Somerset

Unique Reference Number: 109196

Inspection Number: 189054

Head-Teacher: Ms H Harris

Reporting inspector: Mr M Burghart
20865

Dates of inspection: 27 September 1999 - 29 September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706949
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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
Type of control:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Hill High Littleton Bristol BS39 6HF
Telephone number:	01761 470622
Fax number:	01761 472800
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr S Ledbetter
Date of previous inspection:	29 April 1996 - 03 May 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr M Burghart, Rgl	Science, Information Technology, Music, Physical Education, Special Educational Needs, Equal Opportunities.	Teaching, Leadership and Management, Accommodation, Efficiency.
Mr M Whitaker, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, Behaviour and Personal Development; Attendance; Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare; Partnership with Parents and the Community.
Ms H Carruthers	Mathematics, Art, Design and Technology, Religious Education.	Curriculum and Assessment, Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development; Resources.
Mrs K Henry	Under Fives, English, Geography, History.	Attainment and Progress, Staffing.

The inspection contractor was:

MSB Education Ltd.
Broomhill
Wimborne
Dorset
BH21 7AR

Tel: 01202 849799

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The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

Provides a very good start for children under five.
 Encourages very good attitudes and relationships.
 Achieves very good standards of behaviour.
 Makes very good provision for special educational needs.
 Provides good leadership and management.
 Takes good care of pupils.
 Provides good teaching with very good features, especially at Key Stage 1 and for children under five.
 Maintains a good partnership with parents and the community.
 Sustains a very good ethos.
 Gives good value for money.

Where the school has weaknesses

In information technology where requirements are not met, standards are below expectations and progress is unsatisfactory.
 In a lack of opportunities for curriculum co-ordinators to monitor their subjects.
 Insufficient assessment of subjects other than English, mathematics and science.
 In writing, where pupils have too little opportunity for extended writing.
 In showing how skills will be built upon in schemes of work.
 In too little consideration of multicultural issues.
 In outdoor provision for physical activities for those under five.
 In the teaching of some lessons.

Strengths far outweigh weaknesses. However, weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan which will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school. This is fast becoming a good school and the majority of weaknesses identified in this report already feature in the school development plan as a consequence of the school's good self evaluation.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The last report raised five key issues for improvement. The school has been successful in addressing most of them. It has continued to provide a supportive ethos; improved its approach to planning; and developed its management structure by defining the role of the senior management team and co-ordinators. The new headteacher has made a good start in monitoring the curriculum, but there is still more work for co-ordinators to do. They have insufficient time available to observe teaching. Assessment has been improved in English, mathematics and science, but opportunities are lacking in other subjects. Standards in design and technology have been improved to the satisfactory level. The school has managed new staff, new buildings and improvements to the grounds very well. Literacy and numeracy times have been successfully introduced.

Overall the school has made good progress and is very well placed for future development. It has much improved its educational direction, without sacrificing its already good pastoral ethos.

Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

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

Results for 1999 tests, where no comparisons are as yet available, appear to confirm this picture. Inspection findings are that current standards at the end of both key stages, and levels of progress, are above average in mathematics and science. Attainment and progress in English is average overall, with strengths in speaking and listening, and, although broadly satisfactory, relative weakness in writing. Standards in religious education are in line with expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils' progress is satisfactory overall in art, design and technology (improved since last time), geography, history, music and physical education. This reflects a profile of strengths and weaknesses.

Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages, is unsatisfactory in information technology. The subject is underemphasised, requirements are not met, teachers' knowledge and understanding are insecure and progress falls short of expectations.

Children under five reach good standards and their progress is good, against desired learning outcomes. Their physical development is good, but limited by lack of outdoor facilities.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science	N/A	Good	Good
Information technology	N/A	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Religious education	N/A	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Very good	Satisfactory with good features.	Satisfactory with good features.

Teaching was satisfactory or better in almost 95 per cent of lessons observed with 71 per cent good or better, 31 per cent very good and 7 per cent excellent. Teaching is good at both key stages with a higher proportion of very good and excellent lessons for the under fives and Key Stage 1. Strengths in teaching are in objectives, relationships, organisation and control. Teachers and learning support assistants use good questioning techniques and respond well to pupils. Weaknesses in teaching relate to lack of pace, pupils insufficiently challenged through an absence of assessment, insecure subject knowledge and understanding (especially in information technology), and inconsistent use of homework.

The overall profile of teaching is good, including very good teaching and support for those pupils with special educational needs.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good, both in and out of class, notwithstanding a small minority who could misbehave.
Attendance	Good, little unauthorised absence.
Ethos*	Very good. Very good relationships and caring atmosphere. School has clear educational direction and is committed to raising standards.
Leadership and management	Good: headteacher leads very well; governors' involvement good; school development plan much improved, aims, values and objectives clear. Negatives in monitoring opportunities for co-ordinators to manage subjects.
Curriculum	Under fives good, except for provision outdoors. Overall school curriculum broad, and with the exception of information technology, balanced. Schemes of work developing, but still work to do in identifying skills and providing assessment opportunities to gauge pupils' progress.

Pupils with special educational needs Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good teaching, support and provision. Good individual education plans and appropriate links with outside agencies. Good: spiritual satisfactory; moral and social very good; cultural satisfactory, but more work needed to promote multicultural awareness.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Staff make a good team; strength in non-teaching staff support. Resources satisfactory overall, weakness in provision for under fives' physical development. Information technology recent improvements, still more needed. Accommodation good: improvements to fabric, library and grounds successful. Good display. Negatives: include the lack of a field and restrictions in the church hall.
Value for money	Good, improved since last time. The school is efficiently run.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

What some parents are not happy about

Parents are involved.
The school is approachable.
Values and attitudes.
Children like coming to school.

Homework.

The overwhelming response of parents is positive; particularly about new initiatives since the appointment of the headteacher. Inspectors support parents' views.

With regard to homework inspectors find that there are some shortcomings. The school is currently working on a new policy linked to government initiatives.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to further improve the school governors, headteacher and staff should:-

Raise standards in information technology by:-

Ensuring all required elements of the National Curriculum are taught;

Allocating sufficient time on the weekly timetable for information technology to be taught as a subject in its own right, consistent with its core status;

Improving teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject through more in-service training;

Making more use of information technology to support other subjects.

(Paragraphs: 17, 37, 43, 44, 45, 77, 92, 104, 115, 125, 129, 130, 131, 133.)

Improve standards in writing by:-

Providing more opportunities for pupils to be involved in extended writing for a variety of purposes; factual and creative;

Encouraging pupils to draft and redraft their work to improve its quality.

(Paragraphs: 12, 13, 14, 17, 37, 43, 101, 104, 105.)

Develop, still further, schemes of work to show how skills will be built upon year on year.

(Paragraphs: 44, 45, 68, 135, 142, 144, 146, 149, 170.)

Improve the quality of monitoring the curriculum, as planned, by allowing co-ordinators more time to observe teaching of their subject in other classes.

(Paragraphs: 22, 37, 68, 88, 128, 141, 146, 150, 154, 164, 170.)

Develop assessment opportunities, in subjects in addition to English, mathematics and science, to gauge pupils' progress, ensure that pupils are appropriately challenged and inform future planning.

(Paragraphs: 22, 37, 41, 48, 49, 57, 70, 141, 144, 150, 154, 163, 171.)

In addition to the above key issues the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:-

Improving, still further, the quality of teaching, from the points of view of: expectations; pace; and teachers' knowledge and understanding, notably in art, music and physical education.

(Paragraphs: 37, 42, 90, 107, 128, 144, 161, 170.)

Raising pupils' multicultural awareness.

(Paragraphs: 50, 55, 165.)

Improving facilities for physical development of children under five in Year R.

(Paragraphs: 33, 80, 83, 94, 99.)

Defining school policy for homework to overcome inconsistencies, in the light of recent DfEE initiatives.

(Paragraphs: 38, 49, 63, 76, 120.)

Providing appropriate training for staff concerning child protection issues.

(Paragraphs: 60, 72.)

Observing school policy regarding health and safety in physical education with regard to long hair and suitable footwear.

(Paragraphs: 60, 170.)

Meeting statutory requirements to report absence figures in the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents.

(Paragraphs: 62, 77.)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. High Littleton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is situated in the village of High Littleton near Bath in North East Somerset. The school building was originally constructed in 1900 and has recently been added to, to provide permanent accommodation for five classes. The school has close links with the parish church and has the use of the church hall during the school day.

2. There are 135 children on the school roll aged from four to eleven. Numbers have remained about the same since the last inspection in 1996. There are five classes, each with mixed age groups. There is an average of 27 pupils per class. In the week of the inspection it was the first time that children under five had attended school for the whole day. Attainment on entry reflects a wide ability range and is about average overall.

3. Pupils are drawn from the village and surrounding area. Unemployment locally is broadly in line with the national average.

4. The headteacher is in her second year at the school and is supported by five full time, and one part time members of staff.

5. There are 26 pupils on the special educational needs register. This accounts for 19.3 per cent of the school roll, which is broadly in line with the national average. One pupil has a formal statement under the terms of the DfEE Code of Practice, (this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs, receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development). This is less than the national picture. 17 children (12.6 per cent) are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is well below the national average of 19.9 per cent. No pupils come from homes where English is a second language.

6. The school was inspected previously at the end of April 1996. Key issues of that report featured needs to :-

Sustain the caring ethos and standards; Introduce a whole school curriculum plan; Monitor the curriculum; Create a coherent approach to assessment; and Review the balance of management responsibilities.

7. The school has identified as its main aims :-

“To develop positive awareness of self and sensitivity to others, acquire a set of moral values and the confidence to make moral judgements, develop habits of self discipline, self control and acceptable behaviour, and achieve high standards.”

8. Key areas identified in the current school improvement plan focus on:-

Management, Curriculum, Pastoral Care and Environment.

9. As a Voluntary Controlled school, acts of worship were inspected by an inspector

appointed by the diocese of Bath and Wells under Section 23 of the Education Act. His report appears under a separate cover.

10.

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1998	10	7	17
National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics	
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	10	6	9	
	Girls	7	5	7	
	Total	16	11	16	
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (80)	65(50)	94(90)	
	National	80 (80)	81 (80)	85 (85)	
Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science	
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	8	9	9	
	Girls	6	7	7	
	Total	14	16	16	
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	82 (70)	94 (85)	94 (80)	
	National	81 (80)	85 (84)	86 (85)	

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1998	8	8	16
National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science	
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	5	6	6	
	Girls	7	6	7	
	Total	12	12	13	
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	75 (67)	75 (75)	81 (79)	
	National	65 (63)	59 (62)	69 (69)	

¹ Percentage in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

² Percentage in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	7	6	7
	Total	13	12	13
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	81 (67)	75 (79)	81 (79)
	National	65 (63)	65 (64)	72 (69)

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:	Authorised	School	%
	Absence	National comparative data	4.37
	Unauthorised	School	0
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	0
	Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	31.58
	Satisfactory or better	94.74
	Less than satisfactory	5.26

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

11. Children under five, most of whom enter school with average levels of attainment, make good progress in their reception year. The curriculum is well planned and follows a broad, balanced and relevant programme of learning. It enables all children to attain recommended desirable learning outcomes in all areas of development by the time they are five.

12. Results of 1998 National Curriculum assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, show that whilst pupils' attainment in reading was well above the national average, attainment in writing was well below. In mathematics the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level, Level 2, was above the national average, although the proportion achieving Level 3 was well below. Teacher assessed results for science were average overall. Results of the most recent end of Key Stage 1 assessments, for which national comparisons have yet to be confirmed, show a slight improvement in English test results and an improvement in mathematics, with 25 per cent of pupils achieving Level 3. Current pupils in Year 2 attain good standards in mathematics and science and average standards in reading. Attainment in writing falls below national expectations overall.

13. Results of 1998 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 6 were broadly in line with the national average for English, above the national average for mathematics and well above for science. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was well below the national figure in English, close to the national average in mathematics and well above average in science. Results of 1999 National Curriculum assessments show that English test results broadly follow the same pattern as last year, with attainment in writing again below what is expected for pupils of this age. Results for mathematics show a marked improvement on last year with an increase in the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 and an increase in the percentage achieving the expected Level 4. Science shows a similar improvement with a marked increase in the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 5.

14. In comparing the school's 1998 results with those of similar schools, English results are close to average, mathematics results are above average, and science results are well above average. Inspection evidence shows that, at the end of Key Stage 2 standards in English are satisfactory overall with weaknesses in pupils' writing skills. This was a finding of the last inspection. Standards in speaking and listening are good. Pupils listen attentively and express views and ideas confidently. Reading is in line with expectations for this age group. Pupils have a range of strategies to read unfamiliar words. They reflect on the content of what they read and demonstrate appropriate research skills. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment was again found to be satisfactory overall with standards in writing identified as being below expectations for pupils of this age. The school is fully aware of weaknesses in writing and is taking steps to promote the development of this aspect of English.

15. Attainment in mathematics was judged in this inspection to be above average at the end of both key stages. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have good numeracy skills. They

confidently predict patterns of number and have a good understanding of equivalent fractions. At Key Stage 1 pupils use appropriate mental strategies to add and subtract numbers and have a good range of mathematical vocabulary.

16. Inspection evidence indicates there are good levels of attainment in science. Pupils conduct thorough investigations and recognise the importance of fair testing to verify that data is reliable. There is a good balance between practical activity, recording and evaluating results.

17. Attainment in information technology is unsatisfactory. Very limited use was made of computers during the period of the inspection. There was little evidence of new skills being taught or of skills being applied in other curriculum areas and little application could be found in the previous year's work.

18. In religious education attainment meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

19. Progress in English varies across the different aspects of the subject. Pupils have numerous opportunities to make good progress in the development of their speaking and listening skills. In discussions during mathematics, science and geography lessons pupils use appropriate language and give good explanations of their views during literacy hour. In reading, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. At Key Stage 1 pupils develop good knowledge of letter sounds and blends and apply this to their reading. At Key Stage 2 pupils make progress in fluency of reading. Progress in writing is unsatisfactory. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to draft and edit pieces of extended writing. Progress is often hindered by a lack of teacher expectation, in terms of the quantity and quality of written work to be produced in a specific amount of time.

20. Pupils make good progress in mathematics. They successfully build on key skills in knowledge and understanding of number and respond well to the challenge of new concepts. The school has recently introduced specialist mathematics teaching in Key Stage 2. This aids the monitoring of pupils' progress and ensures consistency in the delivery of the mathematics curriculum.

21. Progress in science is good at both key stages. At the beginning of Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in their understanding of circuits and the properties of materials. Pupils at the end of the key stage develop and refine fair testing procedures and record their findings appropriately. Year 2 pupils conduct an experiment to show how light helps us to see, and discuss what they discover.

22. Good progress is made in music at Key Stage 1. Instruments are used well to develop auditory memory and opportunities are created for pupils to perform. Progress in music at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. Progress in art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education was judged to be satisfactory. The school has identified the need to monitor and record skill development in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, so that progress can be measured over time.

23. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and attain standards which are in line with their abilities. They are well supported by class teachers, a specialist teacher and learning support assistants. Activities are well planned and take account of specific needs.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

24. Pupils' attitudes to their work are good, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Children under five, some of whom were, at the time of the inspection, in their first week of full time attendance, behave and respond well, developing positive attitudes to learning. Their personal and social development are good. Children work co-operatively, sharing books and toys, in a supportive and industrious atmosphere. Most understand the need to take turns and to listen to others. Some volunteer to help clear away books and toys at the end of lessons. Effective relationships with staff and with each other are already developing.

25. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 respond enthusiastically to teachers' challenges: for example in a Year 5/6 mental mathematics session on equivalent fractions. Pupils are eager to contribute and are delighted when they are first with the right answer.

26. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are proud of their work and keen to show it to visitors. Pupils of all ages are able to share resources amicably and work well in pairs and groups.

27. Behaviour is very good, as was the case at the time of the last inspection. The appropriate tone is set in Year R, where the under fives quickly learn to comply with the school's behaviour requirements. Throughout the school, pupils behave very well, moving about in an orderly fashion and lining up quietly when waiting to enter or leave a classroom. In the playground, play is lively but, having regard to the limited amount of space available, it is remarkably good natured. No instances of inappropriate behaviour or of offensive language were observed. At lunch, pupils eat in a chatty, sociable atmosphere. Pupils are friendly, outgoing and welcoming to visitors. School property such as musical instruments, books and computers are handled with care and the premises are free of graffiti and litter. There have been no exclusions over the preceding twelve months.

28. Relationships at all levels are very good and a strength of the school. The previous report described the school as a harmonious community, a view more than borne out by this inspection. In keeping with the school's very good ethos, teachers treat pupils with respect and pupils respond accordingly. In classrooms, the atmosphere is both industrious and happy. Pupils have an easy, relaxed, yet entirely proper relationship with teachers, which encourages pupils to try their best. The quality of staff pupil relationships contributes positively to pupils' levels of attainment. Pupils listen in supportive silence to others' contributions and no pupil is derided for offering a wrong answer. Particularly good contributions are often rewarded with a burst of applause. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and classroom assistants and are fully integrated into the life of the school. Older pupils are happy to help younger ones: for example at lunchtime where Year 6 pupils sit amongst young children from Year R and Year 1.

29. Personal development is good. The under fives are given responsibilities from their first day in school: for example in selecting books and games. Pupils with special

educational needs are encouraged to organise their own learning materials. Most pupils have classroom jobs and older pupils carry out tasks such as looking after the overhead projector and cassette player in assemblies. These duties are carried out cheerfully and without fuss. Pupils' sensitivity towards the feelings of those of other cultures is still underdeveloped, but this aspect is presently being addressed. Pupils' personal development is enhanced by involvement in community activities and work in raising funds for their own school and for various charities.

Attendance

30. Pupils' attendance, at 95.6 per cent, is good and very similar to the level recorded at the time of the last inspection. There is, as previously, no unauthorised absence. Registration is carried out promptly and efficiently, whilst pupils read or prepare for the day. Registers are properly maintained. Pupils arrive punctually for school and lessons make a prompt and businesslike start. Whilst there is evidence of an increasing trend towards family holidays in term time, the practice has yet to make a significant impact upon the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

31. The profile of teaching is good with very good features. This constitutes improvement since the last report. In design and technology where teaching had unsatisfactory features, there have been improvements to satisfactory levels.

32. Teaching was satisfactory or better in nearly 95 per cent of lessons observed. It was good in 71 per cent and, in 31 per cent, very good. 7 per cent of lessons were judged excellent, these were in Key Stage 1. The majority of staff taught some lessons judged as good. Four teachers taught some lessons that were very good, including two members of staff who accounted for the three excellent lessons. Two teachers recorded one unsatisfactory lesson each.

33. Teaching for those under five is consistently good, very often better and occasionally excellent. Here staff are confident, make use of good planning and assessment, relationships are very good and expectations are high. Children are helped to make a very good start. However, there is some weakness in provision for outdoor activities. Under five and Key Stage 1 teaching is good overall. 68 per cent of lessons were good or better during the inspection with nearly 41 per cent very good.

34. In Key Stage 2 the overall quality of teaching is good. However, there is a smaller proportion of lessons which are very good in this key stage compared with elsewhere in the school. Nevertheless, nearly 19 per cent of lessons were very good and 75 per cent were good or better. The very small number of unsatisfactory lessons seen during the inspection affected pupils in this key stage.

35. Where teaching is satisfactory or better it has a favourable effect on pupils' attainment and progress. For example, teaching in the newly established numeracy time is usually good, such as Year 5/6 work on fractions. Consequently, pupils' attainment in mathematics has improved steadily since the last inspection. Relationships between staff

and pupils are very good. Teachers interact with pupils effectively. Particularly good examples are in science and during the whole class element of literacy hour.

36. Where teaching is good, staff plan their work carefully, organise activities well and, in an improvement since the last report, communicate their objectives clearly: for example in good review sessions at the start of lessons. In good lessons teachers ensure work moves with pace, use good questioning techniques and provide activities which are challenging and well matched to the majority of pupils' abilities. Staff manage mixed age classes well. Teachers are well prepared and make good use of resources: for example a Key Stage 2 focus on practical work for experimental and investigative science.

37. Approximately five per cent of lessons were judged unsatisfactory. Sometimes sessions judged as satisfactory or even better overall have unsatisfactory elements. There are occasions when pupils are not challenged enough: for example in the writing element of English; and in the mixed key stage class some pupils are not set enough work to do in the time available. This results in pupils making too little progress. In some lessons pace is too slow, introductions are too long restricting time available for practical work. In some subjects, notably music and physical education at Key Stage 2 and information technology throughout the school, some teachers' confidence, knowledge and understanding are lacking. This has a negative effect on levels of progress and is not helped by a lack of monitoring opportunities for co-ordinators to observe the quality of teaching in their subjects. Overall, teachers make far too little use of information technology to support other subjects and, only recently, have begun to consider it as a subject in its own right.

38. The most effective teachers use a combination of praise, and constructive criticism in their marking linked to pupils' individual targets. This is especially successful in English and mathematics. However, there are some inconsistencies between classes in marking. The same applies to homework which suffers from a lack of continuity, partly due to the absence of school policy.

39. A considerable strength of the school is in teachers' consistently good management of pupils. This has a very positive effect on behaviour and contributes significantly to the calm, orderly atmosphere. Teachers play a major part in creating the very good ethos and learning environment.

40. The quality of teaching and support for those pupils with special educational needs is very good. Work is well planned to meet specific needs. Instructions are clear, praise is used constructively and relationships are good. Expectations are high and pupils are worked hard. As a result such pupils make very good progress. Teachers and learning support assistants work very well together.

41. In English, mathematics and science teachers make good use of assessment, but as was the case in the last inspection, insufficient opportunities are created in other subjects. This has a negative impact on staff's ability to report progress and modify future work accordingly.

The curriculum and assessment

42. The curriculum for children under five is very good and planned according to desirable learning outcomes. It promotes attainment in all the areas of learning very

securely, especially personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics by age five. However, in the area of physical development, although there are planned activities for physical education, the outdoor curriculum is restricted through a lack of ride-on toys and activities, such as sand and water play. Curricular planning between the areas of learning for under fives and the early stages of the National Curriculum is good.

43. The curriculum provided for pupils at both key stages is satisfactory, being broad and generally balanced. It covers the subjects of the National Curriculum, as well as religious education, health education, personal, social and moral education. Sex education is covered, as is drugs awareness. The curriculum meets statutory requirements for subjects, with the exception of information technology which is underrepresented. Broadly, appropriate time is allocated to subjects at the planning stage. Efficient use is made of time for the literacy hour and numeracy strategy. However, time allocated is underused for information technology and inefficiently used for some subjects, such as art and design and technology. A good start has been made on implementing the literacy hour and numeracy strategy. However, in literacy opportunities for extended writing are underdeveloped. Pupils have good equal access to the curriculum, including those with special educational needs.

44. Overall, planning is satisfactory with a rolling programme of topics provided to give structure to the curriculum. Planning for literacy and numeracy is thorough and follows national guidelines. Planning for information technology is inadequate for the subject's new core status and there is a lack of links to other subjects. Schemes of work have been provided for non core subjects, but these have not been refined to reflect less time available due to the constraints of the literacy hour and numeracy strategy. A sequential programme of skills to be built on, year on year, has yet to be identified and agreed. At present, this is leading to some inconsistency in work covered in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. A start has been made on identifying learning objectives in daily lesson planning. Most lessons contain suitable plenary sessions to recap on what has been taught. Subjects are supported by appropriate policies. Governors are fully involved in the ongoing development of the curriculum.

45. Since the previous inspection, progress has been made in overcoming weaknesses identified, by providing whole school planning proformas and schemes of work. However, schemes for subjects other than English, mathematics and science, require revision to provide an effective curriculum covering an agreed body of knowledge and skills. As information technology has had its status raised to a core subject, it requires greater planning. In order to improve this situation the school is using some of the planning materials provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

46. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Work is very well planned and meets learning needs identified in pupils' individual education plans. Pupils receive support on an individual basis and in small groups, in and out of the classroom. Effective support enhances pupils' learning and progress in literacy and numeracy very well.

47. The school has a suitable range of extracurricular activities that provide a significant number of pupils with opportunities to take part in sports, (football and netball, with cricket and athletics in the summer term), chess, country dancing, drama and conservation. The curriculum is enhanced by regular visits to places of interest: for example the post office and library, Bristol Zoo, Blaise Castle, Greyfield Wood and Glastonbury Abbey. A range of visitors including the vicar, police, shopkeepers and charity representatives, enriches pupils' experience.

48. Assessment procedures are good for children under five and unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Children under five undergo detailed assessments in their first few weeks in Year R so activities can be matched to their needs. At Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, there are suitable policies and procedures covering English, mathematics and science. Useful information from these subjects is analysed carefully to set targets for improvement as the school strives for higher standards. However, although planned, there are no procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in the new core subjects of information technology and religious education or for all non core subjects. In the school's own evaluation it was recognised that up to 18 months ago there were very few procedures for assessment. The school has made a concerted effort to begin the process which will overcome this.

49. Ongoing assessment information is used satisfactorily to inform planning in English, mathematics and science. Target setting, to improve National Curriculum test results is suitably established. Targets are set for individual pupils for their own learning. Good use is made of assessment information to inform planning for the under fives. However, at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 use of day to day information by teachers to help shape future lesson is variable. There are variations in the standard of marking and implementation of homework and there is no policy to confirm and explain good practice.

Pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

50. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The previous inspection report recognised strengths in provision for pupils' moral development. However, insufficient opportunities to raise the awareness of pupils to the multicultural nature of society and, a lack of cultural links to subjects, were noted. The school has maintained its moral provision very well, but not developed multicultural awareness or cultural links to subjects sufficiently.

51. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Suitable opportunities for spiritual development are provided through well planned acts of collective worship. These provide appropriate opportunities for the whole school to celebrate and worship, with time for thoughtful reflection, prayer and stillness. Pupils have opportunities to contribute to these and to develop a sense of awe and thankfulness. Spiritual development is evident in the daily life of the school. Pupils take part in the annual act of remembrance in November each year. Some thoughtful displays throughout the school encourage reflection. However, opportunities for pupils' spiritual development are underdeveloped as a part of the planned curriculum.

52. Pupils' moral development is very good. There is a clear code of behaviour, the golden rules, which are known to all pupils. Pupils are aware of what is acceptable or unacceptable behaviour. They are encouraged to be honest, diligent and trustworthy through responsibilities given daily: for example getting the hall ready for assembly and packing away equipment in classrooms. Moral issues are explored thoroughly through personal and social education, planned circle time lessons and in assemblies, in order to develop pupils' moral awareness.

53. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. From starting school as under fives, pupils are encouraged to relate well to each other, to take turns and to share willingly. Examples of their very good co-operation are seen in the many times pupils work in pairs or

groups, often of mixed gender. Pupils have a range of responsibilities, including working the overhead projector and tape-recorder for assemblies, sharing tasks at lunchtimes or when putting out or replacing physical education equipment. Adults set pupils good examples of working together in harmony. Pupils relate very well to adults who support the daily life of the school.

54. Pupils join in neighbourhood events and develop a sense of the needs of others in the community. A wide range of activities, such as fund raising for worthy causes, encourages very good social development. For example, pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 host an annual Christmas party for local senior citizens and others regularly sing carols at a nearby residential home.

55. Cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. Pupils are given a secure knowledge of their own and other cultures through taking part in local activities: for example the Radstock Miners' Gala. Pupils join in drama workshops and have received visits from a music group and puppet theatre. They have taken part in a country dancing display at the Bath Festival; and in book weeks, in which they dress up as characters from books and listen to visiting authors. However, opportunities to develop an awareness of the cultural diversity of society and multicultural aspects are insufficiently developed. Cultural links with subjects, such as art and music, from this point of view, are underdeveloped.

Support, guidance and pupils welfare

56. The school's arrangements for supporting and guiding pupils and promoting their welfare are good, which represents an improvement on the effective arrangements noted at the last inspection.

57. There are good procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress and personal development. Each class teacher keeps a record of achievement file for each pupil, containing test results, annual reports, significant pieces of work and items of which the pupil is particularly proud. Whilst assessment procedures are, at times, less than satisfactory, the quality of support offered to pupils is good. The high quality of relationships between staff and pupils is pivotal in providing them with the day to day support necessary to help them cope with life at school. Pupils are well known as individuals to their teachers. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting commented upon the sensitive way in which pupils' personal problems are dealt with. Personal development figures prominently in the school's mission statement and is promoted in a number of ways. Children are encouraged to be self-sufficient from their first day in school and they are given responsibilities which increase in importance as they move up the school. Matters such as sex education and drugs awareness are addressed, although the headteacher recognises that the school's personal, social and moral education programme is in need of updating. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported by class teachers, support assistants and the special needs teacher. There are good links with outside specialists such as the educational psychologist.

58. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. The behaviour policy, which is rooted in the school's ethos, concentrates upon promoting positive conduct. There are seven school 'golden rules' and, at the beginning of the year, each class discusses its own code of conduct. Pupils may be rewarded individually or as a group, thus encouraging pupils to take a group view of behaviour and effort. Groupings are frequently changed to avoid exclusivity. There is a high degree of consistency in the

implementation of the behaviour policy. Lunchtime supervisors have received training in behaviour management. If persistently poor behaviour occurs, the headteacher sets up a report system, involving school and parents. Bullying is approached positively, using a 'no-blame' approach. Cases are monitored to ensure against recurrence and parents are involved where necessary. Ultimately, however, the high standards of behaviour in the school are achieved by creating an atmosphere in which good conduct is the norm.

59. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are good. Registers are properly kept and carefully examined. The headteacher pursues any instance of unexplained absence and there are regular visits from an education welfare officer. Parents are reminded in the school's regular newsletters of the need to report reasons for non attendance promptly and of the need to consult the school regarding term time holidays. The school has the support of the community and pupils enjoy attending, which are the most effective ways of ensuring high levels of attendance.

60. There are satisfactory procedures for child protection and promoting pupils' wellbeing, health and safety, as was the case at the time of the last inspection. However, there is no school policy for child protection, although procedures in place are adequate. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection matters. Other staff are aware of procedures, which is covered in the staff handbook, but have had insufficient recent training. There are satisfactory liaison arrangements with other statutory authorities. Parent volunteers are vetted before they work with children and the school's Internet access has screening software to minimise the risk of pupils' straying into inappropriate sites. A sub-committee of the governing body, including the deputy headteacher, has responsibility for health and safety. Few issues from this point of view were raised in this inspection, but procedures for tying back long hair and wearing suitable footwear in physical education were not met. Premises are inspected regularly, and there is a book in which staff can record observed faults. Fire drills are carried out termly and fire equipment is regularly examined. There are contracts in place for safety inspections of small electrical equipment, physical education and play equipment. Two members of staff are trained in first aid. Records are kept of treatment and in the case of bumps to the head, notes are sent to parents. The school will, under certain circumstances, administer prescribed medicines and, asthmatic pupils may keep their inhalers with them. School mealtime supervisors are aware of pupils with dietary problems.

Partnership with parents and the community

61. The school's partnership with parents and the community is good, which represents an improvement on the position at the time of the last inspection.

62. Information for parents is good. There is good liaison between the Year R teacher and the village pre-school group. Parents are invited to a meeting at school before their children start to attend. The school prospectus is to the point although some of the terms used may be unclear to parents. The governing body's annual report is concise. Regular newsletters are issued, written in a chatty, parent-friendly style. However, neither prospectus nor governors' annual report detail absence figures as required. Class teachers send out newsletters detailing work children will be doing over the ensuing term. Parents have three formal opportunities per year to meet teachers but they do not have to wait for such a meeting to raise matters of concern. Parents feel able to raise matters of concern at any time; they describe staff as 'very approachable'. Pupil reports are good; they give parents a clear picture of their children as learners, focusing on children's attitudes to, and confidence

in, their work. Targets for future improvement are set and there is provision for parental responses to the report. Reports are discussed with pupils before they are sent home and parents have the opportunity for further discussions with teachers if they wish.

63. Parental involvement with the school is good. Parents are consulted over matters such as the home-school agreement, literacy hour and the school development plan. Home-school message books form a useful vehicle for communications. Homework, however, has a low profile and plays only a minor part in home-school involvement. Parents are invited to school functions such as sports day and Christmas celebrations. Parental help in classrooms is welcome and volunteers spoken to felt that their contributions were valued. Parents help in school maintenance: for example by working on the environmental area. There is a vigorous parent teacher association whose fund raising activities directly benefit pupils' learning by providing musical instruments, sports equipment and dictionaries (presented to Year 6 leavers). The association pays for Christmas parties and helps to meet the cost of activities not totally funded by voluntary contributions, such as book week and visits to places of interest.

64. There are satisfactory links with the community. The school has close links with the parish church; pupils attend services on all the major Christian festivals. At Christmas, pupils entertain local elderly people from the community in school. Pupils are involved in the Miners' Gala in nearby Radstock, thus providing them with insights into their area's industrial past. The village is used as a learning resource; Year R children visit the post office to study the postal system. Pupils participate in the village summer fete by running stalls and raising money for the school. There are good links with local businesses but on a financial rather than a curricular level. Local business is happy to donate prizes and provide other financial support, but there are no suitable local employers for pupils to visit. The school does, however, visit farms in support of topic work.

65. Pupils sense of citizenship is enhanced by their work for charity. They support Comic Relief, the NSPCC and the 'Shoebox' appeal for Eastern Europe. The school co-operates with other schools in the area; co-ordinators meet and resources are shared. The majority of pupils transfer at the end of Year 6 to one of two comprehensive schools in Midsomer Norton. Transfer arrangements are particularly thoughtful. The heads of Year 7 visit to tell pupils about secondary school life and pupils have a familiarisation visit before they transfer. Whilst they are in Year 7, the deputy headteacher visits them to make sure that the transfer was smooth.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

66. The leadership and management of the school is good and has improved since the previous report. The school manages pupils' behaviour especially well and standards are very good. Pupils are consistently encouraged by positive means.

67. Some aspects of leadership and management were criticised in the last report. The school has made good progress in addressing these. There is now a good development plan which takes a long term view and provides a very good framework for improvement. The roles of senior management team, governors and subject co-ordinators are more clearly defined, with the result that their involvement in development planning is effective.

The leadership of the headteacher is very good. She manages the school and staff well as an effective team. She sets a positive tone which others have responded to.

68. There has been some improvement in monitoring with the headteacher and governors more involved in evaluating provision. However, there are still too few opportunities for co-ordinators to observe the teaching of their subjects. This, together with the lack of identified, sequential skills in some subjects, has a negative effect on pupils' progress.

69. The headteacher, governors, senior management team and staff are making good progress in moving the school forward, resulting in pupils' attainment in some elements of English, mathematics and science being above average at the end of Key Stage 2. The school has clear educational direction and is well placed to develop still further.

70. In English, mathematics and science procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are well managed. However, too few opportunities are created in other subjects to give teachers a clear view of what pupils know, understand and can do. In some subjects good use is being made of targets as recommended by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. However, the school is aware of the need to take this still further to challenge pupils more effectively and has clear intentions in its improvement plan.

71. Governors play a good part in the management of the school. They maintain good links, and most visit the school regularly. The finance committee maintains a good overview of the budget and the personnel group plays a clear part in managing appointments and the pay policy. Governors' committees have contributed positively to improvements: especially by maintaining staffing levels to support special educational needs; and with regard to improving the building and grounds.

72. The school is aware there has been insufficient recent staff training regarding child protection issues. Acts of collective worship meet requirements and opportunities are created to promote pupils' spiritual development.

73. Organisation and support for special educational needs are good. Staff and resources are well managed and deployed enabling pupils to make very good progress.

74. Recent initiatives to introduce literacy and numeracy times are being well managed.

75. The day to day running of the school is good. The school is particularly successful in managing provision for pupils' moral and social development, with a very positive impact on attitudes and relationships. Most pupils enjoy coming to school. The school's Christian values and educational aims are clear and are effectively communicated. There is a strong commitment to raising standards, but not at the expense of pastoral care, and this contributes significantly to the school's very good ethos.

76. Parents support the aims and values of the school and are very active and well organised in fund raising. Communication with parents and links with the community are well managed. In response to the Ofsted questionnaire and at the parents' meeting, although the level of response was low, the overwhelming majority of parents were very positive about the school. A minority of parents expressed concerns about the management of homework. This inspection finds: there is some inconsistency between classes which the school is reviewing to formalise a new policy.

77. With the exception of including absence figures in the prospectus and annual report to parents, governors meet statutory requirements. However, the school is aware of the need to manage information technology as a subject in its own right. It has begun to improve facilities, space and resources, and develop staff expertise. This is designed to raise the profile of the subject in line with its status as part of the core curriculum. However, at present information technology falls short of requirements and this area is underemphasised with negative effects on pupils' progress. Until recently not all staff could guarantee that pupils had equality of opportunity in the use of computer equipment.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

78. The school has a suitable number of qualified teachers to enable the curriculum to be delivered. A number of appropriately trained support staff work closely with teachers in the classroom. Their full involvement in school based in-service training related to the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy has had a positive impact on the progress of pupils.

79. In January 1998 the school appointed a new headteacher and since that time three new members of staff have joined the school. Two Key Stage 1 teachers appointed on fixed term contracts just prior to the arrival of the head, have now been appointed to permanent posts, and a new Key Stage 2 teacher joined the school in September 1999. The induction procedures for newly qualified teachers and teachers new to the school are appropriate. The headteacher is currently acting as mentor to the new member of staff. With the exception of this new teacher, all teachers hold positions of responsibility for areas of the curriculum. The headteacher has made good efforts to match their strengths and interests to the subjects they have responsibility for. Staff work well together as a team, sharing ideas and expertise. Specialist teaching has recently been introduced in Key Stage 2 for literacy and numeracy. This has the benefit of ensuring consistency of provision for Year 5 pupils whose numbers are split between two classes. There is a clear policy for staff development. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are responsible for the professional development of staff. Identified needs are closely linked to the school development plan. The recently produced staff handbook gives clear guidance on organisation and school routines.

80. The school has successfully adapted and extended its accommodation and provides adequate space for numbers on roll. There is a good library which is being developed as a base for information technology lessons. Although there is no field, pupils make good use of the local recreation ground for sports, especially football. Pupils in Key Stage 2 travel to a sports centre in a nearby town for swimming. The absence of a dedicated outdoor space equipped for those under five has a negative effect on opportunities for physical development. The school benefits from the use of the church hall: for example for physical education, drama, assemblies and productions.

81. External play areas are small, but adequate and include good quality fixed climbing equipment. The grounds are well maintained and free from litter. Recent developments to environmental areas and a 'pond/marsh' are very positive features which enhance the curriculum.

82. Security of the school buildings is good. Buildings are in good repair, recently decorated, well maintained, clean and well used. Classrooms are organised effectively with satisfactory storage facilities. Displays are good and the building presents an attractive

environment for pupils.

83. There are adequate resources overall, to support subjects. However, for children under five there is a lack of ride-on and outdoor equipment to use as part of their physical development. For design and technology, geography and religious education resources provided, such as tools, equipment and artefacts are limited. Resources for pupils with special educational needs are good. Most resources are accessible, with clearly labelled containers and pupils are encouraged to select and replace items independently. There is a new, small, but accessible library which is developing its stock of books. Visits, both locally and further away, enhance learning. The local Anglican church is situated opposite the school and provides a good resource for religious education and for festivals and celebrations.

84. Since the last inspection the deficiency in music resources has been addressed and funds have been set aside for religious education. Increases have been made towards developing cultural resources, mainly through improvements to art appreciation materials.

The efficiency of the school

85. Office administration is efficient and the day to day administration of the school and its finances is good. The few recommendations of the auditors' most recent report have been acted upon and accounts are audited as required.

86. Specific grants: for example for pupils with special educational needs and for staff in-service training are used for designated purposes. The school has an above average level of expenditure per child compared with national figures, but this is in line with its income. Over the past two years it has spent all money generated by numbers on roll and an extra £32000 from its financial reserves, improving staffing, resources (notably for information technology) and facilities. The contingency fund now stands within recommended levels. Very efficient use is made of donations and money raised by the active parent teacher association.

87. Since the last inspection, the headteacher and governors have made good progress in improving the school development plan with efficient procedures to establish priorities and execute action plans. The head consults with staff in order to prioritise spending against the needs of the curriculum. The governors' finance committee efficiently sets the budget proposed by head and finance officer and monitors spending termly. There is evidence that governors have begun to evaluate the cost effectiveness of decisions taken to enhance staffing, resources and accommodation.

88. Although the headteacher still co-ordinates too many subjects as reported last time, the allocation of staff subject responsibilities covers all curriculum areas. Co-ordinators manage budgets for their subjects efficiently, albeit that some of these are small. Staff, teaching and non-teaching, are deployed efficiently to support the curriculum with good use of staff expertise in swapping classes for English and mathematics at Key Stage 2. However, the school is aware of the need for more efficient monitoring of the curriculum, particularly its delivery, by subject co-ordinators to evaluate the success of their planning. Insufficient progress has been made against the school's action plan from the last inspection in that co-ordinators other than for English, mathematics and science have no release time for monitoring.

89. Learning support assistants are well used and make a significant contribution to pupils' academic and personal development. Together with volunteer helpers they are well briefed and efficiently used, with positive impacts on pupils' progress and behaviour.

90. Overall, time is used well, although the pace of some lessons is too slow: for example with overlong introductions. Teaching time available is in line with national averages for pupils in both key stages. Staff expectations of how much work pupils are capable of in a given time are sometimes not high enough: for example in the mixed key stage class where the amount of time available does not always challenge pupils enough.

91. Equipment and learning resources are stored well. They are accessible to staff and pupils in resource areas and are efficiently used, good examples being resources for mathematics and physical education.

92. The school makes very good use of limited space. Recent initiatives and planning are under review to develop the use of space and resources in order to teach information technology as a subject in its own right to meet new requirements.

93. High Littleton C of E VC Primary School gives good value for money. This takes into account the satisfactory nature of standards (good in mathematics and science), pupils' good progress, attitudes and behaviour and good quality provision, especially teaching, evaluated against levels of expenditure per pupil. This represents an improvement since the last report.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

94. Children who are under five attend school full time following a staggered entry programme, which is operated for the first three weeks of the autumn term. Baseline assessments carried out soon after children start school, show that, although there are variations, attainment on entry is broadly average. Provision in reception is carefully organised and planned to meet children's needs. The exception to this is the lack of suitable equipment for outdoor play. Teaching is very good and is underpinned by the creation of a

pleasant and purposeful learning environment in which children feel secure. The curriculum is based on the provision recommended in the document 'Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning'. A learning assistant works closely with the teacher to support children in a range of activities and the involvement of parent and volunteer helpers is an asset, which is greatly valued. The early establishment of consistent routines, the high emphasis on pupils' social development and the good balance of teacher initiated activity and structured independent activity, all contribute to the very good progress made by children under five.

95. Children make good progress in their personal and social development. A carefully structured induction programme supports positive attitudes to learning, which were seen during the inspection. Children relate well to each other and to adults. They are enthusiastic about activities and show a high level of independence, considering the very short time they have been in school. Most can follow instructions and concentrate appropriately when completing tasks. Children behave well in the classroom, when moving around the school and during assemblies. There are many opportunities for children to learn how to share and take turns. In circle time children wait patiently for their turn to hold a special object. They accept that they must put their hand up to answer questions during whole class activities on the carpet. In role play activities they take turns to have the puppet of their choice. Equipment is used carefully and tidied away well at the end of each session.

96. Children listen attentively to stories and rhymes and respond well to the teacher's related questions. They understand the importance of listening to others and not calling out. They are eager to participate in whole class activities led by the teacher. A small number of children can express their ideas in well formed sentences. Many can recognise their name and the letter sound that it begins with. They understand how books are used and enjoy bringing in a favourite book from home for the teacher to read from. Language development is promoted through role play in Old MacDonald's farmhouse and through the use of finger puppets to recreate the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. All children have experience of early writing skills. They trace or write their own name and in role play situations use pictures, symbols and individual letters to convey meaning.

97. Early work in number is well established and children make good progress in their understanding of number and shape. They count forwards and backwards to ten and show some understanding of the numerical symbols for these numbers. Children recognise circles, squares, rectangles and triangles. Many know that a triangle has three sides and that the sides of a square are the same. They are developing an understanding of related mathematical language such as bigger, smaller, sides and corners.

98. Children make good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world. In discussion they consider the similarities and differences between themselves and others. They discuss the features of their homes and talk about the people who live with them. Children name the major parts of the body as part of their learning about themselves. Construction kits are used and explored to make shapes and models and they use a variety of materials during independent teacher directed activities.

99. The development of children's physical skills is encouraged in a number of ways. They handle scissors and small construction toys with increasing control. They are given the opportunity to explore different materials and textures to develop their manipulative skills. Children play movement games and co-ordinate their movements with increasing control. Spatial awareness is developed in physical education lessons, when children are made aware of the limitations of their environment and the position of others in relation to themselves. Provision for the development of gross motor skills is limited as children do not

have the full range of outdoor experiences: for example the absence of ride-on toys, sand and water trays, and large construction kits; has a negative effect. Arrangements and resources for outdoor play are inadequate.

100. Creative development is encouraged through a range of activities in art, imaginative play, circle time and music. Children use simple collage techniques when exploring colour. They paint faces and draw pictures of themselves. They recite and sing familiar songs and rhymes enthusiastically. Resources for imaginative play allow children to explore ways of behaving and encourage co-operation and the communication of ideas.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

101. Results of 1998 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 show that the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 in reading was well above the national average. In writing it was well below. Results for the most recent end of key stage tests show that attainment in reading and writing has risen slightly since last year though comparisons cannot be drawn with national figures as they have yet to be published. Trends in attainment over the last three years show that in the last two years standards have begun to improve. Results of 1998 end of key stage tests for eleven year olds show that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 was above the national average. Results for 1999 National Curriculum tests show a decrease in the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 but an increase in the percentage achieving Level 5. Analysis of the most recent results show that whilst standards in reading are good, attainment in writing is below what is expected for this age group.

102. At the end of both key stages standards in speaking and listening are good. Pupils in Year 2 speak clearly and confidently, particularly in discussions during literacy hour. They enjoy reading aloud together from big books. Pupils comment on and discuss the content of non fiction texts and give clear explanations of differences between fiction and non fiction books. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils express a range of opinions when comparing the book 'The Sheep Pig' and the film version of the story. They evaluate the treatment of the plot and the characters in the two different forms. Pupils listen attentively and follow instructions.

103. Standards in reading are satisfactory for the majority of pupils and there are a few very capable readers in all year groups. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can use a variety of strategies to read unfamiliar words including phonics and context clues. They are enthusiastic about books and respond particularly well to stories read to them by teachers. Progress in reading is monitored through teacher interaction during group reading time and through well kept reading records. High attaining pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 read accurately, talk about texts and offer opinions about books. They use reference books effectively for the retrieval of information. For example, a group of pupils reading a non fiction text used a glossary to find the meaning of the specific geographical language used.

104. Whilst standards in writing are satisfactory overall, extended writing skills are not well developed. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have limited opportunities to write at length for different purposes. The range of language used in imaginative and descriptive accounts is limited and there is little evidence that pupils have developed the necessary

skills to produce stories and accounts, which are increasing in complexity and fluency. Within literacy hour writing tasks often relate to the basic grammatical structure of writing and this is not directly applied to writing situations. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are developing an awareness of the importance of capital letters and full stops and a small number of pupils use them appropriately in written accounts. Most pupils take care with their work and handwriting is usually well formed. The whole school approach which has recently been implemented, is supported by use of a commercial handwriting scheme. A small number of pupils in each year group in Key Stage 2 print rather than use a cursive script. During the period of the inspection, computers were insufficiently used to support and develop writing skills.

105. Progress in the development of speaking and listening skills is good at both key stages and satisfactory progress is made in reading throughout the school. The progress made in writing is unsatisfactory in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. During the inspection some instances of good progress were seen particularly in the development of reading skills. Pupils in Year 5/6 planning a CD Rom page about a famous figure from Tudor times, used the higher order reading skills of skimming and scanning to locate key information in the texts. Year 3 pupils applied their knowledge and understanding of the use of contents pages to predict the location of information within the non fiction text they were examining. In Year 2 pupils made good progress in the recognition of consonant blends when playing a word game. The unsatisfactory progress in writing is being addressed by the school. At the beginning of this school year specialist English teaching was introduced at Key Stage 2 to aid the monitoring of pupils' progress in the development of skills. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress as activities are well targeted to their individual needs.

106. Most pupils' have good attitudes to lessons. They enjoy their work and undertake a wide range of tasks independently. There is a high level of collaboration when discussing and evaluating texts. Behaviour in whole class discussions is very good. Pupils respond enthusiastically to teachers' questions and listen intently to explanations.

107. The quality of teaching is good and at times very good. It is never less than satisfactory. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and lessons are well planned following the structures and learning objectives of the National Literacy Strategy. Where teaching is best, skilled and focused questioning used during introductions and plenary sessions, is used effectively to assess pupils' understanding and take their learning forward. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, there is a lack of pace in terms of delivery and teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve. Teachers demonstrate good classroom management. Resources are well prepared and well matched to the needs of differing abilities of pupils within the class. During the presentation of new areas of learning at the beginning of lessons, teachers use big books and suitably enlarged extracts from texts to emphasise teaching points. For example, pupils analysing the presentation of information on a large poster about the plight of tigers could clearly identify the key features that come to the attention of the reader. There are some inconsistencies in the quality and use of day to day assessment of pupils' learning. There are some examples of good practice in Key Stage 1, where marking is evaluative and identifies areas for improvement. Teachers' reading records are kept regularly and most include useful comments. Learning support assistants are well briefed and effectively deployed to support groups or individuals.

108. The co-ordinator is developing the subject in line with identified needs. There has been a recent audit of library books and immediate requirements have been identified. At the time of the inspection insufficient use was made of the library. This was raised during the last inspection. The subject co-ordinator has started to monitor the implementation of

the National Literacy Strategy and is presently working on the development of writing opportunities across the curriculum. The newly introduced policies for spelling and handwriting are having a positive impact on attainment and progress in these areas of learning. Overall the requirements of the National Curriculum for English are met.

Mathematics

109. Results of 1998 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 2 by the end of Key Stage 1 were above the national average at the expected Level 2, but no pupils attained the higher Level 3. Results for pupils in Year 6 at the end of Key Stage 2 were well above average at the expected Level 4 and close to the national average for those achieving the higher Level 5. In comparison with similar schools nationally, the results were below average at Key Stage 1 and above average at Key Stage 2. Taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together, the school's results at Key Stage 1 have remained consistent at Level 2, but shown variation at the higher Level 3. At Key Stage 2 for those three years, results have shown considerable improvements. At Key Stage 1, there is a variation between the performance of boys and girls, with girls performing slightly better than boys. However, by the end of Key Stage 2 both attain equal standards.

110. The school's results in 1999 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 2 show that the school is sustaining and improving standards, particularly with a proportion of pupils now attaining the higher Level 3. At Key Stage 2, pupils' results show similar improvements with an increase in those attaining the higher Level 5. Inspection evidence confirms above average attainment for pupils by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils, across the school at both key stages, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Pupils capable of higher attainment are suitably challenged throughout.

111. Pupils make good progress in the use and application of mathematics in problem solving and investigations and their attainment is above average. The school has identified this as an area to improve and raise standards; a strong emphasis is placed on developing pupils' mental arithmetic skills. For example, at Key Stage 1, pupils in Year 1/2, are able to use their knowledge of coin shapes and colours to work out different values. Year 2 pupils use mental recall well to problem solve: for example when adding one more to a given number or subtracting one less. By Key Stage 2, in Year 3/4, pupils problem solve using two, three and four digit numbers. By Year 5/6, pupils have progressed to solving a range of problems, including those involving fractions, with confidence.

112. Pupils attain above average standards in understanding and using numbers and make good progress. In Year R, many children can count to twenty with some going beyond. This good foundation is built on well with many Year R and Year 1 pupils confident in counting on and back to ten or higher. By Year 2, pupils have progressed to counting on and back in tens up to one hundred. By the end of Year 2, pupils are confident in addition and subtraction work involving tens and units and hundreds, tens and units. They know multiplication tables.

113. At Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 progress to work involving simple fractions, division and numbers up to a thousand. In Year 4/5, pupils extend their understanding of numbers and fractions. They learn to double and round up numbers and use inverse operations involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. By the end of Year 6, pupils have built upon this knowledge significantly and understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. Mental arithmetic skills are good and pupils are confident in their

knowledge of multiplication tables.

114. In work on shape, space and measures, pupils attain above average standards and make good progress. In Key Stage 1, children in Year R and pupils in Year 1 learn to recognise two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have progressed to more detailed work, such as finding out about different types of triangles and the properties of different shapes. They begin to find the area of shapes. At Key Stage 2, pupils progress to work involving angles and finding lines of symmetry in shapes. By the end of the key stage, pupils are able to calculate the perimeter and area of shapes successfully. They can measure accurately.

115. Pupils' make good progress in handling data using manual methods. They make bar charts, tally charts and line graphs to record and find out information. Pupils are able to extract information to solve problems. At Key Stage 1, they compile tally charts about themselves to find out information: for example the number of pupils with brown hair. In Key Stage 2, pupils have researched favourite ice creams and conducted traffic surveys. By the end of the key stage, pupils in Year 6 can construct line graphs and read and interpret results. Work in handling data is linked to other subjects, such as science and geography. In geography, older pupils use carefully constructed graphs to present information. However, the use of information technology in this respect is insufficiently developed.

116. Pupils are beginning to apply numeracy skills across the curriculum. Links with literacy are used well, particularly in reading and understanding mathematical problems presented in textbooks and through worksheets. Links with English are good, with a strong emphasis placed on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills through their problem solving and mental arithmetic work.

117. Pupils enjoy mathematics lessons and have good, and at times very good, attitudes to learning. In Key Stage 1, pupils work well together playing mathematical games, such as matching shapes and finding coin values. At Key Stage 2, pupils are confident in sharing knowledge and working out answers to problems. On most occasions, they work together well, but sometimes pupils chatter too much when working in groups.

118. The quality of teaching is good overall, with examples of very good teaching at both key stages and an excellent lesson at Key Stage 1. Teachers plan for numeracy lessons effectively. A strength being matching work to the range of abilities in mixed year group classes. This is an improvement from the previous inspection report, which noted some unsatisfactory teaching when planned work was insufficiently matched to pupils' abilities, resulting in a lack of challenge. Good use is made of whole class introductory discussions and plenary sessions to check for understanding and to introduce new concepts. Overall, the pace of lessons is good with much progress made in sessions. Marking is usually constructive, but presentation by pupils, particularly at the beginning of Key Stage 2 is not always consistent.

119. Day to day assessment information gathered by teachers is used effectively to match planned lessons to pupils' abilities. A good range of resources is made available for pupils to select from in lessons. Planning is monitored to ensure appropriate coverage of the curriculum, but the work that is taking place in classes is not as yet monitored.

120. Homework, covering multiplication tables and work to be finished is set on an ad hoc basis and gives rise to some inconsistencies.

121. The requirements of the National Curriculum for mathematics are well met.

Science

122. Standards of attainment in science are above national expectations at the end of both key stages.

123. In National Curriculum test results for 11 year olds in 1998, attainment at the expected level, Level 4, was above the national average and attainment at the higher level, Level 5, was well above the national average. This was high compared with similar schools and schools nationally, and consistent with assessments made by teachers. Early indications for such test results in 1999 are of a similar good picture. However, the percentage of those achieving the higher level, Level 5, has risen from 29 per cent to 55 per cent. This confirms that the school is doing well in science and has maintained the good standards reported in the last inspection.

124. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make consistently good progress through all strands of the subject. For example, Key Stage 1 pupils understand the importance of cause and effect and are developing a good understanding of what science is. Pupils use skills acquired in literacy hour, such as their understanding and use of contents and indexes, to find out information. They are aware of potential hazards of practical work and talk about their work in appropriate scientific terms.

125. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate their knowledge of basic life processes when distinguishing between living and non-living things. They appreciate that living involves change. They are able to use keys based on observable characteristics, such as the physical features of animals and plants, to assist them in identifying and grouping living things. Pupils can sort materials into groups according to their properties and explain why some materials are suited for specific purposes. For example, they know those that conduct electricity and those which insulate sound. Year 5/6 pupils are well aware of the principles of fair testing and are keen to make predictions and try them out in practical work. A small amount of research is undertaken using computers, but information technology is not exploited in presenting work, storing, retrieving or interrogating data.

126. Pupils enjoy science. Behaviour is very good. Pupils have constructive relationships with teachers and each other. They take a pride in finished work, sharing willingly and collaborating well: for example Year 5/6 pupils negotiating who would do what in fair tests for sound. Activities are appropriately matched to capabilities and concentration is good.

127. The quality of science teaching is good. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. They plan effectively and use good questioning techniques to provoke thought and encourage pupils to contribute at a variety of levels according to their capabilities. Resources are well used and assessment tasks are planned appropriately. However, some day to day marking of pupils' work is not consistent and when used, comments, though constructive, do not always give pupils clear indications of what they need to do to improve.

128. The school's science policy is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has addressed the issues raised about challenge and overdirected activities in the last report by producing a

scheme of work which over a two year cycle helps ensure progress of pupils in mixed age classes. Considerable emphasis on experimental and investigative science has been effective in raising standards. The co-ordinator effectively manages a budget for science and there are sufficient resources. She supports members of staff by out of class discussion and in planning, but does not have sufficient opportunity to monitor teaching. This occasionally leads to inconsistency: for example in the pace and challenge of some lessons. The requirements of the National Curriculum for science are well met.

Information Technology

129. There have been considerable changes in the subject since the last inspection when standards in information technology were described as good. In the interim period the subject has been raised to core status, but has received insufficient emphasis at this school. Consequently, pupils' achievements are below expectations. However, a significant proportion of pupils, notably those who have computers at home, have reasonable basic skills: for example some Year 2 pupils can access and load programs, and a minority can save and print their work.

130. Although recent initiatives are having positive effects, currently attainment and progress are unsatisfactory at the end of both key stages. Not all required elements of the National Curriculum are taught. Pupils have too few opportunities to use information technology to control devices and events, or to use simulations to investigate options: for example by exploring adventure games to evaluate the consequences of different decisions. Information technology is not delivered as a subject in its own right and is not used sufficiently to support other curriculum areas: for example in word processing or data handling.

131. Pupils with special educational needs make little use of computers in work towards individual education plans and this is limited by a lack of equipment specifically designated for their support. However, pupils throughout the school, especially at Key Stage 1, make good use of tape recorders and listening stations for literacy work.

132. Pupils have positive attitudes towards information technology, often supported by experience at home. Most work co-operatively, supporting each other when given the opportunity.

133. Very little information technology teaching was observable. It is clear that at both key stages teaching is unsatisfactory and that over the past year teachers' management of the use of computers has been insufficient to help pupils reach expected levels. The school has not guaranteed that pupils have full equality of opportunity in the use of equipment. Some staff lack confidence, knowledge and understanding in the subject and this has implications for future in-service training.

134. Resources for information technology have very recently been improved by virtue of a government grant and spending from school reserves. However, the school still has less computers per head than the average for primary schools nationally. The school is now connected to the Internet. Improvements, with a variety of new equipment, thoughtfully sited so groups can be taught together, provide a satisfactory basis for future work.

135. The school is aware that the lack of a detailed scheme of work for the subject, showing how pupils will progress, building one skill on another, has had a negative effect. There are good intentions in the school development plan to address this problem.

Religious Education

136. The teaching of religious education follows the locally agreed syllabus and meets statutory requirements. Pupils are provided with a range of topics which covers the teaching of Christianity. They study other main religions and learn about the Hindu and Jewish faiths and ways of life.

137. Evidence from the one lesson it was possible to observe, scrutiny of work, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils, indicates that standards are in line with expectations and that satisfactory progress is made. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and their progress is satisfactory.

138. The previous inspection report commented on the lack of a scheme of work to use alongside the locally agreed syllabus. This has been addressed, with a clear plan of topics to be covered. Pupils learn about, and take part in, festivals and celebrations. They learn Bible stories and parables. They think about special places and talk, reflect and write about people, places and things that are important to them. For example, in Key Stage 1, Year 2 pupils have written about the things that are precious to them. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 5/6 have deepened their understanding and are able to draw comparisons: for example contrasting the parable of 'The Good Samaritan' with a modern day equivalent. Older pupils produce some thoughtful work on themes, such as 'forgiveness' and 'jealousy'. Links with literacy are beginning to be developed through extending pupils' writing.

139. The themes chosen for collective worship support and extend work in religious education. For example, work on the celebration of harvest time and the growth of fruits and vegetables are successfully linked to taking care of the environment. Reflection is encouraged through religious education lessons, use of circle time sessions, when pupils are encouraged to reflect on things important to them and to talk about and share their opinions on moral matters, and in assemblies.

140. Overall, evidence indicates that pupils have good attitudes and that teaching is at least satisfactory. In the one lesson seen, the teaching was very good. In this lesson the teacher used a circle time session very effectively to get the youngest pupils to talk about their likes and to listen to each other's responses. Pupils enjoyed being part of the circle and listened to their teacher and each other with rapt attention.

141. The use of resources in terms of religious artefacts and books is limited and it is recognised that these require improvement. However, good use is made of the Anglican church situated opposite the school for Harvest, Christmas and Easter services and for other celebrations. However, assessment and monitoring linked to the subject are insufficiently developed.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Art

142. Evidence taken from limited lesson observation, displays, samples of work, links with

other subjects, a scrutiny of planning and discussion with pupils and teachers indicates that progress is satisfactory, particularly in drawing and painting. However, progress in three-dimensional work and the study of famous artists, and the understanding of their styles of work, is restricted and linked insufficiently to a planned scheme of work.

143. Planning for the subject has yet to be reviewed to reflect the time constraints imposed by the introduction of the literacy hour and numeracy strategy. Any work on famous artists and their styles is covered in an ad hoc way as part of topics: for example portraits by Holbein linked to a history topic covering Tudors. In two-dimensional work, the youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 have painted pictures of themselves. Pupils progress to learning about tone: for example painting strips of paper using one colour to find out how many shades from light to dark they can make. Artwork is linked to topics, for instance painting different leaves. By Key Stage 2, pupils have progressed to producing some careful observational line drawings of plants and pictures of flowers using chalks and pastels. Pupils have studied the work of artists, such as Van Gogh, Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael.

144. Evidence indicates that pupils enjoy their artwork and they talk with pride about work on display. Teaching is at least satisfactory. However, some short term planning shows a weakness in a lack of knowledge about the skills to be taught to particular age groups. Planning lacks a clear indication of the skills to be assessed as pupils move through the school. Much work taking place is in isolation, being linked to topics and not to a scheme of work.

145. Art areas are kept tidy with pupils given some choice in selecting materials and equipment. Evidence indicates that pupils use a variety of media, such as pencil, pastel and paint effectively for two-dimensional work. However, at Key Stage 2, pupils do not have sketchbooks to record their observations in, to indicate the skills and techniques used, and for teachers to assess and track progress over time.

146. The previous inspection report stated that the curriculum, particularly at Key Stage 2, is variable, with insufficient attention paid to a planned development of skills or the study of works of art. This is still the case, but pupils in Key Stage 1 receive an art curriculum which is better planned for skills development. Monitoring work in classes has yet to take place.

Design and Technology

147. It was only possible to observe one design and technology lesson during the inspection. Evidence from displays, samples of work, links with other subjects, a scrutiny of planning and discussion with pupils and teachers indicates that progress overall is satisfactory. Pupils are given opportunities to design and make, but evaluation of their work to make improvements is less evident.

148. In Key Stage 1, younger pupils have made three-dimensional boats while older pupils have designed and made musical instruments. Pupils use a range of construction kits to make models. In food technology, they have made sandwiches and Easter biscuits and nests, while Year 2 pupils made fruity kebabs. In Key Stage 2, younger pupils have designed and made mobiles, linked to work on balance in science, and older pupils a weather recording board and sunshields. By Year 6, pupils have progressed to designing and making finger, stick and glove puppets using detailed designs.

149. Evidence indicates that pupils enjoy their work in design and technology. They are well motivated to complete tasks and share materials sensibly. Teaching in the lesson seen was satisfactory. Much work planned is linked to topics and lacks reference to a scheme of work which sets out relevant skills for each age group.

150. The previous inspection report highlighted deficiencies in some teachers' understanding of the curriculum for design and technology. The level of attainment was satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. Although some progress has been made, evidence from this inspection indicates that although there is a scheme of work, it lacks modification to allow for the time restrictions imposed by the literacy hour and numeracy strategy. Consequently, it is insufficiently implemented, monitored and assessed.

Geography

151. The two lessons observable during the inspection, scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work and discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that progress is satisfactory throughout the school. At the end of Key Stage 1 there was very little previously completed work available for scrutiny as geography is integrated into topic work and sometimes forms only a minor element of it. Early map work is covered in a topic about farming. Pupils make a plan of a farm and note the landmarks the farmer passes on his way from the farmhouse to his tractor. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils visit Greyfield Wood as part of a local study. A study of the Somerset Coal Canal undertaken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 successfully links geographical and historical perspectives. Using a large scale map of the canal area pupils learn to measure direction and distance. They describe the location of particular landmarks using compass directions and calculate the distances between places on the map using scale.

152. A scrutiny of work displayed in classrooms, discussions with pupils and evidence from the two lessons observed, shows that pupils enjoy geography and approach their work with interest and enthusiasm.

153. Teaching at both key stages is satisfactory. Work is planned using a commercial scheme so that skills and concepts are included as well as knowledge. Teachers in the same key stage plan together to ensure continuity so that pupils of the same age in different classes cover work at a similar level. Resources for geography are limited and are just about adequate for the delivery of the curriculum. The subject co-ordinator is aware of the deficiencies and there are plans to improve provision.

History

154. It was only possible to observe one lesson of history during the inspection and evidence of pupils' progress over time was limited. This is due in part to the lack of a system for the monitoring of skill development. Judgements are based on discussions with pupils and teachers and a scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work. By the time they reach Year 6 pupils have a strong sense of chronology and the skills to investigate historical information. In their local history study of the Somerset Coal Canal, pupils learn why and when canals were built and compare present day transport systems with those of the past.

Pupils in Year 4/5 know the main historical figures of the Tudor period and are developing an understanding of key dates and events of this time. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils study the history of the school which dates back to before 1900. They are fortunate to have a number of photographs of school life as it was in the past and a school log book dating back to the beginning of the century. Pupils show an understanding of the passing of time and can compare life at school in the present day with the school in the past.

155. Pupils display a keen interest in history and answer questions enthusiastically. The presentation of their work is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. The quality of work displayed around the school is good and is supported by interactive displays set up by teachers. Good links are established between history and English, particularly in reading and writing. Pupils read statements about Henry VIII and consider which are facts and which are opinions. In their study of local history pupils in Year 5/6 write clear accounts about transport before canals were built.

156. Teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. Planning is effective and appropriate links are made with other areas of the curriculum such as art and geography. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and use a commercial scheme of work to improve planning and ensure coverage of the topic at appropriate levels for the age and abilities of pupils. There are sufficient resources to promote learning and relevant visits are arranged.

Music

157. In most lessons pupils make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress in music. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress over time and the situation described in the last report has been maintained. Pupils have sufficient opportunities to be involved in a range of musical activities. In Key Stage 1, pupils sing with a good sense of rhythm; learning to clap and perform actions to songs. Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory appreciation of notation and are making good progress in awareness of texture, composing and recording. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the school's own percussion instruments and the instruments of the orchestra, and some pupils can recognise these when they hear them played.

158. In Key Stage 2, pupils can create their own music to achieve a planned effect, and use graphic notation to record their compositions. About one in five pupils have instrumental lessons provided by specialists from the county peripatetic music service and are reaching good standards.

159. At both key stages there are limited opportunities for pupils to demonstrate musical skills: for example by playing in assembly or to respond to music and this has a restricting impact on pupils' spiritual development. There are few extracurricular musical activities, but work towards school productions has a positive effect by giving pupils the opportunity to perform.

160. Pupils' response and behaviour is usually good in music lessons. Pupils listen carefully and follow instructions well. When pupils are well motivated, they approach activities eagerly and happily, but when pace is too slow: for example when giving out instruments; or when pupils have too little time to play them, some pupils' attention drops. Without exception, pupils across the school treat resources with respect.

161. Overall, teaching in music is satisfactory, although there are strengths and

weaknesses. Good teaching features clear objectives, good subject knowledge and provides plenty of hands on experience. Weaker teaching is the result of a lack of understanding and insufficient challenge for pupils and expectations which are too low: for example the quality of assembly singing.

162. Good use is made of the church hall for some music lessons. This enables groups to spread out and experiment with sounds without distracting others.

163. Planning is guided by a policy and outline scheme of work derived from a commercial programme, and is of sound quality with clear learning objectives. The intended music curriculum is broad, and covers all required aspects. Good work was seen in Year R and Key Stage 1 with pupils being taught listening techniques and being given good opportunities to widen their vocabulary and reflect on their response to music. Throughout the school planning has links with other subjects: for example in work on sound in science; and dance, where pupils respond to music through use of taped programmes. Currently, assessment is not considered in planning and staff make little formal evaluation of individual pupils' work.

164. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to maintain the profile of music when reduced time is available. However, her awareness of what is happening in the subject is restricted by a lack of monitoring opportunities. She supports other staff in planning and oversees resources.

165. There are adequate resources for the subject: for example a good range and quality of tuned and untuned percussion instruments, which allows all pupils in a class to take part in making music together. Storage and access to resources are satisfactory. Good use is made of monitors to transport instruments. Deficiencies reported in the last inspection concerning the availability of recorded music have been addressed, but insufficient attention is paid to examples of multicultural music. Pupils' cultural development is negatively affected by having little experience of non-European music. Good use is made of outside resources: for example a county music advisory teacher gives valuable advice and in-service training to staff as well as direct class teaching.

Physical Education

166. Pupils in both key stages including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress in physical education, which indicates improvement, especially at Key Stage 1, since the last inspection. Pupils reach standards as expected for their ages. There are strengths in gymnastics at Key Stage 1 and, as reported by the school, in swimming at Key Stage 2.

167. In gymnastics in Key Stage 1, pupils show good control of movements and good use of initiative when moving. Pupils travel satisfactorily using twisting, turning, rolling and jumping movements. They are beginning successfully to link movements together to form sequences. As observed in the playground, pupils throw and catch with appropriate accuracy and control, and are developing hand/eye co-ordination well. Physical education at Key Stage 1 suffers from a lack of appropriate equipment in the church hall.

168. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop greater control, with good emphasis being put on the quality of movements. Although some show inexperience when working in a larger space than a classroom, pupils are well aware of safety when moving, and have a satisfactory

awareness of others around them, particularly when working in groups. Pupils handle small apparatus and equipment appropriately, and take responsibility for setting it out and putting it away. Key Stage 2 pupils have the opportunity to respond to music as a stimulus in dance. The school reports that in swimming, by the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils reach the required standard in swimming 25 metres, with many pupils competent in a variety of strokes.

169. Pupils' response to physical education ranges from very good in Key Stage 1 to unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. Pupils are usually keen and enthusiastic, and willing to learn new skills. They work well together and behave well, although some Key Stage 2 pupils showed immaturity and were overexcited when working in the hall. Most pupils listen well to teachers, follow instructions and are appreciative of the work of others.

170. Observed teaching in Key Stage 1 was good, but less successful in Key Stage 2 where one lesson was unsatisfactory. Here pupils were not extended mentally or physically and pace was too slow. Overall, planning is satisfactory, with due regard to safety, although more attention needs to be paid to long hair being tied back and correct footwear. Most lessons begin with warm ups, and end with cool downs. There are usually clear learning intentions, and most activities are appropriately chosen to achieve objectives. However, lack of an overall plan showing increasing skill levels expected as pupils progress through the school leads to a lack of continuity. There are gaps in some teachers' knowledge and understanding and ability to put across appropriate teaching points. These require in-service training support, which the absence of monitoring of teaching has failed to identify.

171. There is a satisfactory curriculum for physical education, which includes outdoor activities such as tennis supported by external experts. Insufficient assessment opportunities are featured in planning and records of individual pupils' performance do not record progress made and are inconsistently kept. Assessment does not inform future planning, but staff work well together to evaluate their work. Teachers are enthusiastic and offer extracurricular activities: for example netball and football, which enable pupils to benefit in terms of acquiring and improving skills, and through social interaction. There are opportunities for competition within the school such as on sports days, and matches against other local schools, particularly in six-a-side football.

172. With the exception of gymnastics equipment in the church hall, resources are good in both quality and quantity. They are stored well and used effectively.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

173. The team consisted of four inspectors including one lay inspector. The inspection was carried out in the week commencing 27th September 1999 and covered 10 inspector days of observations and interviews. Before the inspection the Registered Inspector attended a meeting of parents to discuss inspection issues and hear the views of three parents. During the course of the inspection the inspection team observed 38 lessons or parts of lessons, attended daily assemblies and observed registration periods and a range of school activities. In total the team made 102 observations which accounted for nearly 56 hours spent in gathering first hand evidence.

174. A sample of pupils from each year group was heard reading. Pupils' behaviour in the playground and around the school was noted. Discussions were held with members of staff, governors and pupils. The inspection team scrutinised policy documents, teachers' planning, financial statements, pupils' records and attendance registers. During the week, inspectors viewed, in detail, samples of work from each year group. These represented all abilities. Inspectors evaluated the provision and use of staffing, accommodation and resources.

175.

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	135	1	26	17

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	6.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	21.8

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff:	4
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	51.2
Average class size:	26.6

Financial data

Financial year:	1998 – 9
	£
Total Income	231102
Total Expenditure	248352
Expenditure per pupil	1986
Balance brought forward from previous year	34192
Balance carried forward to next year	16942

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	135
Number of questionnaires returned:	23

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	47.8	43.5	4.3	4.3	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	52.2	43.5	0	4.3	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	19.0	52.4	28.6	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	30.4	60.9	4.3	4.3	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	30.4	60.9	0	8.7	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	26.1	69.6	4.3	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	34.8	56.5	4.3	4.3	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	26.1	60.9	13.0	0	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	43.5	52.2	4.3	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	26.6	65.2	8.7	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) their school	52.2	34.8	13.0	0	0

Other issues raised by parents

The overwhelming response of parents is positive, particularly with regard to new initiatives since the arrival of the headteacher. Parents are especially pleased with the school's caring ethos. Some parents expressed concerns about homework. This inspection finds that there are inconsistencies between classes, but homework is valued and the school is working on a new policy linked to government initiatives.

Three parents attended the meeting prior to the inspection which is very low compared with most schools and the response to the questionnaire at 17 per cent is low.