

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **GREENFIELD VC LOWER SCHOOL**

Greenfield Bedford

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109600

Headteacher: Mrs D Thomas

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Catlin  
21685

Dates of inspection: 7-9 February 2000

Inspection number: 189055

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Lower
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Pulloxhill Road Greenfield Bedfordshire
Postcode:	MK45 5ES
Telephone number:	01525 712426
Fax number:	01525 712426
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr V Austin
Date of previous inspection:	24 June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs J Catlin	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school it is
		Science	The school's results and pupils' achievements
		Religious education	Quality of teaching
		Geography	
		History	
Mrs S Thomas	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			Quality of school's care for pupils
			Partnership with parents
Mrs M Ashby	Team inspector	English	Quality of curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
		Music	Children aged under five
			Equal opportunities
			English as an additional language
			Special educational needs
Mr P Collings	Team inspector	Information and communication technology	Leadership and management
		Art	
		Design and technology	
		Physical education	

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd.  
51 St Andrew's Road  
CAMBRIDGE  
CB4 1EQ

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Inspection Quality Division  
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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>12</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>26</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Greenfield Church of England Lower School is a five-class school, catering for pupils from 4 to 9 years of age. At present there are 104 pupils on roll, which is small compared with national figures. Attainment on entry is in line with that expected nationally for children of this age. There are 10 per cent of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, which is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need (2.8 per cent) is above the national average. Fewer than 2 per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language. This figure is low compared with schools nationally. The proportion of pupils currently claiming entitlement to free school meals is just below 2 per cent, which is below the national average.

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

Greenfield Lower School is an effective and improving school. Standards are high and teaching has improved since the previous inspection because there is now a significant proportion of very good teaching and a larger proportion of good teaching. The management of the school is very good and has maintained and improved the standards which were reported in the last inspection. The very effective leadership of the headteacher gives a clear and positive direction to the work of the school. The value for money provided by the school, taking account of the very good improvement since the previous inspection and its overall effectiveness, is good.

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

- Attainment in mathematics, information and communication technology and religious education is very high compared with similar age pupils
- Teaching is good, with a significant proportion of very good teaching
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school and behaviour is very good
- Pupils' have a very good knowledge of their learning
- Very good provision for pupils' personal development
- Very effective strategies for teaching numeracy skills
- Very good leadership within the school ensures clear educational direction
- Attendance is very good

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

- The governors' Annual Report to Parents does not meet statutory requirements
- Assessment to track pupils' progress, particularly in reading and that of higher attaining pupils
- Monitoring and evaluating teaching
- Financial implications on School Development Plan and success criteria
- Links with the local middle school

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The areas for improvement are outweighed by the many things that the school is doing well. The previous inspection in June 1996 found Greenfield VC Lower School to be a well-managed school with good behaviour. All of the key issues for action, previously identified at the time of the previous inspection, have been tackled effectively. The improved planning of information and communication technology, history, geography and religious education ensures that pupils now make better progress. There is clear use of assessment in all subjects to inform future planning and staff are now more confident and experienced in the teaching of information and communication technology. Therefore, the overall improvement in the school since the last inspection is very good.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	All schools			Similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
Reading	A	A	B	C	well above average    A above average        B average                C below average        D well below average   E
Writing	B	C	B	C	
Mathematics	A	A*	A	A	

The above chart shows that standards in reading and writing are above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. When compared with similar schools, i.e. those schools that have the same proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards in reading and writing are average.

The school's performance in mathematics is well above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. When compared with similar schools, attainment was well above average. Standards in science, as a result of teacher assessment, are very high in comparison with the national average at the expected Level 2 and are above the national average at the higher Level 3. Standards in information and communication technology and religious education are well above those expected for similar age pupils. Standards in art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education are above those expected for similar age pupils.

When the school's end of Key Stage 1 results are compared with 1996 they show results consistently above national averages. There is year to year variation in the school's average National Curriculum results due to the small cohorts in the school taking these tests. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs also affects the school's results each year, although the school has been very successful in addressing the needs of these pupils, particularly in mathematics. The inspection findings confirm the high levels of achievement, both at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4.

Standards in the school are good. The headteacher and staff have analysed in great detail the National Curriculum test results for last year. They have set challenging targets for the next two years in order to raise attainment at the higher Level 3 in reading and the average Level 2 in writing. There is every likelihood that the school will achieve these targets.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and enjoy school
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good, both in class and around the school
Personal development and relationships	Pupils respect one another's views and collaborate well both at work and play
Attendance	Attendance is very good and well above the national average. The incidence of unauthorised absence is well below the national average

The school achieves its aim for pupils' personal and social development successfully. Relationships



are very good and pupils respect adults and one another.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching is good throughout the school. It is satisfactory in 100 per cent of lessons. In 67 per cent, it is good and in 24 per cent, it is very good. The skills of literacy are effectively planned for and taught well and enable pupils to make good progress. Numeracy skills are very effectively planned for and very well taught and result in very high attainment for pupils of all ability levels.

Particular strengths in teaching include high expectations of pupils, the very good use of support staff and the sharing of learning objectives with pupils so that they are very clear about what they are to learn and how successful they have been. These strengths in teaching enable pupils to make good progress. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is also good because teachers' lesson planning addresses individual needs effectively and therefore enables these pupils to make good progress. The main weakness in teaching is that in a few instances, the learning needs of higher attaining pupils are not always addressed effectively.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The overall quality and range of the curriculum is good and has improved since the previous inspection, most notably in religious education, information and communication technology, geography and history. There are very good cross-curricular links.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision enables pupils to make good progress because the work is well-matched to their needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision for these pupils is good; extra help is available to support these pupils when necessary.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for personal, social and health education is very good and opportunities are used well to reinforce the learning that takes place within this area. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a caring, supportive environment in which pupils can grow and develop.

The school works well in partnership with parents and this was commented on at the pre-inspection meeting for parents. Particular strengths of the curriculum are mathematics, information and communication technology, and religious education. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good. All statutory requirements are met in respect of the curriculum.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and staff give a strong lead and sense of direction to the school. They are well supported by governors. There is a shared sense of commitment to school improvement. The monitoring of teaching and learning requires further development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its responsibilities effectively. However, the governors' Annual Report to Parents does not meet statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is well informed about its strengths and areas for improvement. There is less focus on evaluating progress in the School Development Plan due to a lack of specific success criteria against which to judge. The plan is not costed sufficiently to allow the outcome of spending decisions to be monitored to ensure value for money.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used effectively to raise achievement and to ensure best value for money.

Staff are suitably trained and qualified for teaching in this age group and have between them sufficient knowledge and expertise to meet the National Curriculum requirements. There are sufficient resources in the school to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and they are used well. The accommodation provides a satisfactory environment for learning.

A particular strength of the leadership and management of the school is the clear educational direction of the school and the shared commitment to improvement of all who work in the school. However, the School Development Plan lacks specific criteria against which the school can judge success and financial implications are not specified clearly. There is formal evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of the spending decisions against standards of work produced by the pupils.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their child likes school</li> <li>• Their child is making good progress</li> <li>• Behaviour is good</li> <li>• The school expects their child to work and achieve his or her best</li> <li>• The school is helping their child to become mature and responsible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about how their child is getting on</li> <li>• The school working more closely with them</li> <li>• An interesting range of activities outside lessons</li> </ul>

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views of the school. The school is welcoming and pupils' attitudes to their work and the relationships within the school are very good. Twenty-one per cent of parents who returned the questionnaire felt that they are not kept well-informed about their child's progress. However, teachers are always available to discuss this. Parents' consultation evenings are held each term. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory and set out clearly pupils' strengths and weaknesses with targets for future attainment. The school operates an 'open door' policy and parents are welcome to discuss their children's progress whenever they wish. The school prospectus is a useful introduction to the school. Inspection judgements do not support parents' concerns in this area. Twenty-seven per cent of parents who returned the questionnaire do not feel that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. A range of extra-curricular activities was observed during the inspection and inspection judgements do not support parents' views in this area. There are good extra-curricular opportunities, which include clubs for pupils to learn the recorder, French, football, sports and computer skills. A few parents who returned the questionnaire expressed concerns about the arrangements for the combined Year 3 and Year 4 class. Inspectors examined this in detail, and it is judged that, within its budgetary constraints the school has made the best provision it can for the care and education of pupils in this age group.

There is no evidence to suggest that the attainment and progress of pupils is affected in a negative way by this arrangement.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The attainment of children aged under five, when they enter the reception classes, is in line with that expected for children of this age. By the time children reach the age of five, the majority will have achieved the nationally expected desirable learning outcomes in the six areas of learning known as language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development, creative development and personal and social development.
2. Overall, children make satisfactory progress in the reception class, with good progress in language and literacy and mathematics. Writing skills are introduced and children are able to draw simple shapes and form patterns. By the time they are five they recognise the letters of the alphabet from mobile displays and match these to simple jigsaws to establish the basic skills in reading. In reception, good progress is made in speaking and listening skills. For example, children learn about taking turns by making simple statements about themselves and listening attentively to what others have to say.
3. Children make good progress in early mathematical development. They name shapes, such as circle, square and triangle. The majority of children can count accurately matching one-to-one numbers to 10 and above by the time they are five. They can do a variety of matching, sorting, sequencing and ordering activities accurately.
4. Progress is good in personal and social development. They develop confidence and play co-operatively. They listen to and show respect to adults as well as other children. They follow simple instructions, take turns, and recognise the difference between right and wrong. There is satisfactory development of children's physical skills. Children's manual dexterity is well-developed by the time they are five. Physical education, including games and dance, is timetabled weekly and a range of planned activities enable children to make satisfactory progress.
5. Satisfactory progress is made in children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Children benefit from a good range of experiences to support scientific learning and they record their findings using pictures and writing. They use a range of materials and tools, and their progress in the development of computer skills is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress in their creative development. They enjoy experimenting with musical instruments and singing. The children explore the properties of texture, shape and form using materials, such as play dough, to make various artefacts and express their ideas through painting.
6. The results of the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 1999 in reading and writing were above the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 in reading was very high in comparison with the national average. However, the percentage of pupils gaining the higher Level 3 was below the national average. In writing, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 was close to the national average and the percentage of pupils gaining the higher Level 3 was well above the national average. In mathematics, test results were well above the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected level 2 was very high and the percentage achieving the higher Level 3 was well above the national average. When compared with similar schools, results in reading and writing were broadly in line with the average for these schools and in mathematics they were well above the average. In science, teacher assessment results were very high overall in comparison with national averages at the expected Level 2 and were above national averages at the higher Level 3. When the school's end of Key Stage 1 results are compared with 1996 they show results consistently above national averages, but there are year-to-year variations in the school's average National Curriculum results owing to the small cohorts in the school taking these tests. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs also affects the school's results each year, although the school has been very successful in addressing the needs of

these pupils, particularly in mathematics. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. The headteacher and staff have analysed in great detail national test results and have set challenging targets for improvement in English and mathematics for the next two years, in conjunction with the local authority. They are confident that with the existing implementation of the literacy hour and numeracy strategy they will achieve these targets.

7. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4, standards in speaking and listening skills are good and some good progress is being made across the year groups. Standards in reading in both key stages are above average. However, higher attainers are capable of greater progress. Pupils do not understand or have preferences or knowledge about many authors other than those they have encountered in the literacy lessons. Older pupils can use the classification system to find non-fiction books and are developing the skills needed to use a library effectively. Most pupils demonstrate skill in finding information from non-fiction books, and have some experience of scanning text to find information for their topics. Standards in writing are good. The majority of pupils write for a satisfactory range of purposes and know how to punctuate their work. Pupils are learning about grammar and understand for example what an adjective is. They do not apply this knowledge to their creative writing very often. Pupils show confidence in how to apply their own knowledge of letters and check their spelling in dictionaries regularly.
8. Pupils make good progress in their use of literacy across the curriculum. For example, in a Year 1 religious education lesson, pupils were able to recognise alliteration in the story about 'Charlie's Checklist' and there were also good links with geography, linked to their knowledge about major cities, within the same lesson. When learning about a Jewish boy's Bar Mitzvah, pupils wrote a letter as though they had participated in the ceremony. Appropriate subject terminology is well taught in all subjects, increasing pupils' knowledge and use of vocabulary. Pupils make very good progress in their use of numeracy in other subjects. For example, in science, they use block, bar and pie charts to record information about eye colour and the number and type of pets at home, and this is well-linked to information and communication technology, when results are transferred on to a class database.
9. In mathematics, attainment for all pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4 is well above the national average. They are able to add and subtract simple numbers confidently and can accurately describe two-dimensional shapes. They develop a very good understanding of standard units of length and are developing their confidence in the recall of multiplication facts. All pupils make very good progress. Pupils' numeracy skills are very well-developed and are very effectively used across the curriculum.
10. Pupils attain good standards in science. By the age of seven, pupils know that humans need food and fluids and understand the importance of eating a balanced diet. By the age of nine, pupils understand how light and sound travels. They can record their observations in pictures and writing and all pupils make overall good progress. They build successfully on earlier learning through progressive lessons and extend their investigative skills through opportunities to apply them in different contexts.
11. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4 attain very good standards and make very good progress in information and communication technology. They use the mouse with confidence to respond to word and number games and are aware of the different purposes of information and communication technology through their own word processing and construction of graphs. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them in their Individual Education Plans.
12. By the ages of seven and nine, pupils attain very good standards and make very good progress in religious education. The attainment and progress in this subject and in mathematics and information technology are significant strengths of the school. Standards in English, science, design and technology, geography, history, art, music and physical education are good and all pupils make good progress.
13. Pupils with special educational needs make overall good progress in relation to their targets, with pupils moving both up and down on the school's register of special educational needs. All these pupils have Individual Education Plans with specific targets relating to areas of identified

need. Pupils' progress is monitored and assessed against these targets on the individual education plans.

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

14. The school achieves its aim for pupils' personal and social development successfully. Relationships are very good. Pupils respect adults and one another. All staff work together to create a purposeful but relaxed atmosphere within the school. Pupils trust their teachers. Teachers know their pupils well.
15. Since the last inspection, pupils' good attitudes to learning have been maintained. They are very good when teaching methods are varied to maintain pupils' interest. For instance, in a Year 1 religious education lesson, the theme of the lesson was made relevant to other subjects the pupils were studying. Pupils sat absorbed throughout and enjoyed the lesson. Pupils are confident. They are developing a mature response to their work. Ninety-two per cent of parents who returned the questionnaire felt that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. Pupils are attentive in class and are willing to help one another when they see a need. They encourage one another appropriately. In a Year 3 music lesson, pupils spontaneously applauded others who played their score successfully. Pupils work well together in pairs and in groups. In a Year 1 history lesson they acted as detectives to identify the type of person who would use certain objects.
16. Behaviour is very good. Pupils are polite and courteous to one another and to adults. They treat property respectfully and take pride in their surroundings. Younger pupils take turns patiently. At lunchtime they queue quietly and sensibly. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner. At playtime, they play well together, sharing equipment as necessary. No evidence of bullying was seen during the inspection. Ninety six per cent of parents feel that behaviour in school is good. There have been no exclusions in the past year.
17. Pupils are developing their capacity for independent study. They use dictionaries, reference books and the Internet carefully to research topics. To encourage their maturity, teachers provide numerous opportunities for pupils to take responsibility in class. The range of responsibilities broadens appropriately as the pupils become older. They respond well, take their duties seriously and carry out their tasks efficiently. Teachers give pupils the opportunity to resolve disputes on their own. Issues are discussed and pupils are given time to decide on the best course of action or to reflect on how situations might have been managed better.
18. Attendance is very good, and the attendance profile of the school has improved since the previous inspection. Attendance is 96.6 per cent and this compares very favourably with the national average for primary schools. Unauthorised absence is well below the national average. Registers are taken promptly at the start of each session and attendance information is correctly reported to parents. The vast majority of pupils arrive on time and lessons begin promptly.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

19. Across the school, the quality of teaching is good, with some very good features. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy is good.
20. The quality of teaching for children aged under five is good, with some very good features. There was no separate section for pupils aged under five in the previous report, so no judgement can be made on improvement or otherwise for this age group. The teacher has a clear understanding of how children learn. She plans work very carefully to meet the needs of each child and this aspect of teaching is good. Emphasis is placed on the development of literacy and numeracy skills and these are taught effectively, with a specific emphasis on phonic skills. The numeracy sessions are well taught and she questions the children carefully to check their understanding of the work covered. She develops children's understanding of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour well and children are encouraged to share their work and successes. Children are assessed on an ongoing basis which, together with their baseline assessment results, forms the basis of a good range of assessment data. This information is

used well to set individual targets and inform future teaching plans. Good use is made of the classroom assistant and she has regular involvement in assessing and recording children's progress.

21. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is again good, with some very good features. The teachers have a secure command of the subjects to be taught, and the planning for lessons specifies the content to be taught to the whole class, to specified groups and to certain individual pupils. Lessons incorporate appropriately high expectations and challenge for pupils with different attainments. There are effective links with what pupils have already achieved, and new learning makes progressive demands on them. Relationships are very good, and pupils are expected to have high standards of behaviour. Pupils demonstrate very good attitudes to their work and are keen to complete work to an acceptable standard within set time-limits. Pupils are on occasion given choices about how the work is to be done, and this makes a positive contribution to their independent learning skills. Most lessons have a brisk pace and resources; pupil groupings and adult assistance are all well managed and are used to promote the learning of specific knowledge or skills and to keep pupils on task. Teachers know their pupils well and their lesson planning identifies how particular aspects of the work will be assessed and the evidence that will be gathered in order to measure attainment and progress. Homework is set and caters appropriately for pupils of differing abilities. When teaching is only satisfactory, rather than good, some of the above features are not so well-developed, particularly the aspect of providing challenge for higher attaining pupils.
22. At Key Stage 2, the overall quality of teaching is also good, with some very good features. In the best lessons, the planning includes details of how the class will be organised for particular purposes, which resources will be needed and tasks allocated to other adults. The method of recording outcomes of each activity is planned for, so that pupils can present their results in different ways and so demonstrate a variety of skills. Resources are stored tidily, clearly labelled, and offer easy access for the teacher and pupils alike. Care is taken to ensure that the equipment is cared for and that pupils take responsibility for obtaining and clearing away resources. This contributes well to pupils' independent learning skills and to their moral development. Sometimes groups are formed in order to give pupils experience of leadership and responsibility by helping other pupils less skilled or knowledgeable than themselves, which makes a positive contribution to pupils' social development. The teachers use a variety of groupings, whether as a whole class, or by ability, friendship, pairs or individual pupils. Decisions about the size and formation of teaching groups are based upon the nature of the subject or the learning needs of the pupils concerned or both. Sometimes, other adults are used in an instructional capacity with particular groups or individuals; they are well-briefed and supported by the class teacher. In teachers' planning for teaching and learning a very considerable amount of time, both in and out of school, is spent on planning and marking of work. Teachers are aware of the need to obtain and use accurate assessment information in order to provide appropriately challenging work. There is some good practice in evaluating the success of lessons by teachers. Best practice includes identifying what progress individual pupils have made and how the methods and content for the next lesson need to be adjusted as a result. Overall, this is done well across the school. However, higher attaining pupils are capable of greater progress in their reading. The school has no strategy in place to ensure that fluent readers have experience of reading different styles, and that they regularly respond in writing to books that they read; for example, in book reviews or comprehension about text. There is currently no system in place to monitor the pupils' development of higher order reading skills.
23. Overall, teachers have a good understanding of the National Curriculum in all subjects. Teachers throughout the school encourage pupils to take reading books home, and where homework is set it is often used very effectively by teachers to support pupils' learning, particularly in mathematics. A very positive aspect of teaching across the school is the good classroom management and discipline, which all teachers maintain. There is a consistent approach to behaviour, which enhances the quality of pupils' learning. When marking pupils' work, teachers assess the work thoroughly and constructively and their comments are usually sufficiently diagnostic to help pupils know how to improve. There are good quality, long-term, written curriculum plans to provide a framework for teachers' lesson planning, and to ensure progression across and through year groups.

24. All pupils with special educational needs have Individual Education Plans. Pupils' progress is well-monitored and assessed against the targets on these plans. The deployment of support staff to work with pupils with special educational needs is generally good. They make good progress overall. In some cases, they catch up in their development significantly well and achieve satisfactory levels of attainment by the time their statutory assessments take place.

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

25. Curricular provision is good. Areas of weakness in this aspect have been improved since the last inspection - for example, in information and communication technology, geography, history and religious education. Particular strengths of the curriculum are mathematics, information and communication technology and religious education and cross-curricular links. The school offers a broad, balanced and relevant range of opportunities for all pupils. It meets the National Curriculum requirements in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. There is due emphasis on English and mathematics, with good implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and very good implementation of the Numeracy Strategy. The time allocation of all subjects is satisfactory and the two-year rolling programme for topics ensures that work is not repeated unnecessarily.
26. Statutory requirements for the curriculum, including religious education are met, as are those relating to sex education and a policy on drugs' education. There is a broad range of opportunities for learning offered to all pupils, including those with special educational needs. No pupils are withdrawn from collective worship or religious education. There is good provision, in the form of extra language support, for pupils with English as an additional language, which enables them to make good progress.
27. The curriculum for children aged under five is well based in the desirable learning outcomes and linked effectively to the National Curriculum and the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. It makes a good contribution to the intellectual development of all pupils, particularly in language and literacy, mathematics, and personal and social development. Sound opportunities are provided to promote children's aesthetic and creative development, to extend their knowledge of the world around them and to develop their physical development.
28. There are good extra-curricular opportunities. These are organised and run by parents, Year 13 pupils, from the local upper school and staff. These are good examples of how the community works well together to enhance the curriculum provision for pupils. Clubs to learn recorder, French, football, sports and computer skills meet regularly.
29. The curriculum is socially inclusive by ensuring equality of access for all pupils. During the inspection, two traveller pupils were on the register. The pupils are well-integrated into the school and interact well with their peers and the teachers. Staff work in partnership with the Local Education Authority and the pupils make sound progress. They are admitted into their chronological year and take part in the full curriculum.
30. The curriculum meets the requirements of pupils with special educational needs well, because of the good quality provision for their needs. There are effective early screening procedures to identify pupils who need additional support, and needs are diagnosed accurately. They have good access to the curriculum, with some good quality class support. Individual Education Plans, with detailed targets and appropriate strategies, are drawn up and followed by all staff. The targets on the Individual Education Plans are appropriate and clear. In several, a clear role was outlined for the parents as well as the school. However, the school is not as effective in developing good methods for identifying higher-attaining pupils across the school, particularly in English, and tracking their progress towards higher attainment levels.
31. The school makes good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils. In relation to spiritual development, the school has clear aims to ensure that there are good opportunities in all aspects of school life to extend pupils' knowledge and give them insight into values and beliefs. Pupils of all ages are given some time to reflect quietly and to



come to understand themselves, the wider world and their place in it. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of belonging to their community. They learn about world faiths as well as Christianity. The school celebrates, as a community, the main festivals from world faiths, as well as Christmas and Easter. There are also sharing assemblies weekly when they celebrate their achievements.

32. The school teaches the principles of honesty, truth and justice; being fair, and caring for others. Pupils are taught right from wrong and are encouraged to form good relationships with one another. There is a good range of procedures, which together ensure that all pupils' moral development is good. For example, pupils are aware of their own targets and have some responsibility towards reaching them. Examples of pupils' work on rules for the class and school show that pupils of all ages and abilities have a clear understanding of acceptable behaviour and the difference between right and wrong. The school has good guidelines for behaviour and teachers have a consistent and fair approach. In addition to these strategies, there are timetabled, class 'circle times' to encourage pupils to share worries. These systems, together with a good equal opportunities policy are raising moral standards effectively.
33. All staff, including non-teaching staff, make a strong contribution to the pupils' good social development. The school develops the self-esteem and confidence of all groups in the community. The staff act as good role models in their behaviour and by how they treat one another and the pupils. Adults talk to pupils in school, influencing them for the better. The school reinforces positive attitudes consistently through the curriculum and by personal example. The pupils undertake many tasks that help the school to run smoothly. They learn about health and sex education, as appropriate for their age, in their topic lessons.
34. The school provides good opportunities to celebrate and extend pupils' knowledge and to give them experience of their diverse cultural traditions. This is enriched through visits to support their topic work. Visitors, such as artists and musicians, come into school. The school develops an understanding of other cultures through the curriculum. There are good opportunities to raise pupils' awareness of the richness and diversity of other cultures and to equip them for growing up in a multi-ethnic society.
35. There are strong links with the community and the local church. Parents, previous staff and the governors give valuable time and expertise to the school, which enhances curricular provision effectively. There are very few links with the transfer school, which prevents constructive relationships developing and does not enable a smooth transition from one phase of education to the next. This is an area of concern.

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

36. The school provides a caring, supportive environment in which pupils can learn and develop. Some parents who returned the questionnaire expressed concerns about the arrangements for the combined Year 3 and Year 4 class. Inspectors examined this in detail and are of the view that, within its budgetary constraints, the school has made the best provision it can for the care and education of pupils in this age group. Pupils benefit from the expertise of retired teachers, who give their time voluntarily to work with small groups under the teacher's direction. There is no evidence that the attainment and progress of these pupils' is being affected in a negative way by this arrangement.
37. There is a comprehensive range of policies for monitoring academic and personal progress effectively. There are sound systems in place to give teachers a good picture of pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Throughout the school, teachers use these procedures satisfactorily. Portfolios of pupils' work are kept as examples of standards to be achieved at each level of the National Curriculum. Pupils' individual achievements are recorded carefully and in detail. Pupils with special educational needs are set targets that are linked daily to their Individual Education Plans. Other pupils are set targets after discussion with their teacher. Pupils are reminded of these in lessons and work hard to achieve them.
38. Good behaviour is promoted very well. The school's behaviour policy has maintained its strengths seen at the last inspection. Pupils of all ages show a good understanding of why

good behaviour is important. The clear system of sanctions and rewards is known and understood by them. All staff apply the policy consistently across the school. This helps to raise standards of behaviour and, therefore, progress.

39. Procedures for monitoring attendance are good. The class teacher has the main responsibility. Where necessary, appropriate referrals are made to the Educational Welfare Officer. The unclear marking of registers found at the last inspection has been resolved. Teachers now mark registers correctly, although some teachers do not always enter their daily totals in the register.
40. Child protection and health and safety arrangements remain good. All staff are aware of procedures. They are alert to potential problems in the classroom and take appropriate action to prevent any problems. The governors play an important part in ensuring the health, safety and well-being of pupils. They inspect the site regularly and set priorities for action.

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

41. Parents have positive views of the school. The school has made effective links with the parents, which is a benefit to the pupils. Parental involvement in their children's education is good. The very active Greenfield School Association raises much needed funds for the school. Funds raised last year were used to create a new computer suite for the school. This raised the standards of information and communication technology in the school. Numerous parents help in class and make a valued contribution.
42. The quality of information parents receive is satisfactory. They receive many letters about school events and activities. While parents were informed about the arrangements for Year 3 and Year 4, inspectors consider that the written communication to parents about this could have clarified the situation better, ensuring that all parents understood the provision that was being made. However, a daytime meeting was arranged to speak to parents about this. Those parents who did attend felt well informed. The school also operates an open-door policy and is available to discuss parents' concerns.
43. Parents receive satisfactory information about the curriculum and are invited appropriately to contribute to topics by sending in items to supplement the children's study. Twenty-one per cent of parents who returned the questionnaire felt that they are not kept well-informed about their child's progress. However, teachers are always available to discuss this. Parents' consultation evenings are held each term. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory and set out clearly pupils' strengths and weaknesses with targets for future attainment. The school prospectus is a useful introduction to the school. The governors' annual report is helpful, but there are numerous omissions of the required information; for example, there are no attendance figures, no information about school security and no summary of the school's National Curriculum assessment results at the end of Key Stage 1.

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

44. The management of the school is very good and has maintained and improved the standards which were reported in the last inspection. The very effective leadership of the headteacher gives a clear and positive direction to the work of the school. Working closely with the senior teacher, she has been successful in developing a dedicated and enthusiastic staff, who are focused on improving the existing good standards. She provides guidance for the development of the comprehensive schemes of work, which are now in place for all subjects. These schemes help to promote the high standards achieved by the school. The carefully chosen delegation of subject responsibilities ensures that all teachers make a very effective contribution to the development of the curriculum. Liaison between subject co-ordinators is very effective. All members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching, work very well together. Teachers take every opportunity to discuss, share ideas and advise their colleagues. The non-teaching staff are very well briefed about their work and make a significant contribution to both the standards and the welfare of the pupils. The school has clear aims, which promote the development of individual pupils. Targets are set, and these are known to and understood by pupils. Relationships between all members of the school community are good and the

Christian ethos of the school is appreciated by parents.

45. The headteacher was appointed in September 1997, but was absent from the school from May to mid-November 1999. In her absence the governors, ably assisted by the senior teacher, assumed a greater role in the management of the school. They were faced with a difficult decision in respect of the organisation of classes for the academic year 1999 - 2000. The budget only allowed for 4.5 teachers, yet the school falls naturally into five classes. The governors decided to maintain separate Year 3 and Year 4 classes. Within the constraints of the budget this is only possible in the mornings, and in the afternoons Year 3 and Year 4 are grouped together to make one class of 38 pupils. A whole-hearted effort on the part of the governors, parents and non-teaching staff members allows this organisation to work successfully. The school is over-subscribed and the planned admission limit of 19, despite a capacity of 125 pupils, does not help the school when planning the future organisation of classes.
46. The governing body is very supportive, and governors make regular visits to the school both as link governors, for example in literacy and numeracy, and in working as volunteers in the classroom. The governors' role in shaping the direction of the school is satisfactory; they have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are working to rectify them. They have identified priorities and they monitor and evaluate performance against the success criteria of the School Development Plan, which covers staff development, curriculum development and premises. However, this evaluation would be more effective if the success criteria were more specific and were linked more closely to the budget. This would enable the school to prioritise areas for development more effectively. A number of governors have attended various courses. The financial planning is thorough and the school accepts that there is little flexibility in the allocation of funds. The overall staffing costs are above average. There is little formal evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of the spending decisions against standards of work produced by the pupils. The governors are keen to develop this line of action next term, when, for example, they evaluate the cost of the computer suite against the progress made by pupils.
47. The headteacher monitors teaching and this is of benefit to staff, helping them to evaluate their effectiveness in the classroom; but there is scope for the further development of the existing systems for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching. The first cycle of appraisal has taken place, but the next stage has been delayed by the long-term absence of the headteacher. Staff are very positive about appraisal and have found it helpful. The planning for staff development within the school is good and the available grant has been used very well. Training for teachers has been a priority and all teachers have had the opportunity for training, both for the benefit of the pupils and for their own development. Effective induction for new staff is in place, and there is a trained mentor. Last year the school was approved for the Graduate Teacher Scheme and one student completed her training successfully in the school.
48. The current staffing profile provides a good range of teaching experience and subject expertise, which makes a good contribution to the pupils' learning. Staff are well-qualified and very good use is made of their expertise. For example, they often teach other year groups; the science co-ordinator teaches science in Year 1, Year 3 and Year 4 and the reception teacher teaches mathematics in Year 1. The English co-ordinator also teaches in Year 3 and Year 4. Support staff are fully involved in lessons and make a significant contribution to the good standards achieved in the school. This is particularly noticeable in information and communication technology; the classroom assistant works in the computer suite and is able to share her expertise across the whole school.
49. The headteacher is the special educational needs co-ordinator and is effective. She provides good support for pupils with special educational needs and is available to advise staff about the identification and assessment of these pupils. Record keeping is detailed and effective. Pupils' files are up to date and the level of detail recorded ensures that pupils' individual needs are met. The register of pupils with special educational needs is also up to date and has been analysed according to need. There is a governor with responsibility for special educational needs who is knowledgeable and liaises closely with the co-ordinator. The school has good procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of its special educational needs policy.

50. Accommodation is adequate, although space in the reception classroom is limited. The school makes very good use of the limited display area. Work in both classrooms and corridors is well displayed and creates an attractive learning environment. The playground is well marked, and pupils have access at break times to small equipment which is used well. There is also a football pitch and the school, with the help of parents and some pupils, is in the process of developing a wildlife area. The school building and its accommodation is well-maintained, clean and attractive, providing a pleasant environment for the pupils and the adults who work with them.
51. The resources are used efficiently to raise achievement and to ensure best value for money; for example, the special educational needs budget and all other available grants are managed well and linked to the priorities identified within the School Development Plan. Resources are very good for information and communication technology, good for mathematics, science, geography and religious education and satisfactory for all other subject areas. The school library is well maintained and stocked. There is excellent use of new technology. The school identified development of information and communication technology as a priority and the result has been very successful. The provision and use of computers is of a high order and the skills of the pupils are well above those expected for similar age pupils.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

52. In order to build on the existing good standards in the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- Ensure that the governors' Annual Report to parents meets statutory requirements; (*Paragraph 43*)
  - Further develop existing assessment procedures to ensure good tracking of pupils' progress, particularly in reading and for higher attaining pupils; (*Paragraph 30*)
  - Further develop procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching to maintain and further improve the existing good standards; (*Paragraph 47*)
  - Ensure that financial implications are more clearly stated, both in co-ordinators' action plans and in the School Development Plan, and that success criteria are more specific in order that the school can judge their effectiveness; (*Paragraph 46*)
  - Develop effective links with the local transfer schools in order that pupils are fully prepared for the next stage in their education. (*Paragraph 35*)

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

- Review the layout of the room so that the noise and activity from other areas in the room do not disturb the concentration of pupils engaged in the teacher-led activities; (*Paragraph 57*)
- Further develop daily opportunities for the children to look at books in comfort; (*Paragraph 59*)
- Increase children's opportunities to use sand and water to develop science and mathematical concepts such as capacity and volume; (*Paragraph 63*)
- Review the organisation of resources to encourage children to be independent in their self-chosen tasks; (*Paragraph 69*)
- Develop strategies to ensure that fluent readers have experience of reading different styles; (*Paragraph 76*)
- Ensure that older pupils are sufficiently aware of the difference between best work and draft work; (*Paragraph 78*)
- Continue to develop plans in music to introduce composing using information technology and to further develop assessment procedures. (*Paragraph 128*)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	33
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	24	67	9	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	104
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	10

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.4
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	9	9	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	7	9
	Girls	9	8	9
	Total	18	15	18
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	100 (94)	83 (89)	100 (95)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	18	18	18
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	100 (89)	100 (94)	100 (95)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	1
White	88
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

### Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.1
Average class size	20.8

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	71

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	198,201
Total expenditure	193,386
Expenditure per pupil	1,851
Balance brought forward from previous year	-2,780
Balance carried forward to next year	2,035



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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	104
Number of questionnaires returned	71

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	31	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	33	1	4	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	48	3	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	46	10	3	0
The teaching is good.	56	34	7	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	42	17	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	30	3	11	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	42	3	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	39	31	20	6	4
The school is well led and managed.	39	37	8	8	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	41	4	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	51	19	10	3

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

53. The provision for the children under five is good. At the time of the inspection fifteen children were aged under five. The school admits children full-time into the reception class in the September or January term of the year in which they are five. On entry to school children's attainment is varied but a significant minority of children have above-average levels of attainment. The school's initial assessment of children beginning school judges that they have average levels of attainment overall. Inspection findings confirm these overall average levels of attainment.
54. Children with special educational needs are carefully assessed to establish their future learning needs. The teacher and classroom assistant work well together. This is effective and ensures that all children have equality of opportunity. The children make overall satisfactory progress but good progress in language and literacy and mathematics.
55. The children transfer into Year 1 in September or January according to their date of birth. From this starting point, the great majority of children, including those with special educational needs, make overall satisfactory progress and by the time they are five, are likely to meet the desirable learning outcomes in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development, creative development and personal and social development. They are well prepared for the next stage of education. While some children make good progress, overall progress is only satisfactory because many children are not in reception long enough to make good progress.

#### **Personal and social development**

56. The majority of children are eager to come to school and they make good progress. They play well together. The children respond to instructions and questions and often initiate conversation. They are confident and friendly. Most children can sustain concentration appropriate for their age. They make independent choices about which area of learning they would like to experience. They tidy up their activities at the end of sessions when requested and take pride in what they achieve. The children use the toilet facilities appropriately and are learning to change into physical education kit, fasten their coats, and put on hats and shoes, to give them more personal independence. They have enough confidence to take part in assemblies and physical education lessons in the hall and join the rest of the children in the school at play in the playground.
57. The quality of teaching personal and social skills is good. The staff encourage the children to be independent and to take initiative. There are also some good opportunities planned for children to learn to concentrate on a chosen task or to persevere with a teacher-directed activity. However, because of its layout, the noise and activity from other areas in the room sometimes disturbs the concentration of pupils engaged in the teacher-led activities.

#### **Language and literacy**

58. Children make good progress and they listen with enthusiasm and give appropriate response to questions. For example, they demonstrated a good understanding of how to be a friend from the examples they gave following a story *What are friends?* They show a growing appreciation of the rhyme and meaning of language in stories and poetry. They become engrossed and show signs of joy, wonder and sadness as they experience the emotions in a story for themselves. The children have a satisfactory repertoire of action songs and number rhymes. Although children listen to tapes of games to extend their language development, they do not concentrate well on this and flit to another activity quickly. They play appropriately in their role-play area of a 'school'. However, there are no accessories available - for example, a telephone or typewriter - to further stimulate imaginative ideas and to improve language and

literacy skills. Children speak with fluency can offer ideas and opinions and talk about their preferences. Children know that pictures can tell a story and that words have meanings. They know to turn a page from left to right. The teacher encourages all children to take their books home, to share with and read to their family and the majority do this regularly. As a result, children are making sound progress in early reading skills. The parent's role as the main educators of their children at home is well established. Children are developing skills in writing appropriate for their age and ability. A few can write their own names and many recognise their names. By the time they are five the majority of the children know the names and sounds of many letters of the alphabet. Many children can match and name colours.

59. The quality of teaching is good. There is a gradual introduction to the National Literacy Strategy. The use of large picture books is successful and gives good opportunities for language development. In addition, staff plan opportunities to extend learning and improve children's attainment in speaking, listening and literacy. The area set aside to give daily opportunities for the children to choose to look at books is not an effective or comfortable place to sit. It is placed too close to a working table and the few books are not displayed attractively to encourage children to browse through one.

### **Mathematics**

60. The majority of children make good progress in their skills, knowledge and understanding in this area of learning. They know the correct mathematical language to describe shape and position, size and quantity. They demonstrate a good level of understanding both orally and in practical ways. The majority of children can count accurately, matching one-to-one numbers to 10 and above, by the time they are five. They can do a variety of matching, sorting, sequencing and ordering activities accurately. The children are familiar with counting, and routinely count and match throughout the day, saying for example, how many there are in a group or class. The children say counting rhymes with enthusiasm.
61. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher identifies many opportunities for children's learning to be extended during the day. The children also take part in a numeracy lessons in small groups several times a week. These give opportunities for mental mathematics and a structured time where children learn to focus on a teacher-led activity or to use practical resources specifically designed to promote mathematical skills. There is a satisfactory range of mathematical equipment, although the storage arrangements do not motivate the children to use them frequently.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

62. Children make overall satisfactory progress and demonstrate an awareness of the features of living things as they make observations about the fish in their classroom. They are developing a good knowledge of the purpose of their senses through their topic work. In operating a computer program, many children can control the mouse, press the space bar and directional arrows without support. They use a program 'Splosh' for art, and print off their own pictures. They also use 'Sidney', a maze-game to extend mathematical skills. They can operate the tape recorder, although they did not persist in the listening activity for long. Children choose from an adequate range of equipment to build small designs with construction kits. The majority of children talk confidently about themselves, name their family members and also say where they live.
63. The quality of teaching is sound. The topic approach is suitably planned and helps to stimulate the children to learn more about the world. There are satisfactorily planned play experiences to develop children's knowledge and understanding about the world. The children have limited opportunities to use sand and water to develop science and mathematical concepts such as capacity and volume. There is limited use of the local environment or the school site to stimulate learning about the world and to extend language development.

### **Aesthetic and creative development**

64. There is a good range of creative materials available and children make satisfactory progress. Many children paint, cut, stick and fold paper and card. They experience many opportunities to develop creative ideas, often with suitable cross-curricular links. For example, children made two-dimensional shapes using clay and printed on them with their feet, as part of the topic work on our uniqueness. The children explore the properties of texture, shape and form, using play dough, clay and a variety of everyday substances to create a texture. Displays of observational drawing skills show that pupils' development in drawing themselves is good for their age. They use paint mixed with sand to produce pictures and print patterns with texture.
65. The quality of teaching is good. Teaching is not always focused sufficiently well on developing skills. All activities give children good experiences and there are enough activities to enable children to respond to what they feel, smell and touch.

### **Physical Development**

66. The organisation ensures plenty of opportunities for children to make sound progress in developing their physical skills. They use the hall and the playground on a time tabled basis. There is enough space for a range of physical activities to be developed as they use the small range of outside equipment, such as balls, bats and skittles. The majority of children move with confidence in the playground. There is an enclosed play area for those who feel the need to have space to play separately from the older children. All children improve their co-ordination as they play and move around together. In addition to this, children take part in games, dance and gymnastics lessons. They use space well and are learning to listen carefully and to follow instructions.
67. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The organisation of children for outside activities is satisfactory and the arrangement has been well-thought-out. However, although there are appropriate activities, such as a small climbing frame, sit and ride toys, hoops and skipping ropes, these are usually only available in the summer months. They are not stored well for easy access to promote use on a daily basis.
68. The curriculum for children aged under five covers the six desirable learning outcomes. It involves the children in taking some responsibility for their own learning. It makes a good contribution to the intellectual development of all pupils, particularly in language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. Sound opportunities are provided to promote children's aesthetic and creative development, to extend their knowledge of the world around them and their physical development. Curricular planning is good, providing a cohesive curriculum for children under five. The work has an emphasis on learning through purposeful play and exploration, development of basic skills and developing positive attitudes. The layout and organisation of some activities within the classroom reduces the effectiveness of others and has a negative affect on some curriculum areas.
69. Children are regularly and continually assessed, which together with their base-line assessment results, forms the basis of a good range of assessment data. This information is used well to set individual targets and to inform future teaching plans. There is a satisfactory range of resources but the organisation of some of these does not encourage children to be independent in their self-chosen tasks. Resources are generally very well cared for.

### **ENGLISH**

70. By the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils who speak and listen effectively and read and write to a satisfactory standard for their age is above the national average. The percentage of pupils in Key Stage 2 who achieve standards appropriate for their age is also above the national average. These good standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
71. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds the percentage of pupils attaining the national standard in reading was very high compared with the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 3 was below the national average. In

comparison with similar schools, performance was close to the average. Taking the four years, 1996-1999 together, figures show that both boys' and girls' performance in reading was well above the national average. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

72. Attainment in writing was close to the national average in 1999. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was well above the national average. Standards in writing are close to the national average when compared with all schools and average in comparison with similar schools. The test results show that standards in writing have improved over the past four years and that both boys' and girls' performance in writing was above the national average.
73. Inspection findings confirm these good, overall levels of attainment. At the time of the inspection, after one term in Year 2, the present cohort are working well within the Level 2 of the English curriculum and are on course to achieve the national expectation. The percentage of pupils likely to achieve the higher Level 3 is similar to the previous year.
74. The National Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact on the English curriculum. The governors, senior staff and teachers have made a good start on implementing the literacy hour. Teachers agree that the additional training they have received has enhanced their performance in all areas of the curriculum. Teachers throughout the school follow the recommended structure of literacy lessons and use the framework as their scheme of work. Pupils are motivated to learn about grammar and spelling conventions and the structure of stories and poems because they enjoy the books so much. The group sessions of literacy lessons in all classes are used effectively by all teachers to improve pupils' literacy skills as appropriate for their ability. There are good, planned activities to develop pupils' reading, writing, spelling and handwriting skills. Support staff are strategically placed to target their support of pupils with special needs, and this works well. The school has explained the National Literacy Strategy to the parents, the majority of whom fully support the spelling and reading homework that is regularly sent home.
75. Standards in speaking are good, and pupils listen effectively. They enjoy listening to and taking part in the shared reading stories. They listen to their teacher's explanations and to the contributions of other pupils in their class. They often ask questions to find out more. The majority of pupils are confident to speak in class. They have frequent experience of talking for a range of different purposes in varied contexts. The majority of pupils use the correct vocabulary to explain their ideas.
76. A representative sample of pupils was heard reading during the inspection. Currently, standards in reading for Year 2 and Year 4 are above average. However, higher-attaining pupils are capable of greater progress. The school has no strategy in place to ensure that fluent readers have experience of reading different styles, and that they regularly respond in writing to books that they read; for example, in book reviews or comprehension about text. There is currently no system in place to monitor the pupils' development of more advanced reading skills. Beginner readers learn to read using one scheme, by learning to recognise commonly-used words. They are able to explain in simple terms the plot and their favourite part of the story. They are secure in using some skills to work out unknown text. For example, they use context clues to work out meanings. However, they do not often accurately blend letter sounds to build up words.
77. Pupils enjoy their reading books but do not understand about genres or have preferences or knowledge about many authors, except the authors that they have encountered in the literacy lessons. A satisfactory range of fiction books is available for them in classrooms and in the library, which they borrow to read in their quiet reading time. Pupils also take home reading-scheme books to share with parents. This practice is well-established at the school. Older pupils can use the classification system to find non-fiction books and are developing the skills needed to use a library effectively. Most pupils demonstrate skill in finding information from non-fiction books, and have some experience of scanning text to find information for their topics.

78. Standards in writing are good. The majority of pupils write for a satisfactory range of purposes and know how to punctuate their work. This is more evident from Year 2 onwards, when pupils produce a wider range of writing for different purposes. Pupils are learning about grammar and for example, understand what an adjective is. They do not apply this knowledge to their creative writing very often. Pupils show confidence in how to apply their own knowledge of letters and check their spelling in dictionaries regularly. Older pupils are not sufficiently aware of the difference between best work and draft work, and there are examples of untidy presentation in Key Stage 2 from pupils of all abilities. The large majority of pupils uses correct letter formation. Pupils are taught a cursive style of handwriting, as required in the National Curriculum.
79. Good levels of literacy contribute to learning in other areas of the curriculum, and much good quality reading and writing is inspired by meaningful links to other subjects. Pupils have a good understanding of spoken and written instructions and many can work independently. For example, they can read and write instructions for experiments in science. The majority can use dictionaries and information books to aid their learning. Their confidence in writing enables them to record scientific understanding through structuring accounts of experiments. History and religious education provide good opportunities for pupils to write in different forms about such things as the lives of people in Victorian Britain. Year 4 pupils' research about the Roman conquest resulted in some good factual writing. Good standards of writing are maintained across the curriculum by teachers' high expectations, their attention to teaching pupils to use technical words, and usually detailed marking of work.
80. Pupils' progress overall is good and their attitudes and behaviour are very good due to good class management and the expectations teachers have that pupils should work hard and behave well. Most pupils show an interest in their tasks, often talking appropriately in the process of completing them. They enjoy stories and are attentive and interested when listening. They respond well with interesting ideas in their planned speaking and listening times. Pupils take care of their resources for English and use them sensibly. The current Year 2 is on course to achieve standards above the national average. The current Year 4 achieves standards similar to pupils of the same age. Pupils with special educational needs make overall good progress towards the targets set for them in their Individual Education Plans.
81. The quality of teaching overall is good. Teachers plan work to match the ability levels of all pupils. However, they do not always give higher-attaining pupils firm deadlines or ensure that they work at a brisker pace. The majority of pupils do not improve the structure of their writing through re-drafting which is appropriate for their ability. The school is aware of this and there is an emphasis on improving extended and creative writing this year. All teachers use a National Literacy proforma to plan clear learning objectives over a week. Teachers also plan individual lessons. This results in some good focused teaching, with opportunities for pupils of all abilities to make progress. In all lessons, teachers adopt a supportive approach and tasks and activities are clearly explained. Pupils are encouraged and supported by their teacher or the classroom assistant as they work. Well-timed questions focus pupils' attention. Evaluation takes place at the end of all lessons. In some lessons, teachers do not organise the question and answer times effectively to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils.
82. The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator has monitored progress in each aspect of the subject. This has resulted in the recent introduction of a study skill scheme, and a focus on improving attainment in writing. The previous weakness in the last inspection was handwriting, across the curriculum, and this has been satisfactorily remedied overall. There is a good policy, with whole-school agreement, of the skills to be taught in each year group. The school has assessed the statutory test results and there is a commitment to raise attainment through target-setting for individual pupils.
83. The school provides a small, classified non-fiction library. The school has established a well-organised central storage system for reading scheme books, although the books are outdated and due to be renewed. Levels in reading, matched with those in the National Curriculum, have not been established to ensure that all pupils have a progressively and sufficiently challenging reading programme. Other resources to support the teaching of English for

younger pupils are in short supply. Overall, there is an adequate supply of accessible resources to support the teaching of English. Displays of topic books with pupils' writing and artwork are displayed in classrooms to promote literacy. There is a satisfactory supply of books covering a good range of subjects for pupils to enjoy, including a variety of stories and information from a range of cultures.

## **MATHEMATICS**

84. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests, at end of Key Stage 1, show that pupils' attainment is very high compared with the national average at the expected Level 2 and well above the national average at the higher Level 3. When compared with similar schools, the results are well above average. Analysis of trends in test results between 1996 and 1999 show that standards are consistently very high compared with the national average. The current attainment of pupils, both in Year 2 and Year 4, reflects the test results of a significant proportion of pupils achieving very high standards compared with the national average. These standards are higher than those judged in the previous inspection. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
85. By the age of seven, pupils of average attainment can confidently add and subtract simple numbers, and read, write and order numbers to at least 100. They solve simple money problems competently using addition and subtraction. When using and applying mathematics, pupils competently construct block graphs using information they have gathered. Higher-achieving pupils correctly place the months of the year in sequence, sort them into seasons and are able to collate information on how many days in each month and, for example, how many Sundays in January 2000. By the end of Year 4, average pupils are able to estimate correctly, then weigh to the nearest 100g, a tin of soup, a large bar of chocolate and a packet of biscuits. Higher attaining pupils can read and record accurately a variety of measures on different scales. The majority of pupils, by the end of Year 4, can also add and subtract numbers less than 1,000 and use the four rules of number in problem-solving situations.
86. Average and higher-attaining pupils make very good progress throughout both Key Stage 1 and in the first two years of Key Stage 2. They have a very good developing knowledge of the properties of two-dimensional shapes, such as triangles and squares, and as they get older classify them in a refined way, according, for example, to the number of edges, vertices and faces. Since the previous inspection, all pupils now have sufficient opportunities to investigate mathematical ideas using information and communication technology, as was seen in a Year 3 lesson on making a see-saw balance. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress. This is as a result of teachers' careful planning to ensure that tasks are matched closely to pupils' needs.
87. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to mathematics are very good; they have a positive impact on learning and enable them to make very good progress. They work very well in lessons where tasks are supported by practical apparatus, designed to help them understand important concepts. There is good collaboration when pupils work in pairs or groups. Behaviour is very good, especially when pupils concentrate well because they find the work challenging. There is unselfish sharing of resources and pupils are very willing to help one another. Pupils demonstrate very good powers of initiative when faced with open-ended tasks or questions.
88. The overall quality of teaching is good. The best teaching stems from good subject knowledge and clear planning, with work set at different levels to match the needs of pupils of all abilities. Lessons incorporate appropriately high expectations and challenge for pupils with different attainments. There are effective links with what pupils have already learned and activities, including problem-solving and investigations, are purposeful, set challenges, and enable pupils to improve their work. Pupils are managed very well and this contributes to a positive classroom ethos. In all lessons, teachers use questions carefully to motivate the class during the introduction, to assess pupils' understanding and to improve learning during the session. The end-of-lesson summary is used well, to share learning experiences and to consolidate or extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. There is very effective use of homework to consolidate learning. Teachers regularly keep ongoing records of pupils' achievements, which

are sufficiently diagnostic to ensure that individual needs are addressed in teachers' daily planning and enable pupils to make very good progress.

89. There is an effective and well-qualified co-ordinator for the subject who monitors the planning to ensure that work is following the agreed format. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well implemented. Teachers in both key stages follow an appropriate curricular plan which promotes progression and continuity in pupils' learning. There is a portfolio of moderated, assessed work in the subject to assist teachers to make consistent judgements relating to levels of attainment. Arrangements for the assessment and recording of pupils' progress are good. The results of National Curriculum tests are monitored by the co-ordinator and there are no specific weaknesses. Resources for mathematics are good overall. There are sufficient calculators and small items of equipment for work in the different areas of measurement. Good use is made of the accommodation. The teaching of mathematics makes a very good contribution to pupils' developing literacy and numeracy skills and meets National Curriculum requirements.

## SCIENCE

90. In the 1999 teacher assessments at Key Stage 1, the pupils' results were very high in comparison with the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining above average levels was higher than that found nationally. The previous school inspection found the substantial majority of pupils, by the end of Key Stage 1, to be achieving standards above the national average. By the end of Year 4, pupils were achieving above national expectations. This inspection has found that standards, at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Year 4, for the current cohort of pupils, are above those expected for similar age pupils. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
91. By the age of seven, the pupils show good knowledge across a broad range of science topics and have a well-developed understanding of all aspects of investigative science. They know about the differences between living and non-living things and that animals, including humans, feed, grow, move, reproduce and use their senses. Their appreciation of the nature and needs of animals has been enhanced through opportunities to observe guinea pigs and hamsters. They also have a good knowledge of different foods and the importance of a healthy diet. They can describe and record their observations in pictures, in writing and on worksheets. Their drawings are often of good quality and accuracy for children of this age.
92. By the age of nine, the pupils have a good grasp of the properties of light and understand processes such as reflection and refraction. They have increased understanding of electricity and can make simple electrical circuits that include switches. The pupils record their experiments in words, pictures, graphs and charts, often using the computer for this purpose. The high-attaining pupils are able to draw conclusions and account for their observations. The lower attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs, are enabled to record their work through more structured support for their writing up. The pupils' presentation of their scientific work is of a good quality, with clear structure and accurate drawings. Pupils show good skills in planning their own experiments and have many opportunities to do this. This area has improved since the previous inspection, when it was judged that insufficient encouragement was provided for them to frame their own questions, to decide what evidence should be collected and how this evidence might be obtained.
93. In Key Stage 1, all the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress, making steady gains in knowledge and understanding in all aspects of National Curriculum science. In Key Stage 2, progress is also good and work is well matched to their current attainment. The pupils build successfully on earlier learning through progressive lessons and extend their investigative skills through opportunities to apply them in different contexts.
94. The pupils enjoy their science lessons and their attitudes to learning are very good, because the activities provided are interesting and motivating. They listen carefully, and are attentive in whole-class sessions. They handle materials and tools sensibly and safely. They show sensitivity towards living plants and creatures. The older pupils organise themselves well and



work collaboratively in pairs. They worked productively on making their telephones, enjoyed experimenting with them and then settled to writing about their work.

95. The quality of teaching in science is good throughout the school. Teaching has improved since the last inspection, when teaching was judged to be satisfactory. Weaknesses found then are no longer evident. Lessons are well planned, with resources and worksheets well prepared, and activities that engage the pupils' interest and provide a good variety of approach and challenge. Teachers have good subject knowledge and expectations are high. Activities are explained clearly and demonstration is used successfully to help the pupils' understanding. Teachers express clear expectations of sensible, independent working; discipline is firm and calm, and relationships are very good. Good use is made of classroom assistants, parents and governors to help the pupils' learning and teachers maintain a good overview of the work in groups, sustaining a brisk pace in the learning. Ongoing assessment during lessons is good and helps pupils make good progress. The links between learning objectives and assessment procedures in weekly and longer-term planning are rigorously identified in both key stages. A significant strength of all lessons is the teaching of scientific vocabulary, which also supports pupils' progress in literacy. Pupils' independent learning skills are well-developed through personal research, particularly in Year 3 and Year 4, which makes a positive contribution to the good progress that all pupils make.
96. The co-ordinator for science manages the subject effectively and is well qualified. There is now a comprehensive scheme of work, with clear guidance across the key stages. She successfully supports her colleagues in the science curriculum through policy review, discussion in staff meetings, and through the development of a portfolio of moderated assessed work in science. She has gained some overview of standards and quality in science by visiting classrooms and by looking at teachers' planning and pupils' work on display. There is rigorous analysis of the strengths and weaknesses in standards to inform improvement strategies, which are highlighted for development in the co-ordinator's annual action plan. Assessment procedures have improved considerably since the previous inspection. There are now good opportunities for assessment and it is clear how they are to be linked to future lesson planning.
97. Resources are good, and provision is improving further with the introduction and use of an environmental area in the school grounds. The pupils' learning in science is enhanced through educational visits to places such as Mole Hall Wildlife Centre and the visit to the school of the Astronomy Roadshow, and these also make a good contribution to pupils' developing literacy and numeracy skills. Very good use is made of the accommodation during the Year 3 and Year 4 science lessons when, because of the number of pupils involved, lessons take place in the school hall and pupils rotate, in groups, around the activities. These sessions are very well planned and make a very good contribution to the development of pupils' independent learning skills.

## **ART**

98. Observation of one lesson and a scrutiny of pupils' work, through the school, show standards above those expected of similar-age pupils. Overall, pupils make good progress in the development of skills and techniques. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve good standards and make good progress. A particular strength in the artwork in the school is the very successful cross-curricular linking, so that pupils learn about art and apply their skills in a variety of subjects.
99. At Key Stage 1, pupils have experimented with tools and techniques and have produced paintings in the style of Van Gogh. Their drawings to express ideas and feelings show good control and the use of a variety of materials. In the art lesson seen in Key Stage 1, pupils were looking at human features. Within the one lesson, three groups used clay, colour sketched and printed, using polystyrene to reproduce facial features. The fourth group recreated a previously completed wood block on the computer.
100. At Key Stage 2, pupils make good illustrations to enhance their work in different areas of the curriculum. They have also designed and made decorative 'African' wall hangings, using

fabric, paint and crayons. They are able to use various printing techniques effectively, using paint and crayons to produce a finished product. By the time pupils leave the school they have a thorough grounding in art skills and techniques, a knowledge of different artists and how to use a range of media and materials.

101. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained the good progress shown in art. The teaching of art has two main thrusts. It is taught as a discrete subject, with a specific objective, but it is also used to support selected school topic areas. A good balance is obtained from the two approaches. Allied to this is the careful teaching of basic skills, which are progressively developed as pupils move across the school.
102. Good learning takes place because of the care with which pupils approach their work and by the ordered classroom environment obtained by the teachers. Pupils are motivated to have a second try if the first is not as successful as they would like. The enthusiasm is enhanced by the care taken by teachers in the planning of a wide variety of different and interesting activities. Pupils stay concentrating throughout lessons and behaviour is good. Pupils are able to explain what they have done and what they think they need to do to improve their work.
103. In the lesson seen, teaching was good. The lesson was planned carefully and clear objectives were incorporated into the planning. The whole-school scheme of work provides a solid base for continuity in the teaching of art skills and gives good guidance to all teachers. There was good classroom organisation and an informal but controlled approach to pupils' work. Pupils were asked to suggest how they might improve the quality of their work. This was well-illustrated when pupils were given half a human face and asked to complete the other half. At first pupils had problems of scale and proportion but with encouragement they tried again, with a noticeable improvement.
104. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator, who has developed a detailed policy and a comprehensive scheme of work. There is good use of sketch-books, which act as a record of pupils' progress in this area. The standard of display throughout the school is good. Display is well-mounted, well-presented, and consists of work by pupils. The school uses information technology well in providing labelling and sometimes written explanations of the displayed work. The school uses artefacts to help the links with topic areas. Work on birds, from a topic in the science curriculum, was given extra meaning by displaying stuffed birds obtained from the County Loan Service. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and easily accessible.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

105. There is insufficient evidence to form a secure judgement about the teaching of design and technology as it was not possible to see any lessons during the period of the inspection. Evidence of good standards, at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4, was obtained from examination of pupils' work, discussions with pupils, displays of work and teachers' planning. The indications are that progress, including that made by pupils with special educational needs, is good. In Key Stage 1, the subject is largely cross-curricular and topic-based and the pupils are involved in practical work which follows the carefully planned scheme of work. Termly units have a recognised time value. However, the teacher adds in extra time if she feels it is necessary to cover the task and skills designated in the unit. Year 2 work is also topic based, while Year 3 and Year 4 each cover three units and have a weekly timetabled period. The time allocation for design technology is in line with recommendations. Occasionally, mixed age groups co-operate on a common theme.
106. The school has a well-planned policy and scheme of work, which are continually being amended as nationally recommended guidance is adapted to fit into the whole-school scheme. The scheme of work is due for review in the summer term. Lessons are well planned and have clear and realistic aims. The good planning ensures that pupils are introduced to a wide range of solid and malleable materials which include wood, card, plastic, clay, textiles and junk materials. Pupils produce good quality models from these materials. In Year 4, pupils made pneumatic models with moveable parts which were ingenious and much thought had gone into working out how they could be made to move. In Year 1, a range of puppets, both hand and moveable, were well executed. A scale model of the local church was made from card and

showed much detail. The planning means that all materials are prepared and ready, and teachers give clear instructions to pupils.

107. Pupils enjoy their work in design and technology and take pride in the finished product. Pupils clearly understand the need and function of design. The teachers' flexible approach to the time element means that models are not left unfinished. The design element of the subject is more developed than suggested at the last inspection and is now good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and ensure that work is evaluated and presented by pupils to the rest of the class at the end of the lesson.
108. There are sufficient resources for the teaching of design and technology. They are stored centrally, but each classroom has a supply of tools stored in a toolbox. The school makes use of the County Loan Service and collects consumable and reclaimed materials. Food technology also appears in the curriculum and all cookery equipment is kept on its own trolley. Limited storage space means that access to this is under adult supervision. Support staff in the shape of governors, parents and classroom assistant are used well. They are all briefed beforehand and provide valuable support. Their work enhances the quality of design and technology.

## GEOGRAPHY

109. Judgements on pupils' attainment and progress are based on the observation of one lesson, a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and records, and interviews with staff and pupils. The standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4 are above those expected from similar-age pupils. The indications are that progress, including that made by pupils with special educational needs, is also good. The standards in geography have improved since the previous inspection. In Key Stage 1, the subject is largely cross-curricular and topic based and the pupils are involved in practical work, with the emphasis on oral skills and the use of the local environment. They know that maps represent real locations and develop an understanding of direction by using terms such as *north*, *south*, *east* and *west*. They are able to mark continents on an outline map of the world and can discuss places they have visited. They know about different climates through the journeys taken by the class teddy bear. They undertake fieldwork activities in the village and develop an understanding of parking problems in the vicinity of the school and how this affects safety.
110. The pupils in Key Stage 2 expand on their geographical skills and explore places and study themes at greater depth, and they attain good standards. They have a good knowledge of and understanding about the needs and characteristics of early settlements - for example, the need for fresh water, flat land, houses and crops. They are able to identify early settlements from maps of Great Britain because they know that many place-names end with 'ton' or 'ham'. They can also use maps to obtain evidence of earlier settlement and list the reasons why it was an attractive site to settlers. They can compare villages today with the past, identifying features on Ordnance Survey maps using the symbols on a key. They can plot the journey of a river and know that most rivers eventually flow into a lake or the sea. The study of their local area enables pupils to learn about the main physical and human features and the environmental issues that give the locality its character. By age nine, pupils have made good progress overall and very good progress in mapping skills and have a clear understanding of how to identify physical land features by interpreting map symbols. Their work includes using coordinates and grid references to follow a route and identify the points of reference on maps.
111. Pupils benefit from a practical, enquiry approach and the stimulus of well-planned fieldwork visits. The older pupils' awareness of knowledge about places is extended further by a visit to Harlington Church and to the oak tree under which John Bunyan is thought to have preached. There are good opportunities to study local maps in order to identify further links with John Bunyan in the surrounding area.
112. The co-ordinator for the subject is effective, and there is an appropriate policy and a detailed scheme of work to support teaching. The planning for geography is designed to ensure that all pupils are taught the appropriate skills and are given opportunities to investigate places and themes as laid out in the National Curriculum. Geography makes a useful contribution to work

in other subjects, such as in history, in studying the Romans, Anglo-Saxons and Vikings, and in mathematics, which ties in well with mapping skills and makes a good contribution to pupils' developing literacy and numeracy skills. Learning resources have improved since the previous inspection and are good, with a wide range of maps, videos and atlases. These are supplemented by the loan of boxes of topical books from the County Loan Service.

## HISTORY

113. Only one lesson in history was observed during the inspection. Judgements are based on this lesson, a scrutiny of pupils' work, displays of pupils work around the school, teachers' planning documents, and discussions with pupils and the subject co-ordinator. From this evidence, it is clear that, by the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4, pupils achieve standards above that expected and have developed a sense of the past and chronology by comparing their life with that of a child in late Victorian Britain. They know that children, 100 years ago, often went out to work at an early age, and worked in factories and on farms, and are able to make appropriate use of language of comparison when describing the differences. Their work on Victorian Britain shows a developing knowledge and understanding of the lives of people at work on the farms and in the factories. In the previous inspection, attainment was in line with the nationally expected standard. Standards have improved in both key stages.
114. By the end of Year 4, pupils have achieved good standards and have a wide knowledge and understanding about the passage of time and of different periods of the past. They have detailed knowledge about the lives of people in this country during Roman times. They know about the Roman conquest and that many towns were named by them and by Viking raiders. They have a good understanding of the life of a Roman soldier and how Anglo-Saxon homes were constructed. The visit to the school of the Viking Longship Company provided the pupils with valuable 'hands on' experience of Viking life. Many pupils show good factual knowledge about aspects of Anglo-Saxon life. They study the life of Anglo-Saxon monks and gain an understanding of religious life in a monastery. They know that St Albans is a significant place in Roman history. Many pupils find out about the past from a range of sources, including information technology.
115. In the lesson seen, in Key Stage 1, pupils' made good progress. As pupils move through the school, their knowledge and understanding of historical information increase in depth and breadth. Indications from their work at Key Stage 2 are that progress is good in the periods of history they study and satisfactory for pupils with special educational needs.
116. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good; they are interested in history and enjoy the subject. Their enthusiasm shows in their eagerness to answer questions and participate in discussion. At Key Stage 2, the pupils' recorded work is presented with care and there is evidence of older pupils carrying out personal studies on aspects of cultural life in Italy.
117. In the lesson observed during the inspection, teaching was satisfactory. The teacher's knowledge of the subject is sound and the appropriate use of questions encourage pupils to think carefully about the knowledge presented to them. Valuable use was made of a range of sources of information and, as a result, the pupils enjoyed learning about the past. The school makes good use of visits to enhance the study of history, such as the Stoke Bruerne Waterways Museum, the Museum of Childhood, the House on the Hill Toy Museum and the Roman site and Verulamium museum in St Albans. Activities are planned appropriately to capture the interest of the pupils and foster enquiry through discovery.
118. The subject policy covers the areas of study for the five classes in the school and is referenced to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. At Key Stage 1, much of the historical information is taught through relevant topics based on the children themselves, their homes and the places where they live. With the two mixed classes in Key Stage 2, history is taught on a two-year cycle, with both classes covering the same topic at one time, but taking into account the varying ages and abilities of the pupils. Historical studies are well-integrated into work with other subjects and contribute well to pupils' literacy skills. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject and has undertaken some formal monitoring of teaching and learning. Satisfactory systems for assessment are now incorporated into the

subject planning to ensure that pupils make good progress in knowledge and skills. This has been developed since the previous inspection. Resources are sufficient to support the subject and are supplemented by the loan of artefacts from the County Loan Service.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

119. Only one class lesson was observed during the inspection, but ongoing observations were made in all classes and in the computer suite. Further evidence was gained from the scheme of work, teacher's planning and records of previous work. Discussions also took place with the information and communication co-ordinator and the classroom assistant who works in the computer suite.
120. By the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4, attainment is well above that expected for pupils of a similar age. Pupils can use word processing, can input information to the computer, can load some programs, can maximise, draw, print and save in their own folder. Additionally, in Key Stage 2, pupils can word process directly on the computer, using cut and paste and the spell check, and send e-mails.
121. Pupils are confident and enthusiastic about information and communication technology. They collaborate well and learn quickly and, because they are given plenty of opportunities to use computers, rapidly learn the necessary skills. Computers in both the classroom and the suite are in continuous use.
122. Teaching is very good. Teachers plan their lessons and their group work well and positive efforts are made to see that information and communication technology is used in all areas of the curriculum. There are very good cross-curricular links to mathematics, science, geography, history and design technology. Very good use is made of the word processing programs in labelling the various displays across the school.
123. The subject is very well managed and the school has made a marked improvement since the last inspection, when the use of and standards in information and communication technology were key issues for development. Much thought from the co-ordinator has gone into how best to deal with this. The school has increased the number of computers and the subject is now very well resourced. Seven CD-ROMs are housed in the computer suite and all classrooms have a computer, three of which have CD-ROMs. There are plans in place for the other two classes to have a CD-ROM. The school decided to adopt a dual approach to teaching, whereby the subject is taught by teachers in the classroom and groups are taught in a computer suite. A great deal of effort has gone into furnishing this suite. It is well planned, and the value is evident in the high standards reached by pupils. A classroom assistant, who has received comprehensive computer training, works in the suite, where she is supervised by the headteacher. Her expertise and experience are used well by the school and she has had a significant impact on the training and use of computers by pupils. All teachers have been on appropriate courses, and this is reflected in the good knowledge that teachers display and their confidence in the classroom. The scheme of work is largely based on recommended subject guidance. It is constantly being evaluated by the co-ordinator and the classroom assistant. The effort and expense in getting the present system up and running are justified by the very high standard reached by the pupils. Equally commendable is the organisation, which enables the best use to be made of the very good computer provision.

## **MUSIC**

124. Standards in music are above those expected for similar age pupils. In both key stages the pupils enjoy their music lessons. They improve on prior attainment as they perform, compose or listen to music, and they make good progress in all three aspects.
125. Throughout both key stages, pupils sing songs known by heart. They know many tunes and have a good sense of rhythm, often knowing a set sequence of actions to each verse. They sing with a good understanding of pitch to a pre-recorded accompaniment, which they follow well. The songs in their repertoire are often linked to the topics they study and they know many religious songs. The whole school can sing a round in four parts with good timing. The

choir is formed each year to perform in a public festival held at Wembley. There are two clubs for pupils to learn to play the recorder at lunchtime. These are led by parents and are very successful. A peripatetic music teacher gives violin lessons to a small group each week. Pupils perform occasionally by playing the recorder and the violin in assemblies. Pupils play percussion instruments carefully and stop and start on command. They are able to follow a graphic score, using untuned percussion instruments. Most pupils can identify a piece of music which has a repeating melody. Pupils work in pairs to perform their own scores. This works well and their attempts are recorded to build up a repertoire of sounds for the class topic on 'Communication'.

126. Pupils' musical appreciation is well-developed. They are able to listen to music and pick out particular aspects. For example, they are able to identify that the theme from *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* is a conversational piece of music whereas a flute and piccolo piece is imitation. Overall, pupils' response to music is good, particularly when pupils are in their classroom and the teaching is well-focused. Most pupils work well in their class groups composing music collaboratively. They have very good attitudes to learning. They are pleased when their peers succeed and in one lesson burst into spontaneous applause to show their appreciation.
127. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers manage groups well, especially pupils with special educational needs. Learning objectives are delivered with confidence, although there are no specialist music teachers on the staff. Teachers have the expertise to develop and assess the subject. There is a good policy in place, plus a commercial scheme of work, and these work well. There is good use of praise to encourage pupils to do their best and most lessons include performing, composing and appreciation. Further opportunities for musical appreciation are provided for pupils in assemblies. There are good cross-curricular links; for example, music is sometimes used to stimulate creative writing and art, and the Year 3 recordings became part of their interactive class display on light and sound.
128. The music co-ordinator has a good grasp of what is needed to move the school forward in the teaching and learning of music. There are plans to introduce composing, using information technology, and to further develop assessment procedures. Resources are well-organised in a central collection and are shared by the whole school. Instruments are adequate, but there are not enough available from a wide variety of countries.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

129. Although only three lessons, all in dance, were seen, it has been possible to make a judgement based on the planning of lessons by teachers, the quality of the school scheme and discussions with pupils.
130. By the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4, pupils attain standards above those expected for similar-age pupils. The good standards attained in the previous inspection have been maintained. In Year 1, pupils can move in time to the music and perform effectively simple movements of jumping and turning. Pupils in Year 2 can explore moods and feelings through music and develop their own dance with a clear beginning, middle and finish. In one lesson, in Key Stage 1, groups working on different elements successfully combined to make a whole-class sequence. By the end of Year 4 pupils can compose short dance sequences, are able to adapt these and can work with a partner.
131. Overall, pupils' progress is good across the school. The three lessons seen were limited to dance, although there are good opportunities for outdoor activities. Pupils are enthusiastic about physical education. They respond well to the teachers and keep working throughout the lessons. As they understand what they are attempting to do they keep concentrating and trying to improve. In one lesson this was clearly evident. The encouraging attitude of the teacher enthused pupils so that they were not satisfied with what they were doing but continually tried to better their performance. Behaviour of pupils in lessons is good. They listen well and respond quickly. Pupils work well together, either in pairs or groups.
132. The good quality of teaching is characterised by good planning of lessons. All lessons have a

warm up element followed by the main activity. Methods used are variable, ranging from individual to group to class teaching. This mix of methods is used well according to the circumstances of the lesson. Lessons are well paced with a good balance between instruction from the teacher and the opportunity for pupils actively to take part. Teachers are skilful at identifying teaching points and in the way in which they use pupils to demonstrate these. In the lessons seen, good management and control of pupils creates an ethos which allows pupils to concentrate and fully enter into the lesson. In one lesson seen at Key Stage 2, the ethos engendered by the teacher enabled pupils to experiment both individually and in groups to produce some good quality movement. Teachers are conscious of the safety elements of physical education and remind pupils of possible dangers. All teachers check any unnecessary movement and positively reinforce good practice on the part of the pupils. Teachers also give pupils time to think through what they are attempting before setting the activity in motion.

133. Although at the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be above the national average, there was no scheme of work. Over the last two years the co-ordinator has identified priorities within the curriculum, starting with gymnastics, to build up a very comprehensive scheme. This covers all aspects of the physical education curriculum. Resources are satisfactory, both for small and large apparatus. The school plans to replace the large mats as soon as possible. The hall is small and teachers use the available space well. The school has a grassed outside area, which is used for football, and a good surfaced playground area. There are two extra-curricular sports clubs and the football club is taken by a parent and is open to boys and girls.
134. Within the demands of the primary curriculum the school allocates a reasonable time of one hour and forty minutes a week for physical education. The well-planned scheme of work provides a central focus and gives good guidance to the non-specialist teacher. The scheme plays an important part in enabling pupils to make good progress. Progress is recorded and comments are made indicating special aptitudes or difficulties.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

135. By the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4, pupils' attainment is well above that expected in the locally agreed syllabus for similar-age pupils. Standards are much improved since the previous inspection, when they were judged to be satisfactory. Pupils explore and respond to human experience and study Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism in detail. This fulfils the statutory requirement of the locally agreed syllabus.
136. Pupils in Year 1 can discuss and understand the importance of friends. In Year 2, pupils devised a friendship wheel containing six qualities they would offer a friend. Pupils in both these classes have also talked about Hinduism with a visitor to the school. They have learned what it is like to be in a Hindu family and about the customs, beliefs, clothes, cooking and extended family. In Year 3 and Year 4, pupils have a very good knowledge of the Jewish custom of Bar Mitzvah and are able to write in detail about what they have learned. They have a good knowledge of the synagogue and the rituals associated with this ceremony and understand its significance.
137. By the ages of seven and nine, all pupils have made very good progress in understanding the values and feelings of different religions. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have a very good understanding of friendship and can relate this to Jesus and his disciples. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have a very good understanding of Jewish life and customs, such as the Sabbath, and have a developing understanding of Abraham, the beginning of the Jews and the Ten Commandments. They have had good opportunities to handle Jewish artefacts and to appreciate the importance of these to Jewish people.
138. Pupils' response is very good. They listen attentively in lessons and are very willing to ask and answer questions. Pupils enjoy discussing issues about their everyday lives and they show respect for the beliefs of others.
139. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and skills are consistently and systematically taught. There has been significant improvement in

this area since the previous inspection and this is reflected in the very good standards now achieved. Planning is monitored by the co-ordinator, who is very effective in her role, to ensure the systematic development of skills during a two-year cycle. Long-term planning and use of the locally agreed syllabus is good. Assessment is currently being developed further, although satisfactory systems are in place as a result of the previous inspection. There is a rich source of artefacts, which are used effectively to enhance the quality of pupils' learning.