

INSPECTION REPORT

HORSTED INFANT SCHOOL

Chatham

LEA area: Medway

Unique reference number: 118442

Headteacher: Mrs L Wainwright

Reporting inspector: Jennifer Nicholson
23036

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 January 2000

Inspection number: 189067
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant school

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 – 7 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Barberry Avenue
Chatham
Kent

Postcode: ME5 9TF

Telephone number: 01634 863395

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs N J Beavan

Date of previous inspection: September 1996

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|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Jennifer Nicholson | Registered inspector | Science | Standards |
| | | Religious education | Teaching |
| | | Music | Leadership and management |
| Roger Hearn | Lay inspector | Equal opportunities | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development |
| | | | Care |
| | | | Partnership with parents |
| Ian Stainton–James | Team inspector | English | Curricular and other opportunities |
| | | Geography | |
| | | History | |
| | | Physical education | |
| Jeremy Collins | Team inspector | Mathematics | |
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| | | Art | |
| | | Design and technology | |
| | | Under-fives | |
| | | Special educational needs | |

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Horsted Infant School is smaller than most other primary schools. The pupils come from a variety of backgrounds, including the local private housing estate. One hundred and eighty three pupils attend the school. Thirty six reception children are not yet five years old: the oldest nine of these attend full-time, the remaining twenty seven attend for mornings only: Three per cent of pupils come from ethnic minority groups. All of these pupils speak English, and two are bilingual. Twenty eight per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, an above average proportion, and approximately twice the percentage during the last inspection. Eight pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need, well above average. The school shares with the partner Junior School a Unit for pupils with physical disabilities. Currently there are three infant pupils attached to the Unit. Most children enter the school with average attainment.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective in achieving at least satisfactory standards overall. Teaching is good. Planning for improvement is detailed and thorough, and based on the teachers' good knowledge of their pupils' achievements. Teachers manage pupils very well and with the utmost respect. As a result, pupils are consistently well behaved and have good manners. They enjoy coming to school and are receptive to lessons, learning effectively. Provision for pupils with physical disabilities is very good. The headteacher leads the school in strongly positive ways, with a very clear commitment to improvement. The new governing body is in a good position to assume its role. Almost all the strengths identified at the last inspection have been maintained well. The overall effectiveness of the school is good. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are good in speaking and listening, reading, art and physical education.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership.
- The school provides very well for children under the age of five.
- The school provides very well for pupils with physical disabilities.
- Pupils behave consistently well; they are polite and well-mannered.
- Relationships are very good.
- Pupils are very caring and kind with each other.
- The school's provision for social and moral development is very good.
- The school takes very good care of its pupils.
- The school is very keen to find ways to improve its provision for pupils.
- The school's partnership with parents is very good.

What could be improved

- Targets and expectations for pupils' achievements in writing are not clear enough.
- Pupils in Year 2 are not confident enough in their everyday use of cursive script.
- Pupils do not practise their developing writing skills often enough in subjects other than English.
- Governors are not involved enough in identifying priorities for school development.
- Priorities for school development are not costed in sufficient detail.
- Major spending decisions are not monitored to establish value for money.
- The outside of the school building is poorly maintained.
- The mobile classroom is in a poor state of repair.
- There is no specialist therapy room for the comfort of physically disabled pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made at least satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection in September 1996. Satisfactory standards have been maintained, despite having an increased percentage of pupils with special educational needs. Higher attaining pupils are generally challenged sufficiently well. The monitoring role of the governing body has developed well with good systematic involvement, but they are still not involved enough with the construction of the school development plan. Liaison with the Junior School has also developed well to ensure that pupils' learning continues smoothly when they transfer. Provision of large play equipment for children under five is now good. There has been some improvement to the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 3 scores in national testing, but there remain fewer higher scores in writing. Lessons are now almost always appropriately paced, although sometimes pupils sit for too long on the carpet during introductions.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

| Performance in: | compared with | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | all schools | | | similar schools |
| | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 1999 |
| Reading | A | A* | B | B |
| Writing | B | B | D | E |
| Mathematics | A | A | D | D |

Key

very high, in the highest 5% of schools nationally A*

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In 1999, the overall standards for seven-year-olds in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 were above the national average. In writing and mathematics standards overall were below average: although an average proportion of pupils achieved the expected Level 2, few pupils achieved Level 3. Overall standards in reading were above those of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, but, taking the fewer higher scores into account, in mathematics they were below, and in writing well below. Results overall are not typical of

the school's results, as the table shows. Results have been consistently above national averages for the last four years. The dip in results in 1999 may be attributed to a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. The school's targets for national testing in 2000 are close to national averages. They are realistic, reflecting the year group. During the inspection, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in speaking and listening, reading, art and physical education were judged to be above expectations. Standards in other subjects were average. Standards are high enough overall, although the school is working hard to raise standards in writing further.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Good; all pupils have a positive attitude, and approach lessons and school with enthusiasm. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Good; pupils are polite, confident and ready with a friendly smile. They respect school and class rules and clearly know the difference between right and wrong. |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good; pupils are very caring and kind with each other. They enjoy each other's company. |
| Attendance | Good |

Pupils' good response to school contributes positively to their learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils: | aged up to 5 years | aged 5-7 years |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Lessons seen overall | 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.

In 63 per cent of lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good or better. In nearly two lessons out of ten, teaching was very good or excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teachers plan lessons well to meet the needs of all pupils. They have a good rapport with pupils. Teaching in English, mathematics, science, art and physical education is good. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught systematically. Teachers have recently introduced individual targets for literacy and numeracy, which are proving useful but are not always specific enough. As a result of the good teaching, pupils are receptive and learn well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Satisfactory; the curriculum is broad and balanced and thoroughly planned. It is accessible to all pupils and promotes their academic and personal development suitably. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good; pupils are supported well and as a result make good progress. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Very good; clear, negotiated rules and guidelines, good relationships, and careful planning underpin these aspects of pupils' development very well. Spontaneous special moments are clearly evident. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | The school takes very good care of its pupils by ensuring that it is a safe and secure place. Procedures for assessing what pupils can do are good, but individual targets for what they need to do to get better are not always sharply focused enough. |

The school works very well in partnership with parents, taking their views into account and being very responsive to their concerns.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Good; the headteacher provides a strong lead in shaping the educational direction of the school. She has established a very good climate for improvement. Subjects are managed well overall. The school applies the principles of best value suitably including the thorough analysis of test results, and by consulting parents regarding new initiatives. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | The out-going governing body fulfilled its statutory duties well. The new governing body is in a good position to begin its work, including to identify priorities for school development and to monitor the effectiveness of associated spending decisions. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | The school analyses its results comprehensively in order to improve its provision for pupils. |
| The strategic use of resources | Satisfactory; the school uses resources effectively. Special educational needs staff are well deployed, but there is not enough extra help for under fives. The school building is used appropriately. |

There are sufficient teachers to meet the demands of the school, and a good number of learning support assistants, mainly for the support of pupils with special educational needs. Accommodation is adequate; the inside of the main building is bright and cheerful, but the outside and the mobile classroom are in a poor state of maintenance and repair. There is no therapy room for the privacy and comfort of pupils with physical disabilities.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is responsive to parents' concerns. • The headteacher and staff are approachable. • The children like coming to school. • The children are polite and well mannered. • The school has good expectations for the children's learning and enables them to progress. • The children settle well when they first come to school. • The leadership and management of the school are good. • The teaching is good. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is not enough supervision in the playground at breaktimes. |

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. They found playground supervision, including at lunchtimes, during the week of inspection to be satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In national testing in 1999, at the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment in reading were above the national average overall. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well above average. Standards in writing and mathematics were below average overall. Although the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 in writing and mathematics was close to average, the proportion of pupils achieving Level 3 in writing was below average, and in mathematics, well below. Results in teacher assessments for science were below average overall. In comparison with similar schools, results in 1999 in reading were above average, but in mathematics they were below average, and in writing, well below. These comparisons are based on comparative levels of free school meal entitlement and do not take into account the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in this year group.
2. Results for 1999 are not typical. In the previous three years, 1996 to 1998, results in reading, writing and mathematics were consistently above national averages. The high proportion of pupils with special needs may account for differences. In addition, this year group experienced some disruption to the settled teaching pattern. Results since 1996 show no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls, reflecting inspection evidence.
3. Since the last inspection, standards are broadly unchanged in all subjects with the exceptions of writing, mathematics and music, which are now judged average and were previously above.
4. There is a wide range of attainment when children start school, and attainment of different year groups varies, but the attainment of most children is average. By the time they are five, they are likely to achieve the desirable learning outcomes in all areas of learning, and to exceed them in personal and social development, physical development and in aspects of language and literacy and creative development. They are making good gains in their learning, and are making a good start to statutory education.
5. Inspection evidence shows that standards in speaking and listening, reading, art and physical education are above expectations. In all other subjects standards are in line with expectations.
6. Pupils in Year 2 talk with confidence, with a wide range of vocabulary. They listen to each other and to their teacher very well. In reading, they can express an opinion about their book and discuss fiction and non-fiction. In writing, they sequence ideas and are acquiring a sound written vocabulary and correct punctuation. The National Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact on pupils' learning, but opportunities for pupils to practise their developing writing skills in other subjects are limited.
7. Standards in mathematics meet expectations. Many pupils in Year 2 have a secure understanding of place value. They can partition simple numbers and use different strategies for addition and subtraction. The National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented effectively across the school. Pupils practise numeracy skills

appropriately in other areas of the curriculum, for example in science.

8. Standards in science are in line with expectations. Pupils in Year 2 make simple predictions in experiments, and compare the outcomes. They can identify pushing and pulling forces in practical situations.
9. Standards in information technology meet expectations. Pupils use word processing and graphics software appropriately. Standards in religious education meet expectations. Pupils have a secure understanding of aspects of religious faiths such as Judaism.
10. In relation to prior attainment, pupils make at least satisfactory progress from broadly average levels of attainment on entry to broadly average levels when they leave. In lessons, pupils' learning is at least satisfactory across the range of subjects. Pupils often make good gains, for example in mathematics, geography, art and physical education, promoted effectively by the teachers' good understanding of their learning needs, and of what is required. In general, pupils' learning is positively encouraged by teachers' secure planning and often high expectations. Some opportunities are lost, however, to foster further development in writing when there is an over-dependence on copying the teachers' writing rather than practising independent skills, and by cursive writing not being used widely enough. On occasion, pupils' learning is hindered when too much is attempted in a lesson, although teachers are quick to recognise this and amend subsequent lessons accordingly, as in partitioning in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall. They are fully supported by class teachers, learning support assistants and other pupils.
11. The school has set realistic targets for national testing in 2000, reflecting a commitment to maintaining standards, but set within the context of the year group to be tested. The school does not currently set clearly defined overall targets for improvement for other year groups. Teachers have recently introduced individual targets for literacy and numeracy for pupils in Years 1 and 2, but these are not always specific enough.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The personal and social development of children under five is good. They have good attitudes to their tasks and activities, and settle well, becoming absorbed. They are sensible, mature and well behaved. They work and play happily together, and help each other readily.
13. The good standards of behaviour and positive attitudes to work in the school, as reported in the last inspection, are being maintained well. There have been no exclusions in the last year. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and physical disabilities, have good attitudes towards school, confirming parents' positive views. Pupils are keen to learn and approach lessons positively and with enthusiasm. They respond to lessons with interest and become involved. These good attitudes towards work lead to purposeful learning.
14. Good classroom control produces consistently good behaviour, with the rules and regulations being well known. No examples of inappropriate or oppressive behaviour were observed during the inspection. Pupils are polite, friendly and well mannered. They show respect for each other, adults and property. They move

around the school sensibly and are courteous, for example standing aside in doorways. The good standards of behaviour support the positive learning environment. On occasion, however, restlessness tends to arise when too much of a lesson is spent sitting on the carpet. Good behaviour quickly resumes when the activity changes.

15. Pupils relate very well to each other and to adults. Pupils listen well to each other. Sometimes they burst into spontaneous applause for a good reply to a question. Pupils are very caring and kind to each other. Pupils with special educational needs and physical disabilities are very well integrated. These pupils are readily accepted by other pupils who are watchful and supportive. There is an overall inclusive atmosphere, which is a pleasure to experience. Pupils are given appropriate responsibilities within their class or around the school, which they carry out confidently and with a sense of pride.
16. Attendance is good, being above the national average. In addition there are fewer unauthorised absences than nationally.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching, including for children under five, in lessons observed, was good overall. In just over six lessons out of ten, teaching was good or better, including nearly two lessons out of ten where teaching was very good or excellent, occurring almost always in the Year 2 or reception classes. No examples of unsatisfactory teaching were observed. The best lessons are characterised by good subject knowledge, lively teaching which motivates pupils well, as for example a dramatic presentation in a reception class, and by a wide range of strategies which foster pupils' understanding effectively. Teachers of children under five have a very good understanding of how young children learn, as demonstrated by their commitment to practical direct activities and learning through play. The good quality of teaching identified during the last inspection has been maintained well.
18. The quality of teaching and learning in English overall, mathematics, science, art and physical education is good, reflecting some good subject knowledge. Teaching in other subjects is satisfactory. Teachers teach the basic skills of reading, writing and number effectively, following the literacy and numeracy strategies systematically. As a result, pupils are making good gains in their learning, in reading and numeracy in particular. Lessons are clearly structured, but occasionally over-long introductions limit the amount of time available for pupils to practise their developing writing skills. The school has suitably begun to address this by including an extra lesson for extended writing. Plenary sessions are often used to good effect, to review learning and move it forward.
19. Teachers' planning is good with clear objectives, and stems from comprehensive longer term planning. Good teamwork ensures joint planning across year groups. Teachers use their detailed knowledge of pupils' learning needs to cater effectively for different groups, for example with targeted questions, and by tasks set. Expectations for what pupils can do are generally high, and activities are often challenging, as in science. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to find out information for themselves and undertake personal research. In addition, in writing, expectations over time are not always high enough, for example in the use of cursive script. As a result, few higher attaining pupils are transferring their technical skill of cursive script, gained in formal handwriting sessions, to everyday

use. Teachers support pupils with special educational needs well, by a good understanding of their 'small steps' learning needs, as identified in individual education plans. Their programmes relate very carefully to their full integration into their appropriate classes. In addition, these pupils are supported effectively by learning support assistants for individual and group work. As a result of the good provision, pupils with special educational needs progress well.

20. Teachers use a good variety of teaching methods to motivate pupils and promote learning. Their questioning techniques draw out pupils' thinking, as, for example, in work in science about forces. They make good use of artefacts and emphasise specialist vocabulary effectively. For example, in religious education by handling items from a Jewish home, pupils name and talk about them with confidence. Teachers place a strong emphasis on purposeful practical experiences, for example by observing different types of houses from the playground, or by enacting a Shabbat meal in the classroom. Pupils clearly make good gains in learning from such practical activities. Sometimes teachers create a special atmosphere, which stimulates good expression of ideas, vocabulary and feelings, for example when telling a story, or in preparation for creative writing. In addition, there is on occasion excellent use of dramatic presentation with the under fives, which involves all the children who respond with great enthusiasm. Teachers' informal assessment of pupils' work in progress is satisfactory and suitably informs subsequent lessons. Marking is positive but there are few examples of constructive comments so that pupils are clear what they need to do to improve.
21. Teachers manage pupils very well and with the utmost respect. Consequently pupils are polite and well mannered. They are respectful of each other and behaviour is good. A good learning environment is successfully established.
22. Teachers mostly use time to good effect. Lessons start promptly and proceed in a purposeful manner. In general, the minor weakness of some slow lesson-pace, identified during the last inspection, has improved although occasional examples of a less brisk pace remain when pupils have to sit too long on the carpet. Good use is made of learning support assistants in guiding pupils with special educational needs and physical disabilities towards their learning targets. Information technology is used appropriately to reinforce and support learning, and pupils are often assisted at the computer by a learning support assistant or helping parent.

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

23. The curriculum is sound and appropriately balanced between the subjects. The key issues identified in the previous inspection have been suitably addressed. It is broadly based and promotes pupils' intellectual, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. The commitment to practical activities is evident and cross-curricular links are appropriately made. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Provision for health education is suitably covered in the science and physical education programmes. The overall hours spent on teaching are in line with the national guidelines. Children under the age of five suitably follow the recommended curriculum with a good emphasis on learning through active involvement and structured play.
24. Subject policies and schemes of work are now in place for all subjects, a positive development from the previous inspection. The policies are effective and have been agreed after consultation with all the staff and the governing body. The schemes of work for the core subjects provide suitable guidance for teachers to build systematically upon pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. The guidelines for the foundation subjects also provide effective guidance for planning, although they vary in the amount of detail included, reflecting their position in the school's programme of curricular development. This programme ensures that each subject's curriculum planning is evaluated and developed, and teaching and learning are monitored and evaluated. Weekly plans appropriately identify what teachers want the class to have learned by the end of the lesson, and often give an outline of the activities pupils will take part in to achieve this.
25. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and the National Numeracy strategies and has carefully considered which aspects to include. The school has recently usefully introduced individual targets for pupils in literacy and numeracy, although at present they are too general. The revised curricula in other subjects are based on teaching pupils essential skills to ensure that these continue to be developed despite the time constraints imposed by the introduction of the literacy and numeracy initiatives. This approach has also had the effect of increasing teacher's knowledge and understanding, which makes their teaching more effective, and has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
26. The school promotes equality of opportunity for learning by providing appropriately for pupils of all abilities. Although much of the support for pupils with special educational needs is provided within the classroom setting, they are occasionally withdrawn for group and individual sessions. Higher attaining pupils are also withdrawn for small group intensive sessions. Those pupils who are physically disabled are fully integrated into the school's curriculum and are only withdrawn for essential physiotherapy.
27. The school liaises well with its partner Junior School, a positive development since the last inspection. The headteachers and core subject co-ordinators consult regularly concerning curriculum provision and standards. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage in their education. In addition, there are useful links with the main feeder nursery school. There remain few links with business and industry, as

identified in the last report. There are some links with the local community.

28. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is very good overall. It is a strength of the school. Careful thought has been given to these aspects of the pupils' experience, as evident in planning, for example in religious education about feelings. Special moments are a delight, as in the blessing of children in the Shabbat meal. Daily acts of collective worship suitably include short periods of quiet reflection. All pupils are respected and their contributions valued. The school is a well-ordered community. The diversity of different cultures, music and art are clearly welcomed. Relationships are very good. Staff work well together to provide pupils with the security to learn and grow in the knowledge that they are valued. These aspects permeate and underpin the whole life and work of the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. The school takes justifiable pride in taking good care of the pupils. There is a very good rapport between the teachers, carers and pupils, and each fully respect the other. All possible steps are taken to ensure a safe environment, including the regular updating of comprehensive policies and practices. There are three first-aiders, and all the staff have basic first-aid training. The headteacher and a member of the governors' sub-committee undertake regular health and safety inspections, an improvement since the last inspection. Child protection procedures are very good, and close liaison with other agencies is maintained in case of need.
30. Detailed planning and assessment procedures are in place for the core subjects and records of achievements in most foundation subjects. Currently the school is working towards a Basic Skills Quality Mark, an identified priority. As a result, teachers' awareness of assessment, monitoring and planning has been further raised. Assessment is developing well and is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning through, for example, the recent introduction of individual targets in literacy and numeracy and pupil profiles. Pupils are clearly aware of their targets and know what they need to practise to improve, although targets are not always specific enough. The school's agreed marking policy is a positive step but it is not always applied consistently as there are few examples of constructive comments about what pupils need to do to improve.
31. The identification of pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils in the reception classes are identified through the baseline assessment. Targets set in individual education plans are regularly reviewed, and parents and supporting agencies are fully involved.
32. Pupils' personal development is monitored informally, but staff are very aware of the gains and developments pupils make in this area. Although during the period of the inspection, no evidence of oppressive behaviour was seen, a suitable policy and appropriate procedures are in place to counter any such activity. All staff are vigilant for signs of inappropriate behaviour.
33. Attendance is very well monitored with any unauthorised absences quickly investigated. Staff support and encourage pupils very well. As a result pupils are secure and confident, and work purposefully. The school ensures that it is a happy place that pupils enjoy, thus fulfilling one of its major aims. The good quality support and guidance, and the dedicated commitment of the staff, identified during

the last inspection, have been maintained well.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

34. The school's partnership with parents is very good, confirming the findings of the last inspection. The school has very supportive parents, as identified in the positive response to the pre-inspection questionnaire and meeting. The results indicate that parents are very satisfied with the ethos and teaching of the school. There was a query regarding lunchtime playground supervision and whether there is sufficient cover. During the period of the inspection this supervision was found to be satisfactory.
35. Parents are welcomed into the school. There are good links established which contribute effectively to pupils' learning both at school and at home. The school has an open invitation policy, which is reiterated at regular intervals, for parents to come into school. Those parents who offer to act as helpers are gratefully welcomed. The school sends out frequent newsletters, which keep parents well informed. Parents' views are sought and taken into account on a variety of issues, including homework and the setting up of the home school agreement.
36. Annual reports to parents are comprehensive, although target setting for the following year is not specific enough. Parents are suitably offered an opportunity to discuss the reports with staff and there are also parent evenings. The headteacher and staff are available for a discussion at any reasonable time. Curriculum meetings are held from time to time to assist parents in understanding modern educational developments.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

37. The good quality leadership and management of the school, identified during the last inspection, have been maintained effectively overall.
38. The headteacher provides very effective leadership. She leads by example and has established a strongly positive climate for improvement. Together with the staff and governors, the headteacher is firmly committed to seeking ways of enabling all pupils to achieve of their best. As a result, a purposeful working atmosphere pervades the school. Targets set are realistic and reflect the year group by taking into account the high percentage of special educational needs
39. The management of the school is good. Systems and procedures are securely in place and are regularly reviewed. The headteacher works well in partnership with the deputy headteacher, who fulfils her management role effectively. Curriculum leaders lead and manage their subjects well overall, particularly the core subjects of English, mathematics, and science. Through the monitoring programme they influence and shape the direction of their subjects. They do not, however, have budgetary control, limiting their management experience. Management of religious education and music is only adequate, due to time constraints, as these curriculum leaders work for only a short time each week. However, both are specialists in their subjects and support staff as effectively as possible in the given time. The governing body is newly constituted, previously shared with the Junior School. It is in a good position to assume its role due to secure procedures established by the outgoing joint governing body, which fulfilled its statutory duties well.

40. Monitoring and evaluating the school's work are good. Results, including from national testing and baseline assessments, are analysed in a thorough and comprehensive way, and the information gained is used to set realistic targets for improvement and to identify necessary action. Teaching and the way the curriculum is delivered are monitored by means of a systematic programme, which includes feedback and targets. Governors are fully involved with monitoring, an area which has developed well since the last inspection, and with setting academic targets. However, they are still not involved enough with setting up the development plan, identifying and costing priorities for improvement, monitoring the progress of the priorities, and establishing the value of major spending decisions.
41. Planning for school development is satisfactory, although priorities and costings are not identified clearly enough to enable the financial budget to fully reflect the aspirations of the school. Requests for funds are not dealt with systematically. However, there is no evidence of these shortcomings adversely affecting the education of the pupils.
42. The administration computer system has recently been updated. Its use is restricted to the financial and word processing programs. Other aspects have either been discarded or felt not to be of benefit to the efficient administration of the school. The local authority's financial system does not allow for separate accounting for grants, other than Standards Fund. However, the school closely monitors the receipt of specific funding, for example for the Unit for pupils with physical disabilities, ensuring that the monies are used for their designated purpose.
43. The school's aims are fulfilled well, in particular its commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with physical disabilities who belong to the Unit, are totally integrated into the life of the school. The strongly positive atmosphere of inclusion, where the contributions of everyone 'big and little' are welcomed and valued, is a strength of the school.
44. There are sufficient suitably qualified teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum, including for children under five. In addition, an extra teacher enables the deputy headteacher to fulfil her management role out of the classroom for one day each week. Teachers are deployed appropriately, and suitable liaison arrangements are in place for the two teachers who job-share. There is a good number of trained support staff, mainly supporting pupils in Key Stage 1 with special educational needs, including those with physical disabilities. Consequently classes in Key Stage 1 enjoy a high level of support, but children under five in the reception classes are not supported sufficiently well. Although there is a low turnover of staff, induction procedures, including for newly-qualified teachers, are very good and meet requirements. New and visiting teachers and students in training are supported well. Appraisal procedures are fully in place for all staff and the targets identified contribute effectively to the overall development of the school.
45. Accommodation is adequate. The hall is of a good size and classrooms in the main building reasonable, but the mobile classroom is too cramped for practical work. In addition, as the school is working hard to correct, there is no dedicated treatment room available for the physically disabled pupils. At present the library is used, limiting its proper use, and also the hall, which does not afford any privacy for these pupils. The mobile classroom and the outside of the building are in a poor state of maintenance and repair. Plans are in hand to refurbish the toilet areas.

The grounds are satisfactory and suitably include a grassed area and play space for the under fives. The school makes appropriate use of the accommodation.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to build on the existing good features of the school, and raise standards of attainment further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) raise standards in writing by:
 - introducing targets for the end of each year group, whilst ensuring that individual targets are more specific; **(paragraphs 11, 25, 30, 62, 67)**
 - encouraging confident everyday use of cursive script earlier; **(paragraphs 10, 19, 59)**
 - providing opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in other subjects as well as English; **(paragraphs 6, 65)**
- (2) establish systems so that the new governing body:
 - is fully involved with determining and costing priorities for school development; **(paragraphs 40, 41)**
 - monitors the effectiveness of spending decisions; **(paragraph 40)**
- (3) continue to find ways to improve the building provision. **(paragraphs 45, 46)**

DESIGNATED UNIT FOR PUPILS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

46. The school shares a special Unit with the Junior School for pupils with physical disabilities. Funding is shared equitably, according to pupil numbers in each school. Currently three infant pupils are attached to the Unit. They are fully integrated within the life of the school, only being withdrawn for daily physiotherapy sessions. Consequently they have full access to all aspects of the curriculum. They are totally included in lessons and specialist equipment is provided to support their physical and learning needs. In addition, there are sufficient ramps in place to enable them to gain full access to different parts of the school building. However, at present there are no specialist facilities, for physiotherapy for example. These sessions currently take place in the library, restricting its proper use, and in the school hall, which affords no privacy or comfort. The school is aware of this important shortcoming and is applying for funding to rectify. A special needs unit assistant and two other learning support assistants are attached to the Unit and fulfil their roles well in a sensitive and positive way. In addition, these pupils receive a good level of individual support and encouragement, from teachers and from their peers. They are also supported effectively by other agencies, who liaise well with school staff. The school meets regularly with parents and all procedures of the Code of Practice are fully met.
47. As a result of this very good provision, these pupils have equally positive attitudes towards school as their peers and are enabled to progress well. They are also enabled to make an equally positive contribution to the life of the school community.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 54 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 25 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 6 | 11 | 46 | 37 | 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 - Y2 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | | 183 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | | 11 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | Nursery | YR - Y2 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | | 8 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | | 44 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 0 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 6 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 6 |

Attendance

| Authorised absence | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.7 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.1 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | | 1999 | 28 | 27 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 24 | 23 | 27 |
| | Girls | 24 | 24 | 22 |
| | Total | 48 | 47 | 49 |
| Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above | School | 87 (95) | 85 (95) | 89 (98) |
| | National | 82 (80) | 83 (81) | 87 (84) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 23 | 26 (30) | 26 |
| | Girls | 26 | 22 (29) | 22 |
| | Total | 49 | 48 (59) | 48 |
| Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above | School | 89 (97) | 87 (98) | 87 (100) |
| | 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 | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 |
| Black – other | 3 |
| Indian | 2 |
| Pakistani | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 142 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 0 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

| | |
|--|-----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 8.8 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 22 |
| Average class size | 19 |

Education support staff: Y[] – Y[]

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 8 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 168 |

Exclusions in the last school year – N/A

| | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 | 0 |
| Indian | 0 | 0 |
| Pakistani | 0 | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 | 0 |
| White | 0 | 0 |
| Other minority ethnic groups | 0 | 0 |

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

Financial information

| | |
|--|--------|
| Financial year | 1998 |
| | £ |
| Total income | 289847 |
| Total expenditure | 278174 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1555 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 6674 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 18347 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 183 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 68 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 63.0 | 35.0 | 0.0 | 1.0 | 0.0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 61.0 | 34.0 | 1.0 | 0.0 | 3.0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 50.0 | 47.0 | 1.0 | 0.0 | 1.0 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 40.0 | 50.0 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| The teaching is good. | 71.0 | 29.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 47.0 | 47.0 | 6.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 76.0 | 24.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 71.0 | 29.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 47.0 | 53.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 75.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 49.0 | 47.0 | 3.0 | 0.0 | 1.0 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 21.0 | 30.0 | 15.0 | 3.0 | 30.0 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

48. Children enter the reception classes part time at the age of four in September or January of the school year in which they become five. At present there are 36 children under five who form about half of each of the two classes. Two teachers assisted by two part-time learning support assistants fulfil an effective and sympathetic role in settling the children into school. The attainment on entry for most children is in line with expectations and is assessed using the baseline assessment. They are likely to achieve the desired outcomes in all areas of learning by the time they are five and to exceed them in personal and social development, physical development, and in aspects of language and literacy and creative development. Lower attaining children are identified quickly and planned for appropriately.

Personal and social development

49. Personal and social development is very good. Children's attitudes to learning are good. They concentrate well, for example working out simple number order in groups. They settle to their tasks and become absorbed. They show a particular maturity in self-direction and respect for others. They relate very well to each other. They work and play happily together, and on occasion spontaneously give applause to another child's success. They are very quick to help one another, as when one child rushed to pick up another's work which had fallen to the floor. The children play happily together in the home corner or on their own in water play. They very confidently approach visitors, showing and discussing their work. Teaching in this area is exemplary where the children imitate the excellent role models given by the adults in their caring and listening.

Language and literacy

50. Standards are good overall. Children listen attentively and they express their ideas well. They enjoy books and handle them with care. They know that print carries meaning and talk enthusiastically about the pictures. They successfully repeat stories read to them, retelling them in the correct sequence. Some children are beginning to use their knowledge of sounds to read simple words, and some can recognise simple words in the text. Standards in writing are satisfactory. About half the children can write their names recognisably and others make letter-like shapes. Some higher-attaining children are beginning to make reasonable attempts at correct writing. Teaching in this area of learning is very good or better. The teaching of sounds is very thorough. Talking and vocabulary are encouraged with a very strong emphasis on building up vocabulary. This is sometimes achieved through a very lively involvement of the children in story reading, such as extemporaneous drama with simple costume and good use of musical instruments to create atmosphere. There are ample opportunities for mark making. As a result the quality of the children's learning in this area is good overall.

Mathematics

51. Standards meet expectations overall. Children count to twenty and some go beyond. They order numbers to ten. Some children can successfully add simple numbers. Children match objects to numbers using small toys and cubes. Many children are beginning to use the names of basic shapes, and some higher attaining children, when using a 'feely-bag', were able to name pyramids, cubes and cylinders accurately. Teaching in this area of learning is very good. Many opportunities are taken for children to solve practical problems such as ordering numbers in jigsaws. The learning is thorough as the children work through their tasks very quickly and successfully. They learn effectively about capacity through structured play with sand and water.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

52. Standards are satisfactory in aspects seen. Children talk informally about their families and how they travel to school. They observe how water turns into ice and retains its shape when frozen. They also note how long it takes in different temperatures for different volumes of ice to melt in different places around the room and outside. They are aware of the use of information technology and can control listening stations and simple mathematical programs on the computer such as 'Shiva'. Teaching and learning in this area are good, particularly when aspects are discussed in depth during the reading of linked stories, as when the children talked about hot and cold in relation to a story about homes. Teachers provide a good variety of linked activities, for example about hot and cold. As a result children sometimes continue their learning in other activities, as when they began making cold winter pictures spontaneously while printing with geometric shapes.

Physical development

53. Standards are good. In the hall children move around with confidence. They climb and balance with good control. As they work on large equipment, they co-ordinate movements well and have good spatial awareness. They use pencils and crayons very carefully and accurately. They use their hands well when working with playdough, flattening and squeezing, cutting it into shapes and making cakes and biscuits. Teaching and learning in this area are good, as the children are given good opportunities to develop natural talent and to become more confident in areas where they are unsure. Improvement has been made in the provision of large outdoor equipment. The equipment includes tricycles and large building bricks, giving the children more opportunities to improve physical skills and extend role play.

Creative development

54. Standards are good overall. Children display good observational skills and explore colour, texture and shape well in their artwork. They work very confidently in paint, collage and playdough, and construct objects from junk materials. They can name primary colours and can predict the outcome of colour mixing. Their pictures show recognisable forms and their patterns have structure and shape. They enjoy listening to music and sing rhymes and number songs appropriately. Teaching and learning are good in this area. The children learn good skills and effective techniques, but are also able to develop their own ideas and imaginations.

ENGLISH

55. At the end of Key Stage 1, taking the results of all pupils into account, the overall standard achieved in reading was above the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above in reading was close to the national average, but the percentage of pupils reaching Level 3 or above was well above the national average. Results in writing were below average overall. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above in writing was close to the national average but the percentage reaching Level 3 or above was below average. In comparison with schools in similar circumstances, performance overall in the reading tests was above average, but in writing it was well below. Boys and girls attain similar standards. Comparison of test results from the last four years indicates that reading was well above national averages and writing was close to average. The high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the 1999 Key Stage 1 year group may be a contributing factor to the drop in results.
56. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment in English is above the expected level overall. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and the increasing competence of the teaching staff are having a positive impact on the pupils' learning. In addition, in most lessons, learning support assistants, who receive appropriate training, also make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
57. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are above expected levels for seven-year-olds. Pupils speak confidently and listen very well to each other and to their teachers. They use a wide range of vocabulary and express ideas with confidence. For example, several pupils in Year 2 were very confident when re-telling the story of Rumpelstiltskin. They are given many opportunities to speak to an audience. Pupils focus on questions posed by teachers and clarify their ideas through relevant and sensible contributions.
58. Standards in reading are above average for seven-year-olds. A survey of reading confirmed that pupils generally enjoy reading and are supported effectively at home. They are able to express an opinion about their books, discuss fiction and non-fiction preferences, and are able to look up information using contents and index. Good support is given to pupils with special educational needs. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils are appropriately challenged and make good progress over time in their reading.
59. Standards of writing are satisfactory. In handwriting, pupils are encouraged from an early age to form their letters correctly, but they do not use cursive script confidently until half way through Year 2, which limits their achievement at higher levels. Pupils use their writing in a variety of genres including book reviews and poems. Some delightful poems about winter showed good description. Sometimes they re-tell stories, as with 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' in Year 1, or write instructions as in 'How to make a snowman', or 'How to get to school'. Pupils are learning appropriately about story structure, but whilst most pupils have good ideas for creative writing, the majority of their stories have tended to be short, and the quality of the writing has, as a result, often been disappointing. Observations of recent work, however, indicate some improvement in the quality and quantity of independent writing.
60. By the end of the key stage, the higher attaining pupils can write a full page, suitably sequencing events in well-formed, not always joined-up, even handwriting,

which conveys meaning well. These pupils are steadily acquiring a sound writing vocabulary and the correct use of capital letters and full stops. They are also becoming familiar with, and sometimes use correctly, speech marks, exclamation marks and question marks. They structure sentences suitably and learn how to extend them and make them more interesting. They write imaginatively, for example about a scary castle, and some pupils are beginning to use words for dramatic effect.

61. Pupils' attitudes to English are good overall. They settle well, sit quietly, listen with attention, are industrious and diligent. They are eager to make a contribution to discussion. They remain involved over a long period, with evident enjoyment. Pupils work well individually and can work without adult supervision for significant periods. Relationships are very good. Pupils' behaviour is good, sometimes very good, and this has a very positive influence on their ability to concentrate and learn.
62. The quality of teaching in English is good overall, and makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved by the pupils, who consequently learn well. In one quarter of lessons seen, teaching was very good or better. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is good. Their expectations of the pupils are always appropriate and often challenging, as when a Year 2 class was working on speech marks, question marks and exclamation marks. Planning is good, thorough, detailed, well focused and relevant, with a good range of tasks carefully linked to previous work to meet pupils' individual needs. The introduction of targets in literacy has proved popular with pupils and is enabling them to experience success and make progress, although the targets are not always sharply focused enough. Good explanations and clear instructions enable pupils to start work with confidence. Good summing up consolidates their learning. Well-targeted open questioning was seen to particularly good advantage in a Year 2 class: the teacher elicited pupils' ideas and extended vocabulary appropriately, challenging pupils of different abilities, and developing understanding. The good questioning encourages pupils to listen carefully and articulate answers clearly, focusing on essentials. Very good use of praise motivates pupils and maintains their attention.
63. Good classroom management creates a productive atmosphere, which supports good learning. Teachers' gentle good humour helps pupils relax and want to please. The example of 'speech marks being like the wrapping of a parcel in so far as they wrap up the sentence' amused pupils in Year 2, and successfully made the point. The use of resources is good, and the thoughtful use of other adults further encourages pupils' learning. Lessons move forward purposefully and carry the pupils along without wasting time.
64. The curriculum is planned to give pupils a suitably broad experience of English. Documentation is comprehensive, detailed, thorough, and based on the National Curriculum and the National Literacy Strategy. The literacy programme is well managed and has been conscientiously introduced. Arrangements for assessment are good and have the potential to provide an accurate view of the language development of individual pupils. Resources are good, up-to-date and appropriate. The library is well stocked with a suitable range of attractive reference books, and regular time is set aside for class use of the library. However, there was no evidence during the inspection of pupils using the library to promote independent learning and research skills.

65. The general literacy skills of pupils are sound, and work is satisfactory presented. Pupils' spelling is reasonable, and they have a sound understanding of punctuation. The contribution of other subjects to pupils' literacy is underdeveloped. Although suitable subject-specific vocabulary is learned in mathematics, science and geography, there are few opportunities for pupils to extend their developing writing skills in subjects with an emphasis on written communication. Often pupils just fill in the missing words on a worksheet or copy-write. The use of information technology in English is mainly confined to simple word processing and spelling practice.

MATHEMATICS

66. In national testing at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 in mathematics, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 or above was broadly in line with the national average. The percentage reaching Level 3 was well below the national average, although teacher assessments indicated a higher than average percentage. The high proportion of pupils reaching the Level 2A standard, some of whom just missed gaining the predicted Level 3, may account for the difference. Standards are below those of similar schools. Results for 1999 are below those of the last four years, which were consistently above national averages, and as such are not typical. The drop may be accounted for by a higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group.
67. Inspection evidence indicates that at the end of Key Stage 1, standards in mathematics meet expectations overall. Findings broadly reflect those found during the last inspection, although there are now more pupils working within the higher Level 3. Predictions for this year's tests for gaining expected levels are realistic, although a little cautious, but reflect the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. Individual targets for improvement in numeracy have recently been set for pupils in Years 1 and 2, but these targets are not always specific enough. The inspection found no particular differences in attainment in the performance of girls or boys.
68. Many pupils in Year 2 have a secure understanding of place value to 100. They use halves and quarters accurately. They can partition simple numbers and use different strategies for addition and subtraction to 20. They order numbers. Some pupils accurately add and subtract numbers up to 100 and above. They accurately add money over one pound and subtract from 20 pence. Pupils solve simple money problems and calculate change well. They work on multiples of fives and tens and use mental strategies. They sort objects and numbers into sets. Pupils have a good knowledge of shapes and solids and can name their features accurately. They can compare length by direct comparison and can measure and weigh accurately using simple metric measures. Pupils can describe position clearly.
69. Standards in numeracy are satisfactory. Pupils use their numeracy skills to support learning in other subjects, for example counting in science experiments, and interpreting simple charts.
70. The quality of learning in lessons is good overall throughout Key Stage 1. In reception, the pupils are given a good grounding in all the areas of mathematics. This foundation is built upon throughout Key Stage 1, where each area is clearly

developed and extended, number in particular. In independent group activities in Year 1, pupils show a good grasp of ordering numbers to 20. They are also working well on ordering numbers to 100. After clear demonstrations from teachers most pupils understand the process of splitting simple numbers and making number sentences. They talk about what they are doing, using appropriate language. In Year 2, working on partitioning is more developed. With suitable reinforcement and practice, pupils are able to explain clearly how to partition using different numbers as a base, and using good mathematical language. In the plenary sessions they are able to suggest other strategies with a clear understanding of how their own methods work. Over a period of two days these pupils showed good development in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs consolidate number skills well as a result of good support from teachers and learning support assistants. Information technology is used appropriately to support pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs.

71. Pupils demonstrate good attitudes to learning and concentration in lessons is high. They are interested and well motivated and persevere in their work. They work well both independently and in groups, often supporting each other through useful discussion and sharing ideas. Their behaviour is good, and relationships between teachers and each other are very good, thus ensuring a positive environment for learning. Pupils talk to teachers and adults with confidence, explaining their work and asking appropriate questions.

72. The quality of teaching is good overall. In one quarter of lessons seen, teaching was very good. Lessons are well planned and lesson structure clearly defined, reflecting the systematic introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers show a good level of knowledge and understanding in the subject, which enables pupils to develop well in mathematical language. There is good use of worksheets that gives pupils the opportunity to cover a range of tasks. This approach suitably allows for different tasks to meet different individual needs. Teachers have a very good rapport with pupils, which gives confidence to the pupils, who are able to approach teachers and others in the sure knowledge that their queries will be listened to and solved. In the best lessons, teaching makes good use of consolidation both at the beginning and end of lessons, and question-and-answer sessions are used effectively to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding. Lessons are often well paced, which motivates pupils to respond well and be keen to learn, as in a Year 1 lesson on number sentences. Subject documentation supports lessons well as pupils move through the school. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and keep appropriate records of their progress and attainment. Resources are good, and there is a good mixture of books, materials and equipment.

SCIENCE

73. In teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, standards of attainment in science were below average overall. The proportion of pupils achieving highly was also below average. These results are lower than results in 1998 when all pupils reached the expected Level 2, and the proportion of high scores was well above average. Standards of attainment during the inspection were found to be average overall at the end of Key Stage 1, with most pupils working within the expected Level 2 and, with support, beginning to tackle aspects of the higher Level 3. Differences in attainment from 1998 may be accounted for by a high number of pupils with special educational needs in the subsequent year groups. Results for the last two years show little difference between the performance of boys and girls, reflecting inspection evidence.
74. Pupils in Year 2 identify pushing and pulling forces confidently. For example, they know that a pushing force is used to blow paint across paper with a straw. Pupils apply their knowledge by labelling classroom objects correctly according to the force required to operate them, for example opening a cupboard door by means of a pulling force. Pupils make suitable predictions in a pulling experiment. They use prior knowledge of pulling heavier and lighter objects to inform their predictions and use a simple chart. They make relevant observations and with support are beginning to recognise the need for the same conditions for experiments.
75. Standards are broadly unchanged since the last inspection, although there now appears to be less working at higher levels. Proportions of pupils with special educational needs have risen significantly since the last inspection.
76. The quality of teaching and learning in science is good overall. Teachers have a sound understanding of the curriculum and are well supported by good planning documents. Consequently, lessons enable pupils to build steadily on previous learning. Teachers place a good emphasis on practical experimentation, finding out and 'being a scientist', in this way harnessing effectively pupils' natural curiosity. As a result pupils are interested, involved and keen to 'have a go'. They gain a secure understanding of the principles of observation and fair testing as they progress through the school, from free exploration in reception to increasingly more structured investigations in Years 1 and 2. The direct practical experience reinforces pupils' knowledge, so that they remember prior learning with confidence, for example that magnets 'stick' to metal and not to wood. The investigations also give good opportunities for pupils of different abilities to work together, which they do in a mature and sensible way, sharing equipment and taking turns. Teachers challenge pupils effectively through the experiments and through their questioning of individual pupils, including pupils with special educational needs. On occasion, they give more difficult challenges to higher attaining pupils. For example, in a Year 1 class, pupils described the characteristics of wood that make it suitable for particular purposes such as for cooking or making furniture. Teachers manage pupils very well in a calmly positive way. Lessons are well organised and proceed at a suitable pace, which teachers adjust as necessary to maintain pupils' motivation. For example, in the mixed Year 1 and 2 class, the teacher recognised that pupils' attention was beginning to wane after several repetitions of the experiment, so she changed the lesson focus and all pupils quickly became involved again. Simple everyday equipment is used effectively. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by learning support assistants, by the

teachers and by the encouragement of their peers. As a result they are usually interested and involved and are enabled to make good progress.

77. The subject is well managed and is identified as a focus as part of the school's monitoring programme. New assessment documentation is enabling teachers to usefully build up their observations of pupils' responses to lessons to gain an overall record of their achievements, and to identify areas for improvement.

ART

78. Evidence from the few art lessons seen and work on display suggests that standards in art exceed expectations for the pupils' ages. Pupils have a good sense of colour. They know how to mix colours properly and what effect colours have on each other. Pupils are confident in working in a range of media, in particular card and paper montage, and they produce careful and well-finished work. All displays are related well to aspects of the school's curriculum in other subjects, such as science in the display on winter. This ensures point and purpose to the outcomes. Standards in art have been maintained well since the last inspection.
79. Pupils' response to art is good throughout the school. They pace themselves well within practical lessons and approach their work sensibly and carefully, and with an eye to quality in their final pieces. They co-operate very well when working in group situations. They are attentive to each other's contributions and express their appreciation of work. Pupils across the school treat both their own and others' artwork with respect and consideration. There is an obvious enjoyment and purposefulness in their approach to art activities.
80. Evidence indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers lead discussions well, so that pupils have a very clear understanding and are confident about what is to be achieved in the eventual outcomes. They make good use of demonstrations, which enable pupils to progress and develop their skills successfully. They give clear explanations. For example, the account of how machinery functions enabled pupils to be aware of the need for relationship in form and shape in their cog pictures. Good oral feedback to pupils and assessment of their work encourage them in the development of their own critical abilities. Planning throughout the school is detailed and allows for pupils' skills in using differing media to develop effectively as they move through the school. The good art policy and scheme of work introduces pupils to a wide variety of skills and techniques. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are particularly well met to enable their artistic skills to progress well.
81. Opportunities for exploring form and space have now been included in the revised schemes of work. The subject is well resourced, but there is no kiln. Art continues to be strength of the school and efforts are clearly made to maintain and improve on it.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

82. Evidence from lessons and from looking at pupils' work around the school indicates that standards in design technology are as expected for the ages of the pupils. Pupils in Year 1 use their experience of houses to identify basic features and relate

the structures to geometric shapes. Pupils in Year 2 have a clear idea of what design involves for puppets, for example, producing some good and varied drawings. They explain the stages of designing and making, and why they are using particular materials. They discuss and evaluate each other's work appropriately.

83. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers show a sound knowledge of skills and techniques, and give clear instructions which enable pupils to design and make effectively. They show commitment to the subject by the care they take in the design element. Teachers encourage pupils to work together and evaluate their work, and as a result pupils listen to each other carefully and make effective suggestions for improvement. They work very well together and discuss the object of their designs co-operatively as in choosing characters for their glove puppets. Good links with literacy, geography and mathematics show pupils clearly that design and technology is a tool in everyday use. For example, pupils make winter mobiles to support work on seasonal weather, and in geography they design maps. A good pace in teaching maintains the pupils' interest throughout the lessons. Consequently pupils enjoy their work and have a positive attitude to learning. They are enthusiastic and take pride in ensuring that articles are well finished and attractive. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress in their learning to that of their peers. The good policy and scheme of work ensure that pupils build steadily on prior learning. Assessment is suitably built into planning, and pupils are encouraged to self-assess. Resources are good and easily accessible. Tools and equipment are kept centrally.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

84. Standards of attainment in geography and history are broadly in line with expectations for pupils of the same age. The school uses a topic approach for the subjects. In Year 2, pupils study geography for one half of the term and history for the other whilst in Year 1 30 minutes is spent on each subject per week. In geography, pupils in Year 2 have an awareness of a locality beyond their own area – the village of Minchinhampton. They correctly identify different types of buildings and describe their use. Pupils in Year 1 link history and geography by looking at different types of houses adjacent to the school and by comparing features of houses now and in the past.
85. The quality of teaching and learning in geography, and in history from limited evidence, is satisfactory overall. Teachers have a sound subject knowledge. Through the good pace and variety of the lessons they ensure that pupils' interest is sustained. Pupils are enthusiastic and keen to answer questions and contribute. Teachers use an active enquiry approach well to motivate pupils, as in the observations of local houses. In addition, the teacher's direct knowledge and experience of the contrasting locality effectively arouse pupils' curiosity about another place. The strategy of using Barnaby Bear to find out about Minchinhampton is used to good effect and contributes well to pupils' learning. The presence of Barnaby in the geography lessons is a popular feature with the pupils, promoting a positive response. It enables them to relate more closely to the topics being studied as they look at photographs of Barnaby in different places such as the golf course and outside the post office during their study of the village. Pupils with special educational needs make similar gains in their learning to those of their peers, through sensitive and effective support.

86. The co-ordinator for both subjects is an enthusiast and this is reflected in the way that pupils respond in these lessons. Both subjects have a wide range of resources to support learning, for example artefacts, books, pictures, photographs and videos, some of which are arranged in topic folders for ease of use. Teachers make good use of the resources available to broaden pupils' experiences and engage their imaginations about other places and times.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

87. Limited evidence from lessons observed and work seen indicates that, by the end of Key Stage 1, standards in information technology are in line with expectations. Pupils in Year 2 are able to use word processing and graphic software appropriately. They explain the process appropriately, using such terms as 'monitor', 'cursor', 'enter key' and 'delete'. They recognise control as an integral part of many everyday devices, for example in use of listening machines. They are able to control and model in various situations, for example by learning how to restate prose into poetic form.
88. Pupils' response to information technology is good, and their concentration in lessons is high. They are interested and well motivated. They work well in pairs and support each other in discussion and in sharing ideas. Their behaviour is very good and relationships between teachers and each other are constructive, leading to effective learning. They ask questions and are confident of receiving good and positive support.
89. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and paced appropriately to ensure clear knowledge and skills in using computers and other technology. Teachers show a sound knowledge and understanding of the processes involved, enabling the children to learn successfully. Careful demonstrations enable pupils to practise and gain a sound understanding of skills in word processing and control and modelling. Teaching across the curriculum gives pupils an appropriate experience of work on computers, for example in literacy and numeracy. Pupils with special educational needs make good use of computers, and also show good control and modelling skills in the use of mathematical programs. Information technology makes a good contribution to the overall success of pupils with special education needs, particularly in the case of physical disability.
90. The good revised policy for information technology looks to a four-year plan being implemented in the school for the development of the Internet in the National Grid for Learning strategy. In-service training for teachers and support staff is a strong feature in the policy. Assessments form the basis from which further plans can be constructed. There are good resources and all classes bar one have access to CD-ROM.
91. In the previous inspection standards were satisfactory as they are now. However, in the light of the new policy the school is improving its provision of this subject.

MUSIC

92. Standards in music are as expected for the ages of the pupils. Pupils enjoy singing a repertoire of songs from memory, and most respond appropriately to a steady beat, by tapping or clapping in time. They are able to sing louder and softer and generally sing tunefully. Many pupils link words and actions in well-known songs. They name basic instruments correctly and are beginning to identify tuned and untuned instruments. Some older pupils clap the patterns of short rhythmic sections, and are beginning to recognise silences in the music. Younger pupils listen carefully and make good attempts to recognise instruments such as a tambourine or bells, from the sounds they make when played out of view. Standards are less good than during the previous inspection when they were judged good overall. The specialist co-ordinator now works part time and is therefore unable to support the subject as well as previously.
93. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Sometimes they are good, as when the teacher makes lesson objectives explicit to pupils, encouraging them to be aware of their learning, or when sections of songs are rehearsed, clearly improving performance. Lessons are securely underpinned by a supportive scheme of work for non-specialist teachers. Music sessions are suitably organised and pupils well managed. As a result, pupils behave well and have positive attitudes. Lessons include opportunities for pupils to work in different sized groups, and on occasion they also include work in pairs, as in a Year 1 class, practising rhythmic clapping patterns. Teachers promote enjoyment in music-making, and as a result pupils show enthusiasm, being keen to join in, including pupils with special educational needs. Visiting musicians enhance the music curriculum and further stimulate pupils' interest and involvement. In addition, pupils sing for parents at regular 'singalongs', and make a welcome contribution to the community by singing occasionally to senior citizens. Pupils with special educational needs are supported sensitively during music sessions by the teachers, learning support assistants, and their peers. This enables them to participate fully and to make progress in their learning commensurate with that of their peers.
94. Management of music is barely satisfactory. In the limited time available the specialist part-time co-ordinator supports colleagues well. However, assessment and monitoring of the subject are under developed.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

95. Standards in physical education exceed expectations for the ages of the pupils. Pupils in Year 2 move with poise and good body control on large apparatus, benches, mats and the floor. They are beginning to link and repeat a series of movements which are imaginative, for example a slide along a bench followed by a series of rolls or a dismount off a table followed by a roll. All pupils concentrate on a two-footed landing and most finish with the appropriate gymnastic salute. Throughout the key stage, pupils show a good awareness of space and safety. Most pupils are able to improve their performance through sharing ideas with others and watching demonstrations given by other pupils. Pupils develop good spatial awareness and use the hall space to best effect. No games lessons were seen during the inspection, although in their playtimes pupils showed good sportsmanship. It was also not possible to observe any dance lessons, but through the scheme this element is well covered.

96. The quality of the teaching and learning is good. Pupils with special educational needs and physical disabilities are enabled to play a full part in lessons through effective support and encouragement from teachers, learning support assistants and their peers. Through clear objectives in the lessons, pupils understand what they are required to do. The control of lessons is very effective and pupils behave very well. They listen and follow instructions carefully. Lessons have a good pace by making use of variety, an improvement since the last inspection. In all lessons, pupils are given appropriate warm-up and cool-down activities, often to music, and work that ensures good skills development. Pupils co-operate well and work effectively on an individual basis. They acknowledge the performance of others, display enthusiasm and sustain high levels of interest and motivation. They obviously enjoy the subject. The effective intervention by teachers usually aids development, enabling pupils to show improvement in their work through further practice. Teachers promote safety in physical education effectively, and as a result pupils are very conscious of this aspect of the subject. The subject receives sufficient time and is well resourced to support teaching and learning.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

97. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils in Year 2 know about some important aspects of Jewish family life, for example the Shabbat meal. In their written work they show knowledge of Bible stories from the Old Testament, for example Moses, and about stories and aspects of other religious faiths such as Hinduism. Pupils across the school name basic Jewish artefacts and talk about their use, for example the menorah, torah and kippa. They are beginning to make comparisons between other religions and Christianity. Standards are broadly unchanged since the previous inspection.
98. Evidence from lessons seen and pupils' work, lead to the judgement that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure, supported well by detailed and good quality planning documents. Teachers make good use of real objects to promote learning. As a result, through handling Jewish artefacts pupils are developing a good understanding of their significance. On occasion role-play is used to very good effect. Pupils' interest and involvement increased and the quality of their learning was clearly enhanced by the enactment of the Shabbat meal. Evidence of previous work suggests that pupils gain a wide range of knowledge and information appropriately as they progress through the school. However, opportunities are lost for them to use their own words to record their understanding and also to also practise their developing literacy skills. Teachers' management of pupils is very good. They interact with pupils in a consistently positive and respectful way. Consequently pupils respond well. They are keen to learn and work purposefully. They only become a little restless when a lesson introduction is over-long. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and enabled to make similar progress to their peers.

99. Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development, for example through its emphasis on feelings and the faiths and practices of other cultures. The curriculum offers a wide range of learning opportunities, but there is limited use of visits and visitors. Management of the subject is barely satisfactory. The co-ordinator is part-time and therefore is unable to fulfil all aspects of the role, for example auditing assessment procedures, which are informal and lack a common procedure, and monitoring. However, she has good expertise in the subject and supports colleagues well in the time available.