

INSPECTION REPORT

HIGHFIELD HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newbold, Chesterfield

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112667

Headteacher: Mrs. Linda Kingdon

Reporting inspector: Mrs. Mary Speakman
21581

Dates of inspection: 26th - 29th June 2000

Inspection number: 189222
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary with nursery unit

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Highfield Lane
Newbold
Chesterfield
Derbyshire

Postcode: S41 8AZ

Telephone number: 01246 273534

Fax number: 01246 554120

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. Stuart Yeowart

Date of previous inspection: 20th May 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs. M. Speakman	Registered inspector	Physical education	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school
		Religious education	The school's results and pupils' achievements
			Teaching and learning
			Key Issues for action
Mrs. K. Berry	Lay inspector		Pupils' welfare, health and safety
			Partnership with parents and carers
Mrs. V. Birkett	Team inspector	English	
		Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	
		Special educational needs	
Mr. A. Markham	Team inspector	Mathematics	Leadership and management
		Information technology	
Mr. A. Scott	Team inspector	Geography	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
		History	
		Equality of opportunity	
Mr. M. Wainwright	Team inspector	Science	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
		Design and technology	
Mrs. V. Wilson	Team inspector	Art	
		Music	
		Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage	

The inspection contractor was:

Power House Inspections

Grasshoppers
1 Anglesey Close
Chasetown
Burntwood
Staffordshire
WS7 8XA

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Highfield Hall Primary School is situated in the Newbold district of Chesterfield, Derbyshire. The locality nearest to the school is one with council properties and some private and rented houses. There are 380 pupils in the main school and 52 children who attend the nursery on a part time basis. At the time of the inspection 26 children in reception were under five. Children are admitted to the nursery after their third birthday and into the reception unit in the term when they reach their fifth birthday. Nearly all pupils speak English as a first language. All those pupils who speak English as an additional language do so competently and receive no additional support. 20% of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is broadly similar to the national average. 96 pupils and one child based in the nursery unit have been identified as having special educational needs. 12 have statements of special educational needs. These figures are above the national average. On entry to the school the children generally have an attainment that is similar to most of their age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school, which provides an impressive level of care for its pupils and makes effective provision for all aspects of personal development. There has been a good level of development since the last inspection in many aspects of school life. However, there is a need to raise standards further at Key Stage 2 in some subjects. Standards at Key Stage 1 are generally similar to those seen nationally. Standards in English are improving. Overall, teaching is satisfactory and there is a significant amount that is good. The school is well led and managed by an energetic head teacher who works closely and effectively with staff and governors. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in mathematics and at the end of the key stage attain standards that are above national averages.
- There is a very good partnership with parents that is evident in positive relationships, the well organised contribution of parent-volunteers within the school and the very high quality of information that parents receive.
- There is high quality provision for pupils' personal development that successfully promotes good attitudes, behaviour and personal relationships.
- Procedures for enabling pupils' care, welfare and protection and for supporting their personal and academic progress are good.
- The effective leadership of the headteacher and key staff has enabled the school to make a good rate of improvement since the last inspection.
- There is very good quality of support and mentoring for teachers new to the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in information technology at the end of both key stages, and in English, science and religious education at the end of Key Stage 2, are not high enough.
- The expectations of some teachers at Key Stage 2 are not high enough.
- Lesson planning for most subjects does not give enough attention to providing activities that are carefully matched to pupils' prior learning and achievements.
- Pupils do not record their findings in science in a systematic form, and sometimes it is unclear what they have learnt from an activity.
- Teachers have insufficient subject knowledge in information technology and religious education.
- The scheme of work for religious education does not provide teachers with sufficient detail at Key Stage 2 to ensure they meet the required standards.
- The scheme of work for information technology is incomplete and there is insufficient equipment for the subject to be taught effectively.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school, which was last inspected during May 1996, has had to deal with some major areas for improvement and has made good progress in doing so. But there is still a need to raise standards further. Since the previous inspection, the quality of education provided for children who are under five has improved and there is a good level of liaison between the nursery and reception. The behaviour of pupils around the school is now good. Lunchtime supervisors are well trained and lunch and break times are now pleasant and sociable. Subject schemes of work have been provided for all subjects. In the last inspection considerable variation was noted in the quality of teaching across the school; this is not now the case, although teaching in some classes in Key Stage 2 still needs to improve. There has been a general improvement in the level of resourcing for most subjects. Teaching time has been reviewed and adjustments made to the organisation of the school day. The toilet facilities have been improved and the school is now a secure place.

STANDARDS

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

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

The overall trend is one of improvement in results in the national tests at a similar rate to that seen nationally. In 1999 the number of pupils achieving higher levels in mathematics was close to the national average. Over four years, girls achieved slightly better than boys in English and mathematics; this is similar to the national picture. During the inspection higher standards than those achieved in the tests were observed in mathematics where attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was judged to be in line with national averages. Attainment in English was found to be below national averages at the end of both key stages because not enough pupils achieve the required standards in writing. Attainment in

reading at the end of Key Stage 2 is similar to the national standard. Attainment in science was found to be below national averages at Key Stage 2. In 1999 attainments in the end of Key Stage 1 tests were generally higher than those of pupils taken the tests at the end of Key Stage 2. However, the pupils taking the tests at the end of Key Stage 2, included a high percentage of pupils who entered the school during the key stage, many of whom had special educational needs. Pupils achieve well in art at Key Stage 2. Achievements in history and geography are low in both key stages and in music at Key Stage 2. Children who are under five make a secure start to their education and by the time they are five most of them have reached the level of attainment required nationally for children of this age. Pupils who have special educational needs receive effective support and make good progress.

The targets set by the school for attainment in test results at the end of both key stages are based on teachers' knowledge of the pupils and their performance in various assessments during their time in school. Results from the 2000 tests confirm the improving trend and indicate that generally the school has met or exceeded its targets. Overall, pupils throughout the school are making satisfactory progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to learn, they listen carefully to their teachers, and are fully engaged in interesting lessons. Sometimes there is a lack of care taken in the presentation of their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Occasional aggressive incidents are dealt with very effectively by teachers or supervisors.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships within the school are good. Pupils support each other well. Pupils show good levels of initiative.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The attendance rate is similar to the national average. Most pupils arrive at school punctually every day

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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.

During the week of the inspection teaching was satisfactory or better in 96% of lessons. It was very good or better in 10% of lessons and good in 47%. Four per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. The best lessons were carefully planned, teaching was lively and pupils of all abilities were challenged. In the unsatisfactory lessons, planning did not give sufficient attention matching tasks to pupils' learning needs and teachers' expectations of what pupils can do were not high enough. In these lessons pupils did not make reasonable progress. The teaching of numeracy was good at both key stages. Teachers have a good understanding of the demands of the Numeracy Strategy and particularly good use is made of the initial mental mathematics session. Overall the teaching of the Literacy Strategy was satisfactory. Generally pupils' learning is satisfactory. When suitably challenged they show

a high level of interest in their work, try hard and concentrate well. When teaching is undemanding they make less effort and do not acquire new skills and understanding to the same extent.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for children who are under five is good. It is satisfactory for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. Provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is good. Pupils are very well supported by experienced staff who enable them to participate fully in the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for all aspects of personal development is good. Pupils are given many opportunities to be socially responsible, they are taught the difference between right and wrong. Pupils' own culture and that of others is celebrated in many aspects of the curriculum.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are effective procedures in place for the care and protection of pupils. Pupils are well supervised at lunch times. Pupils' academic performance is monitored effectively.

The school has a very effective partnership with parents and the local community as indicated by the good number of parents who work voluntarily within the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The head teacher provides energetic leadership and manages the school well. She is supported capably by an efficient deputy head teacher and hard working senior team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	There is an effective governing body that has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The evaluation of the school's improvement targets is good. There is increasing use of test data to evaluate pupils' academic achievements. Co-ordinators monitor their subjects well.
The strategic use of resources	Staff, time and resources are generally used satisfactorily. Constraints on space make it difficult for pupils to have regular access to the school library. The school has clear and efficient procedures in place to provide best value when considering the acquisition and use of resources and services.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are making good progress. • Parents are made to feel welcome, and feel comfortable approaching the school with problems. • The school is well led and managed • Behaviour is good. • Their children are being well taught 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents thought that arrangements for homework were inconsistent. • A few parents thought their children were not challenged sufficiently. • Parents were concerned about the large classes and the cramped nature of some of the accommodation.

The inspectors agreed with most of the good points the parents made. Pupils' progress was judged to be satisfactory. There is a detailed homework policy and a booklet of guidance. Nothing was noted during the week to support the parents' concerns about the provision of homework at Key Stage 2. The inspection team took the view that in the better lessons, pupils of all abilities, including the more able, were provided with an appropriate level of challenge. The inspection team noted that some of the classes at Key Stage 2 have over 30 pupils in them. The school cannot currently accommodate more classes and is making the most rational use of its teaching staff and support staff who give additional help in classrooms. The inspection team agrees that accommodation is limited and this impacts particularly on aspects of English teaching. The need to provide accommodation for small groups for additional literacy work means that the library is rarely accessible for pupils to undertake independent research. Various public areas of the building have to be used that are not best suited to accommodate small groups.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. When pupils enter the nursery, their attainment is similar to that generally seen for their age. The nursery provides children with a wide range of experiences, which cover the main areas of learning for children under five. Children join the reception unit in the term in which they reach their fifth birthday. In both nursery and reception children make good progress in their personal and social development and satisfactory progress in all other areas of learning. By the time they are five most children have reached the level of attainment required nationally for children of this age in all areas of learning. In both nursery and reception unit teachers assess and plan for children's differing needs and monitor their progress carefully. They share their findings and this ensures that children have a smooth transition from nursery to reception. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection when there was very little liaison between the two units.

2. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests taken towards the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils' results were in line with the national averages in reading, above the national averages in writing and below national averages in mathematics. When compared to the results of similar schools, they were above average in reading, well above average in writing and average in mathematics. The results showed a wide range of attainment, ranging from a few pupils who were still working towards level 1 in reading, writing and mathematics to above average numbers of pupils achieving higher levels in reading and mathematics and very high numbers achieving higher levels in writing. Between 1996 and 1999 attainment in reading tests were higher every year. In writing, results declined until 1998 with considerable improvement in 1999. In mathematics, results improved from 1996 to 1998. There was a slight decline in 1999. In the science teacher assessments pupils' results were broadly in line with the national average.

3. Evidence from the inspection confirms this improvement in standards in reading and mathematics. This is due to the positive impact of the literacy and numeracy strategies and the benefits of teaching numeracy and literacy in Year 2 in classes organised by pupils' ability. Overall, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in English is similar to the national average and attainment in mathematics is above the national average. Attainment in science at the end of the key stage is similar to the national averages.

4. The 1999 National Curriculum tests taken towards the end of Key Stage 2 show that standards in English and mathematics were below the national average and in science they were well below the national average. In comparison with similar schools standards were well below in English, below in science and in line in mathematics. The findings of the inspection are that pupils have raised their standards in mathematics in which attainment is now in line with the national average. In English, although overall standards are still below the national average, there have been improvements in reading. In science, standards seen during the inspection were below the national average at the end of the Key Stage 2. Although the general trend in improvement is similar to the national averages, English and mathematics results declined from 1996 to 1998 then show improvement to 1999; whilst in science, standards improved up to 1998 then declined slightly in 1999.

5. The standards attained at the end of Key Stage 1 are not maintained at the end of Key Stage 2. A high number of pupils in Key Stage 2 are admitted to the school during the key stage and have fragmented educational experiences. In 1999 28% of pupils taking the National Tests did not attend the school in Key Stage 1. There was also a high level of pupils with special educational needs in that year group. Additionally, the pace of learning in Key Stage 2 is most variable. Although the progress made at Key Stage 1 is built on in Year 3, for some pupils in Years 4 and 5 progress is slower. At Key Stage 2, there is variability in the quality of the teaching in English. In Year 6, the quality of teaching and the pace of learning improves for most pupils. In the case of science, through most of Key Stage 2, teaching too frequently does not built on the achievements of Key Stage 1, although teachers at Year 6 work hard to cover programmes of study to a reasonable level.

6. In 1999, at the end of Key Stage 1, the boys' results in reading were higher than the girls'. This is against the national trend. All other results at the end of both key stages were similar to the national trend. The school monitors the relative performance of boys and girls and looks at its practice critically in order to provide equality of opportunity. No significant differences between the attainments of boys and girls were noted during the inspection.

7. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils listen carefully and speak clearly. They read competently and use a reasonable range of strategies to read unknown words. They can describe the story and characters of the books they have read. Most pupils can write simple stories, in sentences with simple punctuation. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the key stage building on their skills and knowledge consistently.

8. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils listen attentively and speak with increasing confidence. They use a reasonable range of vocabulary accurately. Progress in reading throughout the key stage is satisfactory and attainment in reading is in line with national standards. By the end of the key stage they read accurately and with discrimination. Pupils have benefited from the introduction of the literacy strategy and the various arrangements that are in place throughout the key stage to improve the standard of reading. The youngest and oldest pupils in Key Stage 2 make satisfactory progress in writing. However, progress slows for some pupils in Years 4 and 5. By the end of the key stage standards in writing are slightly below national averages because not enough pupils reach the expected levels. Just over half the pupils are able to produce extended and interesting pieces of writing with a precise use of vocabulary and awareness of the audience they are writing for. They punctuate and spell with reasonable accuracy. However, although many other pupils are able to achieve this standard from time to time and in shorter pieces of writing, they do not reach the expected standard consistently.

9. In mathematics pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 1 and by the end of the key stage most pupils handle numbers competently. They have a wide mathematical vocabulary, which they use correctly, and a good understanding of shapes, measurement and fractions. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout Key Stage 2 and by the end of the key stage are attaining standards that are in line with the national average. There has been a good level of improvement in standards in mathematics and this is due to the positive impact of the numeracy strategy and the close monitoring of and improvement in the quality of teaching. By the end of the key stage most pupils have good number skills which they are able to apply successfully to puzzling out mental mathematics problems. Higher attaining pupils are able to solve complex problems involving ratio and proportion. Pupils with special educational needs receive a good level of support and this is helping them to develop good skills in number, decimals and fractions.

10. Pupils make satisfactory progress in science throughout Key Stage 1 and by end of

the key stage they have a reasonable understanding of all the required programmes of study. They are particularly knowledgeable about life processes. They are able to make observations and record their findings carefully. This rate of progress is not maintained at Key Stage 2 because insufficient attention is given to teaching pupils how to tackle investigative activities and record their findings systematically. Better progress has been made in Year 6 but by end of the key stage the level of pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding are generally below the national average.

11. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with local expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and below this standard at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education at Key Stage 1 but this is not maintained at Key Stage 2. At the end of Key Stage 1 they have a good knowledge for their age of Christianity and this is built on appropriately in Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 2 knowledge and understanding of this aspect of religious education is thorough. However, knowledge and understanding of other major faiths is not addressed at Key Stage 2 in sufficient depth to fulfil the requirements of the agreed syllabus.

12. At the time of the last inspection progress in information technology was found to be unsatisfactory at both key stages and attainment at the end of the key stages was below national expectations. This is still the case. Pupils do not receive a wide enough experience of information technology to meet the required standards; there are insufficient resources and many teachers lack the necessary subject expertise.

13. Progress in history and geography are unsatisfactory at both key stages and pupils do not achieve a satisfactory standard. Pupils do not have the opportunities to develop the skills to research and use geographical and historical evidence to a reasonable level. Because of timetable arrangements, too much time sometimes elapses between topics that focus on history and geography through the year. Thus it is difficult for pupils to build on prior attainment and make the progress of which they are capable.

14. In art, pupils at Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress. Progress at Key Stage 2 is good and pupils achieve high standards both in their own work and in their knowledge and understanding of the work of significant artists. Progress in music is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 but pupils in Key Stage 2 make little progress because teachers lack sufficient expertise and some feel insecure about teaching music. In design and technology and physical education pupils' progress is satisfactory at both key stages.

15. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the effective support they are given and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Progress for one pupil was so marked that he no longer requires the protection of a statement. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their fellow pupils because they are fully bi-lingual.

16. The school sets pupils' targets for achievement throughout the school and for attainments in national tests at the end of both key stages. Pupils' individual targets are recorded in the back of their exercise books so they are constantly reminded of what they are aiming for. The targets set for performance in the 2000 national tests take account of pupils' individual progress, their performance in various tests undertaken through the school and the school's earlier achievements in the national tests. Targets for 2000, have mainly been exceeded at the end of Key Stage 1 except in spelling where the target of 64% at level 2 was not met. At the end of Key Stage 2 test scores in 2000 for English and science are higher than at the end of 1999. Overall, although attainment in reading meets its target,

the overall target for English is not met. The targets set for mathematics and science have been exceeded. These scores confirm the overall picture of one of improving standards since 1996.

17. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to implement the requirements of the literacy and numeracy strategies and this has had a positive impact on standards in mathematics and in many aspects of English. However, the pace of improvement has not been so marked in other subjects. The school is aware of where there are deficiencies and is taking action to address these shortcomings as a major part of the school's three year programme of improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

18. Pupils have good attitudes towards their work. They listen well to their teachers and show interest in lesson activities and new learning. For example, pupils often concentrate hard to improve their skills in group reading sessions. They also derive pleasure from their concentration as when they learn a new technique in art. They are especially focused when involved in practical activities like mental mathematics or a science investigation. They can be enthusiastic when they sing during music lessons, but singing in assemblies sometimes lacks sparkle. Pupils sometimes strive hard to produce neat and careful work, but this is not always the case. At times, they lack a sense of urgency and determination when producing written work.

19. Pupils' behaviour both in and out of class is good. This shows an improvement from the last inspection. Behaviour is very good in classes where the teachers provide inspiring work and have high expectations of commitment from the pupils. In these classes, the self-discipline and co-operation of the pupils enable teachers to work with small groups without the need for constant supervision. Their keenness to participate in some lessons is tempered by a sense of responsibility. For example, despite their eagerness to perform in music lessons, they handle musical instruments carefully and respectfully. However, occasionally pupils allow themselves to become too excited and their noise level can be too high, which distracts other pupils from work. At break times and lunch times, pupils play together happily and productively. They get together to play all kinds of games and are considerate when games overlap, for example, or when a younger pupil needs help. Occasionally, pupils are unduly aggressive in their play and this can lead to fractious behaviour. There were three fixed term exclusions during the school year prior to the inspection.

20. There are good relationships throughout the school. Teachers work hard to develop a good rapport with pupils in the classroom and engender an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. Teachers value pupils' contributions in class activities and show sensitivity if they have personal difficulties. As a result, pupils are relaxed and earnest in class, and are happy to respond to their teachers' expectations. This was seen in a religious education lesson, in which pupils felt comfortable about speaking of their own feelings. Pupils also get on well with each other. They work well in groups during lessons, and are happy to listen and swap advice. For example, they support one another when working in paired activities in physical education lessons and collaborate sensibly when composing songs in music.

21. Pupils are responsible and show good levels of initiative. For example, at lunch times, Year 6 pupils answer the school telephone in the temporary absence of the school secretary. Other senior pupils are on duty in the Key Stage 1 playground to respond to the needs of the younger pupils. Some Year 6 pupils coach Year 2 pupils at football and, when the Year 6 pupils are not available, Year 5 pupils step in as efficient substitutes. Older

pupils encourage good behaviour around the corridors and cloakrooms of the school, and they help younger pupils eat their lunch. During English lessons, pupils in Year 5 pair up to improve reading, with confident readers helping other pupils to improve their skills. Pupils are keen to suggest new activities at school, such as basketball and croquet. They raise funds for such charities as the RSPCA¹ and Greenpeace². The school has hosted children from Byelorussia on a visit to the United Kingdom.

22. Attendance is satisfactory and broadly in line with national averages. Pupils generally arrive on time and settle down to their lessons quickly. Parents and pupils appreciate the visibility of the headteacher as they arrive in a morning and respond with a friendly word and a smile.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. At the time of the last inspection there was a considerable variability noted in the quality of teaching with 25% of lessons seen being judged as unsatisfactory. Since the last inspection the school has worked very hard to address the causes of this high level of unsatisfactory teaching with considerable success. The provision of useful documentation for most subjects, the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies and the improved level of resourcing in many subjects have had positive impact on the overall quality of teaching. However, the school does not yet have an entirely efficient lesson planning format for subjects other than mathematics and some staff do not always conform to the school's marking policy.

24. Taking account of the quality of teaching observed during the week of the inspection, the findings of the scrutiny of pupils' work and of teachers' planning, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The teaching at Key Stage 1 is slightly better than at Key Stage 2 but not to the same extent as at the time of the last inspection. 13% of lessons at Key Stage 1 were judged to be very good or excellent, with 10% at Key Stage 2 being judged very good. The main reasons for this difference are that teachers' expectations tend to be higher at Key Stage 1, lesson planning is more consistently useful and so teaching methods employed are more effective, overall 10% of teaching was very good or better, 47% of teaching was good, 39% was satisfactory with 4% being unsatisfactory.

25. Teaching for children who are under five both in nursery and reception is good. During the week of the inspection 75% of the teaching was good or better and no teaching was unsatisfactory. The teachers and the nursery nurse have a very good understanding of the children's needs. The nursery and reception units' staff plan separately for children's development in all the required areas of learning but work closely together in sharing the results of their assessment of children's differing learning needs. Staff keep good and frequent checks on children's achievements so that progress is closely monitored. The very effective class management strategies used in reception create a good atmosphere in which children are very clear about the teacher's expectations. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection when lack of liaison between the two units was a cause for concern.

26. Throughout the school the level of teachers' subject knowledge and understanding is satisfactory. In some subjects, such as mathematics and art at Key Stage 2, it is good. In religious education at Key Stage 2 and in information technology throughout the school it is

¹ Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

² Greenpeace - an international organisation concerned with the general conservation and safety of the environment.

unsatisfactory. Where teachers have sufficient subject expertise this enables them to extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding effectively. This is particularly the case in mathematics where the high quality of teaching throughout the school has been instrumental in raising standards at both key stages. In a very good numeracy lesson at Key Stage 2, the teacher's good subject knowledge was evident in her confident and lively teaching style. Sharp questioning of pupils during the introductory mental mathematics element of the lesson kept all the pupils on their toes. They responded well enjoying the demands that were being made on them. A very good pace of learning was further promoted by the teacher's ongoing feedback to pupils about how well they were progressing. The pupils acquired a good level of understanding of decimal numbers related to money and applied this successfully to the number problems they were set. Where teachers lack a reasonable level of subject expertise, such as in music, they are not always able to ensure that pupils are working at an appropriate level. When this happens pupils make insufficient progress.

27. The teaching of numeracy is good; lessons are carefully planned and good attention is given to improving pupils' skills in mental mathematics. Teachers identify the correct mathematical terms and these are included in their planning and emphasised within the lesson. In a good lesson in Year 1, the teacher reminded the pupils of the term "consecutive numbers" and then encouraged them to use it as they ordered 2 digit numbers in a mental maths activity. Lessons are usually well balanced between the mental activity and follow up group tasks. Frequently mental activities proceed at a good pace. However, sometimes this is not maintained during the group task, when activities do not challenge pupils sufficiently because tasks are repetitive or too easy and do not make the same level of demand on them as the earlier part of the lesson.

28. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory. Teachers have a good understanding of the requirements of the literacy strategy. They have good relationships with pupils and manage the pupils well. Lessons are planned in outline for the half term and these plans give a useful overview of the work to be covered. More detailed weekly plans are then devised. The usefulness of these plans is limited because teachers do not use their recent assessment of pupils' progress to inform the level of the activities they plan. This is particularly the case at Key Stage 2. The organisation of additional literacy support for some pupils in Years 3 and 4 is having a positive impact on these pupils' reading and writing. A particularly effective feature of the teaching of literacy is in the Year 3 and 4 class where additional group reading takes place on a daily basis. This gives pupils extra opportunities to work at texts in ability based groups with the class teacher and for independent and shared reading. The class teacher ensures that the texts assigned to each group are well matched to their prior ability. In a session during the inspection a group of higher ability Year 3 pupils were observed interpreting advertising materials from a range of supermarkets. They were required to identify the persuasive language and to comment on how effective they thought it was. The teacher's searching questions and the demanding nature of the text challenged the pupils well. They particularly enjoyed puzzling out the double meanings of the puns. They made good progress in acquiring additional vocabulary and in understanding how language can be used persuasively in advertising. However, not all lessons at Key Stage 2 are so demanding; sometimes, although teaching is thorough, the pace is leisurely. When this is the case, although pupils make gains in their learning, they could be challenged to do more in the time.

29. Most teachers' plans identify broad objectives for learning and in the better lessons at both key stages these are made clear to the pupils. However, frequently teachers' planning of practical tasks for pupils lacks detail and does not take account of their earlier progress and what they are capable of. This was evident during the inspection in science. A very good example of lesson planning was seen for a Year 6 lesson where tasks were well adjusted to previously assessed levels of understanding. However, the planning for the majority of science lessons observed during the inspection confined itself to a brief outline of the lesson activity and follow up tasks. Where careful lesson planning ensures a precise match between the work and pupils' ability, gains in learning are made. Where the match is not so precise sometimes not enough is asked of pupils. In a very successful and well-planned science lesson at years 6 the pupils commented "challenging tasks are interesting."

30. Expectations of what pupils can achieve at Key Stage 1 are generally satisfactory and sometimes high. At Key Stage 2 the picture is more variable. Where expectations are high, teachers conduct whole-class teaching sessions at a brisk pace, sometimes targeting their questions to particular pupils to ensure that all are involved and concentrating. Sometimes teachers show high expectations during the introductory part of a lesson, but do not extend this to their expectations of how much pupils can achieve or understand when they are working at group or individual tasks. Lessons that start off with great promise and at a brisk pace sometimes decline because follow up activities are not as demanding as they could be. Evidence from the scrutiny of work showed that some teachers accept work from pupils that is presented poorly, with no suggestion in the marking that presentation needs to be improved. Low expectations were also evident in the overuse of simple work sheets that did little to consolidate or extend the pupils' understanding. This was particularly the case in English and science at Key Stage 2 and history and geography at both key stages. High expectations were evident in the science books of pupils in Year 2 when more challenging tasks were set for the higher attainers and the marking was very helpful to pupils.

31. Throughout the school teachers manage pupils well. They establish positive and productive relationships with their pupils. The well-established behaviour policy is usually implemented consistently by all teachers. Children in nursery and reception soon understand the standards of behaviour that are expected of them. Generally, pupils of all ages work well without direct intervention and support each other when difficulties arise. On those occasions when class management is not as successful, it is usually because the pupils are not entirely engaged with what they are required to do or because the teacher does not insist on the usual high standards of attention that were generally noted.

32. The use of assessment is better for children who are under five and at Key Stage 1 than at Key Stage 2. Teachers generally support pupils well in lessons, and intervene appropriately if pupils are having difficulties. When pupils find the work too easy or finish their work with time to spare they are not always provided with additional work that will extend them further. In the better physical education lessons, teachers use pupils' work well to exemplify high achievement. Particularly good examples of careful marking were seen in English in Year 6, in which marking was very precise, identified exactly what needed to be done and provided targets for improvement. The impact of this careful marking was evident in the noticeable improvement in the quality of written work as the school year progressed. However, the marking of pupils' work is not always satisfactory. Although teachers usually acknowledge the accuracy of pupils' work clearly they do not always identify what pupils need to do to improve.

33. Time is used satisfactorily. Lessons start briskly after registration and the changeover of ability sets at Key Stage 2 is accomplished efficiently. However, sometimes the brisk pace of learning is not maintained throughout the lesson. Resources are generally used well. They are accessible to pupils and available from the start of the lesson. When teachers have additional support they manage this very well. Support staff and volunteer helpers are well briefed before the lesson and are clear about its intention and the role they play. The quality of support given by staff and volunteers is good and makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning.

34. Pupils with special educational needs benefit considerably from additional support which enables them to participate fully in lessons and to make good progress toward the targets in their individual education plans. Teachers take good account of their needs during literacy sessions ensuring they are seated where they will gain maximum benefit from the class teaching session. They adjust their questioning to suit pupils' particular needs. All pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans. These are rather variable in quality; some are not as specific as they need to be to enable teachers to accurately plan suitable tasks for pupils.

35. Teachers make satisfactory use of homework. All pupils take home reading, spellings and mathematical challenges such as learning number bonds and tables. From time to time other activities are set, which link well with pupils' current learning.

36. Overall, pupils learn at a satisfactory rate. The pace of learning is very closely linked to the quality of teaching. Children who are under five in nursery and reception acquire new skills and understanding at a good rate because overall the quality of teaching is good and teachers have high expectations of what these children are capable of. Pupils learn at a steady pace through Key Stage 1 and by the time they are seven they are generally achieving at a standard that is broadly in line with that seen nationally. In mathematics they achieve standards higher than this. However the pace of learning varies at Key Stage 2 and slows for some pupils at Years 4 and 5.

37. Some parents at the parents' meeting and in their responses to the questionnaires completed before the inspection expressed concern over whether higher attaining pupils were sufficiently challenged. The inspection team found that the picture was a mixed one. Certainly all pupils, including the higher attainers, benefit from the organisation of literacy and numeracy teaching into ability based groups. In the teaching of other subjects the level of challenge is very much linked to the general quality of teaching and the curriculum that is offered. Where teachers have good subject expertise and plan their lessons carefully, they tend to challenge the higher attainers more effectively. In art at Key Stage 2, for example, there is a good level of expertise and standards are high. However, in music and religious education, where subject expertise is lacking, there is not the same level of challenge built into lessons.

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

38. Provision for children under the age of five is good and meets statutory requirements. The curriculum provided in Key Stages 1 and 2 is, overall, satisfactory although the school has identified concerns about some lack of coverage in science and has taken steps to rectify this. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects of the National Curriculum except in information technology. The requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are being met at Key Stage 1 but are not met fully at Key Stage 2. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily. There has

been good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy so that pupils' skills in numeracy are reflected in other areas of the curriculum. However the emphasis on these has been to the detriment of some other subjects. Topic-based planning provides some good cross-curricular links, between science and design and technology, for example. There has, however, been insufficient attention given in the medium and short term planning to provide the depth of coverage needed for pupils to make the best progress. This has been recognised and is being rectified. The previous inspection noted a lack of schemes of work for most subjects. This is not now the case and reflects satisfactory progress. In current planning, due regard is paid to national initiatives and to Curriculum 2000. In addition there is a raised awareness of provision for pupils' social and personal development. Co-ordinators have been appointed and a policy is being drawn up for personal, social and health education and citizenship. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. Needs are identified and due account of them is taken in planning.

39. Extra-curricular provision is satisfactory and a number of opportunities are available to pupils at lunchtime and after school, including sport, crafts and drama. Pupils seen rehearsing for the current drama production apply themselves well, know their lines and are very enthusiastic, encouraged by the number of teachers involved. All pupils have full and equal access to the curriculum. A good feature is the way in which teachers often organise groups so that pupils with special educational needs work closely with higher-attaining pupils, with very positive outcomes. There are good links with the local secondary schools and pupils are heard discussing recent induction visits. Opportunities are available to make use of some of the secondary schools' facilities such as the computer suite. The school also links effectively with a local university. Community links are also good and the school is very much a 'community school', noted in the very active and effective links with parents. There is involvement with the Highfield Community Project and with the local tennis and swimming clubs and with a local "Football in the Community" project that involves both boys and girls. Pupils visit museums and frequent visitors to school enhance pupils' knowledge of the locality and people. The swimming pool is used by outside groups and raises revenue for the school.

40. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The school holds an assembly daily, either for the whole school or for infants or juniors. Moments for personal reflection are always included. There is a list of forthcoming assemblies available, which suggests how the assembly themes may be linked to the curriculum. All staff are aware of the importance of spiritual development and have provided opportunities for spiritual development in many areas. In English, for example, pupils are encouraged to use writing as a way of expressing emotions and inner feelings.

41. The school is effective in its promotion of moral values. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong, and show respect and concern for other pupils. Their relationships with all staff, supervisors and visitors are good. The school rules are clearly exhibited in classrooms and teachers have high expectations of how pupils should behave. Pupils are treated with respect and sensitivity. There is an effective behaviour and discipline policy in place and parents are also made aware of the school rules.

42. There are opportunities provided for pupils to become socially responsible. A group of boys in assembly thanked other pupils for tidying up the playground and another boy received a certificate for helping regularly in the dining room canteen. Year 6 pupils shared with the school how much they had enjoyed their induction day at their new secondary school. Pupils are given the opportunity to attend a residential week, as well as all classes having planned educational visits during the year that are linked to the topics they are

studying.

43. The school promotes cultural development well. Pupils may participate in a drama club and visits to places of cultural interest. They learn about notable artists in art and encounter a good range of poetry and children's literature in English. There is effective provision for pupils to learn about cultures other than their own. The library has a good selection of books giving pupils the chance to explore different cultures and religions. There are opportunities provided to appreciate music, and a display of artwork reflected African culture and tradition. Pupils cook food popular in other countries, and make Chinese dragons

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. This aspect of the school's provision is good and has remained consistent since the last inspection with improvements in some areas. Weaknesses in health and safety and concern at the poor state of repair of the toilet blocks have been addressed successfully.

45. Parents are happy with the level of care given to their children and the approachability of the staff. Inspection findings during the week would echo this view and further commend the school for the progress made in playtime provision and welfare supervision. Lunchtimes particularly are well structured with staff fully involved in organising games and activities. Child protection, accident and medical procedures are well established and efficient. Safety is a priority to which all adults and the pupils themselves pay particular attention.

46. The school is secure and the identification of visitors a daily routine. However, this does not detract from the welcome the school provides or the high profile of parents and other visiting agencies in the school.

47. Consistent promotion of good behaviour and discipline contributes to the positive relationships and the low incidence of aggressive or unsociable behaviour. Detailed records of behavioural and attendance concerns play an important part in the monitoring of individual performance and development.

48. The school has developed effective strategies for monitoring pupils' academic performance. The national tests are completed in accord with statutory requirements. Trends are analysed over years and good use of the information is made to help the setting of school targets for improvement linked to the national requirement. Test results have also been analysed by teachers to determine needs in literacy and numeracy, resulting in the setting of targets for pupils. Both key stage co-ordinators collect data on all pupils. This is maintained as an ongoing record of pupils' performance, which is used to support the tracking of pupils and the determining of appropriate action. Pupils' progress is monitored through tests. Teachers carry these out each half term and this data is also collected and analysed to identify areas of weakness. For example, information has been used successfully to identify the need to improve the performance of boys relative to girls in English. A positive feature has been the sharing of these targets with pupils by displaying them inside the pupils' exercise books.

49. Pupils who have special educational needs are well supported. The school's commitment to these pupils' is evident in the high level and quality of the support they receive and the appropriate work that is usually provided for them.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. The vast majority of parents are fully behind the work of the school and the support given to their children. They particularly value the openness of the staff, the welcome they receive as well as the opportunity to be listened to and involved.

51. The partnership between home and school and the relationships that have developed is a strength of the school. The headteacher has been a major driving force in this area, making herself visible and above all available. Parents are fully informed of all that is happening and particularly value the 'Thursday Newsletter' to catch up on events. All aspects of communication with parents and outside support agencies are another major feature of a normal school day.

52. There are three opportunities a year for parents to discuss their children's progress in a more formal setting as well as a clear and detailed annual report. From time to time parents have the opportunity to find out more about how the school organises the teaching of aspects of the curriculum. For example, literacy, numeracy and science evenings were all well attended. The school actively involves parents in their children's education through homework and family reading sessions as well as the opportunity to participate in the Better Reading Partnership. Many parents take advantage of the opportunity to accompany their children into classrooms prior to the morning session to share a book or look at their work.

53. The Home/School Agreements have formalised what was already happening and highlight the co-operation of parents in their children's learning.

54. The high profile of parents and other adults as volunteer helpers is very impressive. They are well targeted to support the curriculum within the classroom or if they wish, choose to give of their time in other ways. A number of volunteers run a popular weekly Toy Library which links the under fives with the younger pupils in the main school.

55. The Parent, Teacher and Friends Association remains proactive in organising fund raising activities and social events for extra funds for specific resources. The Parents' Forum is another opportunity for parents to meet the staff to express their hopes and concerns and enable them to have an input into the school.

56. The school's very good relationship with parents has a significant impact on provision for special educational needs. Parents feel that their children are well supported. They are encouraged to come into school to help and know that their assistance is valued. Parents are appropriately informed about their pupils' place on the special needs register and always invited to reviews.

57. This ever improving partnership between home and school is now well established and contributing to pupils' learning through friendly co-operation and stable relationships.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior management team are good. They have a clear vision for the school, which is shared by its staff and the governing body. The senior management team and governors have a clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are strongly committed to ensuring that pupils' attainment is improved in line with the school's aims. The school lays great stress on ensuring equal opportunity for all pupils and expectations of behaviour are high. The headteacher has developed an effective team approach within the school through her strong, professional leadership. Responsibilities have been clearly delegated and all staff are involved in developing the work of the school. The school has a positive ethos and relationships within the school are good. There is a happy, supportive atmosphere, which is enabling both teachers and pupils to improve their performance and raise the standards of the work of the school.

59. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities effectively. It manages its affairs efficiently and there is an appropriate committee structure that ensures everyone is kept informed. Members have been designated to take a special interest in aspects of the school's work such as the provision for pupils with special educational needs and the implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. The chair of governors has a good working relationship with the headteacher and a good grasp of the issues that the school is working to develop. As a result the governors have a well-informed awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors are satisfactorily involved in the formulation of the school development plan, which is a detailed document and sets clear targets for improvement. Success criteria are clearly stated and the time scale of actions is clear. Co-ordinators prepare detailed plans, which further develop the actions specified in the school development document. The governors and headteacher share the clear vision for the direction of the school and have appropriate long-term goals. The issues from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. The governing body is fulfilling most of its statutory duties. However, requirements for the information technology curriculum and religious education at Key Stage 2 are not fully met.

60. The school has a clear policy and procedures for school self-evaluation and staff performance review. These procedures are well developed. Co-ordinators monitor their subjects well and have a clear awareness of the strengths and weaknesses in their respective subjects. They draw up reports, which form an important part of the process of determining priorities for action to be included in the school development plan. The headteacher and co-ordinators examine pupils' work, monitor teachers' planning and carry out observations of teaching. The results of observations of teaching are fed back to teachers and used to develop the individual and set targets for improvement, whilst more global issues are dealt with through training sessions for all staff. The school uses performance review effectively to support the development of teaching. The headteacher has an annual review meeting with each teacher when performance is discussed and future targets for attention are agreed. The governors have set the head teacher performance targets after consultation with the teaching staff.

61. There is good management of special educational needs. The role of co-ordinator is shared by the head teacher and deputy head teacher. This arrangement works well and both co-ordinators deal with administrative matters and liaise with class teachers. They discuss issues as they emerge and give practical advice and support. The monitoring of teaching is linked to the review process and teachers' weekly planning is monitored to

ensure that pupils' individual targets are being taken account of. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is monitored as part of the overall monitoring of teaching.

62. The school makes effective use of data to support the raising of standards. The school has monitored its results in comparison to schools nationally and those with similar characteristics. It is aware of the fact that the rate of improvement in the core subjects will need to increase if standards are to be comparable to similar schools and has taken action in a number of ways to address this situation. Targets are set for pupils and teachers review pupils' performance in discussion with colleagues.

63. The school spends a relatively low percentage of its budget on teaching staff. This is compensated for by the use of a high number of support staff. The number of teaching staff is adequate considering the number of classrooms available to the school but this situation will need to be reviewed if the school is successful in obtaining the extra classrooms it has requested. Staff are deployed effectively. Very good arrangements are in place to assist the induction of newly qualified teachers and staff new to the school. The expertise of individual members of staff is used effectively to develop that of other teachers.

64. Overall, resources for learning are satisfactory. They are well stored, both in classrooms and central storerooms, and accessible and clearly documented. Classroom resources are well organised and labelled. Whilst the number of computers has been increased since the last inspection, the school has no central computer suite and this limits opportunities for whole class teaching of basic computing skills. The school has a library containing reference materials but this is not easily accessible to all pupils. The accommodation is cramped for the number of pupils on roll and the school has been requesting extra classrooms for some time. There are two separate classrooms housed in "Medway buildings" which are in a poor state of repair. The school benefits from having its own swimming pool, which both enables the teaching of swimming to be a strength and also to raise extra finance for the school through lettings to external users out of school time. The school occupies what was once a large country house and is sited in attractive grounds, which provide a pleasing external learning environment for pupils.

65. Financial planning is good and the school is efficiently run. The governors are fully involved in the financial management of the school and this results in a prudent approach to managing the budget, close attention to getting value for money and careful consideration of financial implications in the longer term. The school is applying the principles of best value. It is constantly comparing its work with other schools and seeks best value for money when obtaining services. Whilst the school still uses many services provided by the Local Education Authority, it has contracted its own cleaning services. This has resulted in financial savings and maintained a high quality of cleaning. Co-ordinators have full control of budgets for their area of responsibility and manage them carefully.

66. The school development plan is a comprehensive document and includes costs and success criteria. The links with the school's budget are clear and this results in the successful targeting of resources in accordance with the school's priorities. The school uses its grant money appropriately and augments these with funds from the budget and other sources in line with its priorities. For example the money spent on special educational needs is increased by funds from the budget to provide extra support staff, This ensures good support for special needs pupils and compensates for the low numbers of teachers.

67. Procedures for financial control are clearly documented and efficiently carried out. The school's most recent financial audit was carried out in 1997 and its recommendations have been complied with. The school secretary has been up-graded to the role of administrative officer and deals with the day-to-day features of financial matters very ably. She works well with the headteacher to ensure the efficient management of the budget. The governors' monitor spending closely through monthly financial reports and termly reviews. Good use is made of the information available from the school's computerised management system.

68. Overall, pupils enter the school with levels of attainment that are similar to the standard usually seen for their age. The school promotes a positive ethos, makes good provision for the care and personal development of the pupils. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Although standards in some subjects in Key Stage 2 need to improve, generally standards are rising. The overall quality of the teaching is satisfactory. The financial allocation for educating each pupil is below the national average. In the context of all these factors, the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

69. In order to raise standards further the head teacher, in partnership with the staff and governors should:

- (1) Improve standards at Key Stage 2, particularly in English, science and religious education by:
 - sharing the good practice and high expectations evident in some classes in Key Stage 2 to the benefit of all pupils;
(paragraphs 18, 28, 30, 36, 93, 95, 122)
 - refining the planning of lessons so that the objective of the lesson is always clear and precise, the tasks pupils are given challenge them appropriately, encourage them to use their skills and knowledge independently and do not depend on over-prescriptive worksheets.
(paragraphs 8, 28, 29, 32, 93, 52, 113, 129)
 - In addition, in science by:
 - improving teachers' expertise in science at Key Stage 2,
(paragraph 113)
 - ensuring that pupils record their investigations in a systematic form.
(paragraphs 9, 111)
 - In religious education ensuring that provision at Key Stage 2 meets statutory requirements fully by:
 - improving teachers' expertise in religious education at Key Stage 2;
(paragraphs 26, 155)
 - ensuring that the scheme of work provides sufficient detail to enable all the programmes of study to be taught to the required standard.
(paragraphs 11, 38, 59, 150, 154)
- (2) Improve standards in information technology at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and ensure that provision meets statutory requirements fully by:
 - improving teachers' expertise in those aspects of the subject where this is lacking currently;
(paragraphs 12, 26, 38, 134)
 - completing the scheme of work ensuring that it provides sufficient detail to enable all the programmes of study (including data handling, modelling and control) to be covered in sufficient depth and taught to the required standard.
(paragraphs 137, 138)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

77

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

45

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	9	47	39	4	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 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	380
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	78

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	12
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	96

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	32
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
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	23	18	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	18	18
	Girls	18	15	16
	Total	34	33	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (63)	80 (85)	83 (85)
	National	82 (81)	83 (85)	87 (86)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	18	21
	Girls	16	16	13
	Total	34	34	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (54)	83 (60)	83 (73)
	National	82 (65)	86 (65)	87 (72)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	36	25	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	21	21
	Girls	19	17	18
	Total	37	38	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61	62	65
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	21	21
	Girls	19	17	18
	Total	37	38	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58	68	63
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	5
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	373
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	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	3	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.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	233

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	13.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
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	£
Total income	515 770
Total expenditure	630 419
Expenditure per pupil	1 612
Balance brought forward from previous year	5 622
Balance carried forward to next year	28 261

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	406
Number of questionnaires returned	146

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	43	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	45	4	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	49	5	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	42	11	7	13
The teaching is good.	59	36	2	2	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	43	11	5	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	29	5	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	40	3	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	48	45	5	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	58	38	1	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	45	3	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	47	14	7	12

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

70. Children may be admitted to the school's self-contained nursery unit during the term in which they become four. There are 26 nursery places and children attend either a morning or an afternoon session. A full-time teacher and a well-qualified nursery nurse teach the children until they transfer to one of the reception classes in the school's main building during the term in which they are five.

71. Provision for the children in the nursery and for those in the reception unit, including children with special educational needs is good. The well-balanced curriculum and effective teaching in each of these classes provide good quality learning experiences that are well based on the early learning goals.

72. Since the last inspection early years teachers have worked hard to improve the communication between the nursery and reception classes. A good nursery/reception partnership now exists, with regular visits of staff and children between the two units. These improved liaison arrangements have led to a consistency of learning experiences for the children. Reception teachers build on the good start made in the nursery.

73. When children enter the nursery their levels of ability are generally those expected of children of this age. Staff identify and plan for children's differing needs and they make sound progress. The local education authority's agreed system for initial assessment is applied when children enter the reception class. Teachers make good use of these results to plan purposeful activities to develop children's individual learning needs. They continue to make sound progress. By the age of five most children have reached a level of attainment appropriate for children of this age in all areas of learning.

Personal and social development

74. The children make good progress in this area of their development. In the nursery they play amicably side by side and generally behave very well. Staff organise good quality experiences for children to learn acceptable ways of behaving towards others. They devise suitable ways of developing confidence and self-esteem, such as providing a board where children may display their own work. Older children co-operate well together in their learning activities. Good examples are seen of their working in pairs and in groups. In a reception class lesson children work harmoniously in a very small area in their experiments to find out which objects will roll.

Language and literacy

75. The children make sound progress in speaking and listening and in developing reading and writing skills. Suitable prompting and questioning by nursery staff encourage younger children to talk about what they are doing and to extend their vocabulary. They respond enthusiastically to stories, repeating words such as 'munched' and 'crunched' when re-telling *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and offering the word 'nocturnal' in a discussion about animals. Some children enjoy telling stories to each other from favourite books. They use their voices expressively, pointing to the words as they 'read'. Most children are able to recognise their own names. They practise making patterns and letter shapes in sand before learning to trace with a pencil and then copy letters and words.

76. In the reception class children listen well to the teacher and to each other. They confidently offer suggestions for 'missing words', correcting each other's spelling and use of upper and lower case letters as they complete a shared story about Frisky the lamb. Younger children can recognise letters and identify the initial sounds of words and match them to appropriate pictures. A recent farm visit led to some interesting descriptions of pigs. The older children remembered their smell, behaviour and the size of their litter as they studied photographs of their visit. Some children can write one or two sentences using their list of key words or with help from the teacher. Most children like to read from their reading books, learning with the help of pictures, initial letters or whole word shapes.

77. The teaching of language and literacy for children under five is good. Teachers interact well with the children to develop their language. The teaching of reading and writing in reception is effective.

Mathematical development

78. Progress in learning about number and shape is sound. Children in the nursery use numbers up to ten in the correct sequence in suitable counting rhymes. They practise counting during their daily activities and learn to make comparisons between size and height. Children show that they can select items that do not belong to a particular group by removing a toy penguin and a hippopotamus from a tray of woodland animals. They learn to share when it is pointed out that one child already has two toys, another only has one. Different shaped paper for their drawings in the class animal book is used to help children identify a square, a circle and a triangle.

79. In the reception class children become familiar with numbers up to 100. A session focusing on tens involved them well in recognising and comparing numbers. Children are keen to guess "Is it bigger than 40?" or "Less than 50?" and know that each ends in a zero. They learn to describe and distinguish between different positions, directions and movements. Older children develop skills in rapid addition and subtraction using their fingers. In a lesson about shape they learn to describe three-dimensional shapes and to describe their properties, re-enforcing their learning with practical activities.

80. The teaching of mathematical development is good. Teachers provide a good range of activities for children to practise and consolidate their learning and share the purpose of the lesson with the children.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

81. Children make satisfactory progress in learning about the world in which they live. Their experiences are developed through suitable themes about their senses, seasons, foods, animals and their homes. Nursery children enjoy searching the outside play area to find and identify mini-beasts. They examine their finds through a magnifier and make pictures and models of them. In their play with the farm toys they learn the names for parent and baby animals, such as 'sheep and lamb'. Older children learn about the countryside environment through such experiences as the greatly enjoyed visit to the farm. Children become familiar with suitable computer programs such as 'Dressing Teddy', in which they practise mouse control in matching clothes to fit the appropriate bear or shape.

82. Teachers in both nursery and reception provide pupils with interesting and practical activities for children to develop an understanding of the world around them.

Physical development

83. The children progress satisfactorily in their physical development. Most children develop sound control of writing tools and manipulation of materials during their use of construction toys, sand, dough and clay. Nursery children have the advantage of a secure outside play area, large apparatus and wheeled toys with which to develop their skills. Children in the reception class do not have the same opportunities for outdoor play, but some physical education lessons are held in the playground. Children are able to use the hall for dance and movement on the large apparatus.

84. Teachers ensure that children learn to manage a wide range of small equipment and tools. The nursery staff make good use of the outdoor area to provide opportunities for children to use large apparatus with confidence. Teachers in the reception unit make effective use of the school hall for drama, dance and physical education lessons.

Creative development

85. Children use a suitable range of tools and materials to make colourful and attractive pictures to express their ideas. Stories linked with topic work are developed through children's actions, sounds and movement, as seen in the five year olds' performance of *The Three Little Pigs*. In the nursery children enjoy performing action songs and rhymes. Children in reception choose appropriate percussion instruments to play the actions in *The Bear Hunt*. They recite the words to their musical story. During the inspection there was little observation of activity in this area of learning but photographic evidence indicates that satisfactory progress is made in creative development.

86. Teaching for children who are under five in both in nursery and reception is good. Teachers and nursery nurses have a very good understanding of the children's needs. Lessons are well planned with a good balance between independent and teacher directed activities. Children's progress is effectively monitored and these assessments inform further planning well. The very effective class management strategies used in reception create a good atmosphere in which children are very clear about the teacher's expectations.

87. The nursery class is fortunate in having the benefit of attractive and spacious surroundings and a good supply of very well organised resources for their early learning. Accommodation for children in the reception unit however, is unsatisfactory. There are at present 52 children sharing one classroom and two overflow areas. Teachers manage exceptionally well in these difficult circumstances, but the area is cramped and unsuitable. There is insufficient space for the development of creative or imaginative play and no easy access to an outside play area.

ENGLISH

88. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests taken towards the end of Key Stage 1, standards were in line with the national average and above the standards found in similar schools. However, these standards were not maintained at Key Stage 2. The results of the end of 1999 test indicated that the number of pupils at the end of this key stage attaining the expected level (level 4) was below national averages and below the standards seen in similar schools.

89. Standards seen during the inspection at Key Stage 1 were generally similar to those indicated in the 1999 tests. At Key Stage 2, although standards towards the end of Year 6 are still below the national average, there have been improvements in reading and standards are closer to the national average.

90. Standards in speaking and listening benefit from the early emphasis in nursery and reception. Early satisfactory progress is maintained as pupils move through Key Stage 1. At the end of the key stage their attainment is in line with the national average. This satisfactory progress continues throughout Key Stage 2 and at the end of this key stage pupils have maintained these average standards. By the time they are seven, pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to each other. In a Year 2 literacy session pupils were able to report back to the teacher and evaluate what they had learnt in a confident and articulate way. By the time they are eleven most pupils are good listeners and some are confident speakers as was seen when they discussed the various sides of the arguments concerning the harvesting of mahogany in the rainforests of South America. However, opportunities for collaborative discussion are limited.

91. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in reading. By the end of the key stage, many pupils are able to read simple stories and poems with good expression and understanding. As they move through the key stage they acquire a reasonable knowledge of phonic rules. One Year 2 pupil observed that there were more vowels than consonants in a particular word and that this was unusual. As pupils move through Key Stage 2, they continue to make satisfactory progress in reading, with many opportunities to read provided both during the literacy hour and at other times. The higher attaining readers read aloud with good expression and they understand the impact of punctuation on reading. Less able readers make good progress because of the systematic teaching of key words and phonic rules. In Years 3 and 4 the arrangements for Additional Literacy Support help pupils with below average attainment in reading, and those with special needs. They work in small groups and this helps their progress. In Years 5 and 6 the school's Better Reading Partnership provides an intense programme to aid identified pupils with their reading. The school has tracked the progress of pupils taking part in this partnership very closely and it has been very effective in improving pupils' attainment in reading. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are achieving standards in reading that are similar to national averages.

92. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in writing. By the end of the key stage, many pupils are able to write logically ordered stories using interesting vocabulary. The writing of most pupils is legible, sentences are appropriately structured and punctuated and the spelling of the higher attaining pupils has a reasonable level of accuracy. Younger pupils progress from copying the teacher's writing to composing their own sentences. These early efforts become more complex, pupils begin to punctuate their simple sentences correctly and handwriting improves.

93. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in writing are below the national average. The Additional Literacy Strategy, as well as impacting on reading, has helped to speed learning in writing, but progress varies across the key stage. Some writing lacks planning and structure and presentation is careless. Handwriting can be legible, but some pupils, who write clearly and neatly in their regular handwriting lessons, do not maintain the same quality when writing independently. When this is the case, handwriting shows a lack of fluency and consistency in letter formation. By the end of the key stage, some pupils produce extended writing using a wide choice of vocabulary and have an extensive knowledge of grammar and punctuation. Their work is interesting and imaginative. They can write for a wide range of purposes including letter writing, reports, stories and poems. However, there are too many pupils who do not attain this level consistently for standards in writing to be similar to the national average.

94. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress through both key stages. They receive a high level of support from the school's support assistants and their progress is assessed regularly. Pupils with special educational needs are always integrated into the whole class element of the National Literacy Strategy though some pupils work away from the classroom in small groups for part of the sessions.

95. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, with the occasional lesson at Key Stage 1 being considerably better than this. At Key Stage 2, the majority of lessons seen were satisfactory, with the occasional unsatisfactory lesson and a reasonable proportion of good teaching. All teachers, in both key stages, show thorough subject knowledge and provide good models of clear speech. In effective lessons, introductions to lessons are constructive, with the purpose of the lesson clearly established. Teachers have positive relationships with pupils and manage them well. Consequently, pupils have very good attitudes to learning throughout the school, are well behaved, interested and co-operative. Medium term planning is good, but weekly planning, particularly at Key Stage 2, is not adequately detailed. Some teachers fail to plan activities that match the pupils' prior attainment closely, paying insufficient attention to information from pupils' assessments. When teaching is less successful or unsatisfactory there are lower expectations of what pupils are able to achieve and planning that lacks the necessary detail. When this is combined with marking that does not inform pupils of what they need to do to improve or accepts low standards, it results in low achievement in some classes.

96. Resources are good and enable teachers to work effectively within the literacy hour, but computers are not used to their best advantage. The school is aware of the need to develop the range of fiction books located in the classrooms. The school has devised a useful reading scheme in which books of different levels of difficulty are identified by a colour coding system. Parents are encouraged to hear pupils read at home and all are provided with a 'Reading is fun' booklet which offers advice. Pupils do take books home, but there is not a consistent record keeping procedure in school. All pupils are provided with dictionaries and spelling logs.

97. The library offers a good selection of non-fiction books, but its small size limits use by whole classes. It is mainly used to accommodate small groups for reading sessions; this reduces access to the library for independent research. The school has insufficient accommodation for small group work so groups have to use the corridor and every available corner around the school.

98. Since the last inspection, a useful scheme of work has been devised, and the range of pupil's writing opportunities has improved. Pupils are taught how to draft and re-draft their writing and there are detailed plans to further develop the teaching of writing. In Years 5 and 6, guided reading is now taught out of the literacy hour, to allow more time for writing activities within the hour.

99. The English policy is very clear and comprehensive and the leadership and management of the subject are very good. Procedures for assessing and tracking the pupils' progress through the school are good. The information is used to inform decisions regarding the potential of pupils, and to highlight areas of strength and weakness in the school, on which school will base future decisions.

MATHEMATICS

100. In the 1999 National Curriculum Tests taken at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils attained standards which were below the national average at both the expected and higher level. In the 1999 tests taken at the end of Key Stage 2 pupils attained standards below the national average at the expected level and around the national average for the higher level. Since the previous inspection, results at Key Stage 1 have declined whilst those at Key Stage 2 are similar. When compared to similar schools the results in both key stages are average. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999, results fluctuate year on year.

101. Inspection findings show that for the current group of Year 2 pupils, standards are above average and are on course to achieve improved standards to those of the previous year. The current group of Year 6 pupils are also attaining improved standards, which are in line with the national average. This improvement is the result of the school's monitoring of the teaching of mathematics and the subsequent development of teachers' subject expertise, linked to the successful introduction and implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. The school has also introduced a new pattern of curricular organisation that includes grouping pupils by prior attainment. This has resulted in improved planning of activities, which present an appropriate challenge to pupils.

102. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have good number skills. They have well developed mental skills and can add and subtract two numbers accurately. The higher attaining pupils can carry out simple multiplication and division sums. They recognise odd and even numbers and have a good grasp of number facts to 20. They have a well-developed awareness of number sequences and can count forwards and backwards in even and odd numbers. They have a wide mathematical vocabulary and can associate different terminology to the correct process. Pupils' cover a wide range of mathematical topics including fractions, money, capacity, symmetry, the measuring of length and the attributes of shapes.

103. The work of pupils in Key Stage 2 is of a satisfactory standard. It is well presented and indicates good coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study. Years 3 and 4 pupils have good number skills and carry out calculations confidently. They have a thorough grasp of multiplication tables and apply this to mental activities effectively. They count forwards and backwards in fours, have a good grasp of decimals and negative numbers. Higher attaining pupils apply their mathematical skills to investigations. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils have good number skills, which they apply to mental activities enthusiastically, responding rapidly to questions. Year 6 pupils multiply and divide fractions with confidence. They can multiply and divide by two digits, understand lowest common multiples, factors, prime numbers, and square numbers. Pupils have a good knowledge of decimals and can multiply and divide decimals by 10, 100, and 1000. Higher attaining pupils can solve problems involving ratio and proportion and the multiplication and division of decimals. Pupils who have special educational needs in this year group cover a wide range of work and are making satisfactory progress. They are developing good skills in number, decimals and fractions. Their confidence and skills in the subject are developed effectively as a result of the well-organised extra support they receive in the classroom.

104. Pupils' use of mathematical skills across the curriculum is limited. There are few opportunities to develop understanding through the application of mathematics to design technology, geography and science.

105. The quality of teaching in mathematics is generally good and makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved and to the quality of learning. Of the fourteen lessons observed, two were very good, ten were good and two lessons were satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. All teachers have a thorough understanding of the subject and use this to good effect to give clear explanations of mathematical concepts. Teachers have a secure understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and the school has made a successful start to its implementation since last September. Lessons are well planned and have clear objectives. The purpose of the lesson is made clear to the pupils at the start. Most lessons begin with a challenging mental mathematics session, which is followed by a well-organised and planned group activity. Teachers make effective use of the concluding part of the lesson to consolidate learning and make additional teaching points.

106. The high quality of teaching has been instrumental in raising pupils' attainment and improving their progress in mathematics. Relationships in classrooms are very good and as a result pupils work hard and enjoy the subject. They respond well to questions in whole-class sessions and maintain a high level of concentration during group activity sessions, producing work at a good pace. This was particularly the case in the very good lessons observed. The teaching in these lessons was marked in particular by the high degree of challenge presented in both the opening mental activity session and the following group work and in the clarity of presentation by the teacher. In a Year 5/6 lesson the teacher made a brisk and lively start to the mental session on decimal fractions, which developed the interest and involvement of a less able set of pupils. The pupils were then presented with some challenging problems involving calculations of percentages such as 40% of £60 and 80% of £12. In a good Year 2, lesson pupils responded rapidly to a series of questions which required them to add one and two digit numbers mentally. They were able to explain how they had worked out the answer. The teacher had very good relationships with the pupils and her firm management of the class enabled them to learn a lot even though they become very excited by their success. During the follow-up activities, the pupils were required to divide shapes into halves, quarters and thirds. The work was carefully planned with challenging tasks, well matched to pupils' prior attainment and enjoyed by teacher and pupils alike. These lessons excited the pupils and developed enthusiastic responses and good learning.

107. Management of the subject is good. The two co-ordinators have worked hard and have successfully led the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. They have a clear overview of the subject and have produced a detailed action plan, which includes the observation of teaching and learning. They also monitor the subject through the examination of planning and pupils' work. Teachers' expectations have been successfully raised by the introduction of targeting for all pupils. Use is made of National Curriculum Optional Tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 and National Tests in Years 2 and 6. Data is being gathered and compiled into a file, which supports the tracking of pupils and determining of appropriate action as necessary. An analysis of answers to questions in the National Tests has been carried out to indicate weaknesses in provision and this information is used to inform teacher's future planning of learning activities.

108. The school has taken significant action to improve the teaching of mathematics and raise standards in the subject since the previous inspection report. Teaching is now good and presents challenging lessons to pupils. The school has taken the required organisational measures to teach pupils in ability groupings. The subject is now effectively co-ordinated and the school is on course to raise standards in the subject.

SCIENCE

109. Teacher assessments undertaken at the end of Key Stage 1 show that pupils' attainment was broadly similar to the national average. The 1999 National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Key Stage 2 were well below the national average and below the standard found in similar schools.

110. The findings of the inspection are similar at Key Stage 1 where attainment is in line with the national average. At the end of Key Stage 2 attainment is below the national average.

111. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have satisfactory knowledge of required programmes of study. They are particularly knowledgeable about life processes and living creatures. This reflects teachers' interests and the practical experiences provided. Pupils understand that materials have different properties and use the correct vocabulary to describe them. They then apply this knowledge to other subjects, such as designing a wolf-proof house for the three pigs. Pupils know how and why a simple electric circuit works. They make regular observations of food, noting and comparing the rate at which different foods rot. Pupils also observe and record the lives of tadpoles and when one dies they think about this and list possible reasons. Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress. This is not maintained through Key Stage 2. At this key stage pupils gain knowledge in lessons, where often there is fruitful discussion and interesting tasks are sometimes set. However, there is insufficient emphasis on recording of findings and the use of specific scientific vocabulary. The science curriculum has not been covered in sufficient depth. Neither is understanding of the subject consolidated sufficiently and there are few opportunities for pupils to apply their understanding effectively. Older pupils show satisfactory basic knowledge of the subject but are often unable to explain their understanding without a lot of support from the teacher.

112. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Some good lessons were seen, when pupils were stimulated to investigate. Year 1 pupils used magnifying glasses when searching for mini-beasts, observing any camouflage. Good links were made with art, involving mixing colours to make 'camouflage green'. When the pupils observed this happen many of them gasped. Those who coloured butterflies were able to match the wing markings and could explain that they were symmetrical. No lessons were seen in Year 2 but the scrutiny of pupils' books showed the high expectations of the teachers, with more challenging tasks set for higher attainers. The marking of work in Year 2 is very helpful, with questions being posed in addition to encouragement given.

113. Overall, teaching in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. The teaching in Year 6 is an exception to this. Although no unsatisfactory lessons were seen during the inspection a scrutiny of books from all classes shows that too often pupils are faced with low level tasks not matched to their previous experience or ability. In some classes there is a proliferation of worksheets. Too little account is taken of the attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1. This is not built on effectively and some teachers' expectations are too low. In some classes the presentation of work is untidy with no suggestion from the teacher of the need to improve. Marking generally consists of an acknowledgement of completion of the task, but occasionally not even this. In the Year 6 classes some examples of good and very good teaching were seen. In both lessons the teachers set challenges, maintained good pace to the lessons and used effective probing questioning. Time limits were set so that pupils concentrated well and achieved their objectives. One of the lessons focused on improving

pupils' ability to draw scientific conclusions from the results of a previous investigation. It was planned specifically to develop higher order thinking.

114. Experimental and investigative science is not taught effectively in Key Stage 2. Pupils have opportunities to investigate but their recording of practical work lacks structure and this aspect is not developing progressively through the key stage. On occasions, the teacher's lack of subject knowledge means that the investigation is pointless. In a Year 4 class the pupil's prediction does not match the stated task so that he concludes that his prediction is correct. There is no mark from the teacher to question this, just a tick! Tasks may be interesting so that pupils behave well and apply themselves to their work but the tasks are sometimes insufficiently challenging and frequently the same task and expectation applies to pupils of all abilities. A Year 5 task could have been managed successfully by pupils in Year 1. Teachers use resources well and generally provide the appropriate vocabulary, but this is not sufficiently reinforced. Planning does not include key words as part of a lesson's learning objectives. Consequently although pupils are familiar with the words they cannot easily use them in context in any explanations.

115. The recently appointed subject co-ordinator has analysed previous test results, identified areas of the curriculum covered insufficiently well and taken action to amend this. Planning has been reviewed to ensure that all aspects of the National Curriculum programme of study are covered fully and that assessment procedures are in place. The inclusion of science in the topic plan provides for some good links with other subjects such as art and design and technology, but has meant some lack of depth to the science element. There is insufficient reinforcement of literacy skills in the use of vocabulary and in expectations of written explanations. Numeracy skills are used to record information in the form of graphs. There is little evidence of the use of information technology to support the subject. The previous inspection noted a shortage of resources. This is being remedied satisfactorily. It was also noted that recorded work in Key Stage 2 was unsatisfactory. This is still the case and thus progress overall in the subject is unsatisfactory.

ART

116. Only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 1 during the inspection and two lessons in Key Stage 2. Evidence was gained from wall displays, discussions with teachers and pupils and a very full and interesting portfolio of work for Key Stage 2 pupils.

117. Pupils in Key Stage 1, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their art lessons, which are appropriately linked to their current topics in other subjects. In Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress overall in the development of their skills and means of expression and in their knowledge of well-known artists.

118. Pupils are provided with opportunities to draw objects from observation, recording their impressions with a variety of materials. Their three-dimensional work includes clay models, masks, puppets and textiles. They develop their use of colour, line and tone across a good range of subjects, such as still life, landscape and portraits. By studying the work of different artists they learn about a variety of different styles. Pupils communicate their ideas effectively through paint, pastel, pencil or computer technology.

119. In Key Stage 1 pupils paint pictures of wild, tame and pre-historic animals to illustrate their topic work. They mix colours to make light and dark tones. Pictures are colourful, showing a mix of patterns and shapes in their jungle display. The pupils' work is lively, but rather limited in range.

120. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have studied natural objects and made sensitive drawings showing form and texture. They have created distinctive textile designs following a visit to the Mappin Art Gallery to study the work of an African artist. In a lesson planned around their 'Garden' theme pupils are inspired by the scent and colour of a striking variety of fresh flowers, which fill the classroom. They consider the effects created by Monet, John Singer Sargent and the 'wet-in-wet' technique of modern painters. They express their ideas well in painting and embroidery, and create imaginative miniature gardens from their sketchbook designs. The pupils work with immense enjoyment and absorption and take great pride in their achievements. Older pupils have effectively used colour and shape to give their impressions of feelings, such as depression, warmth or comfort.

121. The quality of teaching varies from satisfactory in Key Stage 1 to some very good teaching in Key Stage 2. In the best lessons, teachers show a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Teachers give pupils opportunities to experiment and resources are well organised. Volunteer assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. Their conscientious and much valued support allows the teacher to demonstrate techniques to small groups of pupils. There is clear leadership for the subject and good support for teachers through training sessions and advice on lesson planning. Some practical lessons, such as art and physical education take place one after the other. This leaves little time for the preparation and clearing away of all the equipment. Sometimes this leads to inadequate time for development of a lesson or opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work.

122. Since the last inspection, the school has significantly improved the quality and range of resources. An updated scheme of work, nearing completion, is set to combine the elements of the art curriculum and provide a staged programme of learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

123. Standards in the subject attained by pupils at the age of eleven are broadly similar to those seen in the majority of schools. Judgements are based on a small number of lessons, all in Key Stage 2, a limited range of evidence in books and photographs, and from talking to pupils.

124. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have worked with a good range of materials and are taught to cut and assemble them using basic skills. They plan what they are going to make, and draw what they want their finished product to look like, labelling the main parts. Year 1 pupils use construction materials effectively to create animals by following a pattern. The topic-based curriculum links design and technology effectively to other subjects, particularly science. Year 2 pupils study the properties of materials and use their knowledge to design a wolf-proof house. Key Stage 2 pupils continue to work with a range of materials and make interesting constructions including toys with moving parts. On occasions, knowledge of basic electricity is used to illuminate models. Frameworks made by Year 6 pupils show accurate measuring, cutting of wood and knowledge of structures in their use of strengtheners.

125. Teaching is satisfactory overall but not all teachers show sufficient understanding of the subject. In an unsatisfactory lesson, pupils were engaged in different tasks using a range of materials. However, no planning and preparation had been carried out so that some pupils were sewing materials to make 'bags' for no specific purpose. Construction skills are taught effectively and pupils are very aware of the need for safe handling of sharp cutting tools. Work seen shows care and attention to detail in the finished product. Key Stage 1 pupils are being taught the process of planning and evaluating their work. However this does not develop through Key Stage 2 in a systematic and progressive way, varying greatly between classes. In some classes pupils are not challenged to think sufficiently about the best way to achieve their goal. On occasions the finished article does not reflect the plan seen, although there is no indication of any amendments having been made. Sometimes the final evaluation is omitted. Year 6 pupils enjoy challenging tasks and can talk about the complete process of designing and making products. Some of their drawings are very basic and they lack the inclusion of different elevations. However, the pupils' capabilities are reflected in a task to design suitable clothing for elderly and infirm people. They give sensible thought to the possible problems and arrive at solutions to overcome them. Pupils enjoy the subject and collaborate very well in small groups, sharing both ideas and tasks fairly. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated in groups with higher attainers and they make full and equal contributions.

126. The very recently appointed subject co-ordinator has already devised a matrix in order to ensure coverage and progression in the subject. This is a satisfactory improvement from the previous inspection. Her action plan is well matched to requirements, with plans to monitor progression closely. Pupils use and reinforce numeracy skills in calculating and measuring. There are good cross-curricular links, particularly with science. Although the previous inspection noted some lack of teacher expertise which still remains, progress overall has been satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

127. As it was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection, judgements have been based on an analysis of pupils' work and discussions with pupils. The school presents both geography and history as integral parts of their topic curriculum. The curricula of both subjects are sound. They form part of a complex yet thorough topic-based scheme of work, which works on a two or three year rolling programme. This includes all aspects of the National Curriculum. Teachers have recently strengthened the curricula with elements of a new national scheme of work. However, they do not provide enough opportunity for pupils to study the subjects throughout the year. Therefore, frequently pupils do not acquire enough knowledge or develop sufficient skills. The school has recently introduced a useful system of assessing pupils' work on a regular basis, but the information gleaned from this does not yet influence teachers' planning. However, the co-ordinators are aware of the shortcomings in the subjects and they have already produced an appropriate action plan with sensible priorities.

128. Throughout both key stages, pupils make unsatisfactory progress in geography. At Key Stage 1, pupils can draw simple plans of their rooms at home. They recognise buildings like factories, houses and churches. They understand a little about town layouts and about the different kinds of housing, although they do not show a sound awareness of how this is related to their own locality. They appreciate how rainforests are to be found in hot and humid areas of the world, and what kinds of creatures live there, such as snakes and lizards. Pupils produce very little independent work. There is an over dependence on the completion of undemanding worksheets.

129. At Key Stage 2, pupils understand a good deal more about their locality and can identify important buildings. As they move through the key stage they acquire some basic facts of the physical world, such as the names of the continents and the different kinds of climate zones, such as the Arctic and rainforests. Although they do not know about the physical geography of their own country, they do know some details of Greece, and where it is in relation to the United Kingdom. They understand the possible ill effects of land use for factories, such as pollution, but do not appreciate the wider implications of environmental issues. Pupils' geographical skills, such as map reading and making use of resource material are under-developed. Pupils have basic library skills and are able to access the Internet with help, but their work shows very little sign of independent study.

130. Pupils also make unsatisfactory progress in history through both key stages. At Key Stage 1, pupils have some idea of how things change over time. They know, for example, that mixing bowls have given way to electric food mixers and that garden mowers have developed from hand to hover power. They know a little about The Great Fire of London and that Samuel Pepys recorded the details in his diary, and they know about Guy Fawkes. However, their knowledge is very thin and they are not able to present it efficiently in words and pictures of their own.

131. In Key Stage 2, although pupils acquire a reasonable range of historical knowledge their skills in presenting and interpreting evidence are under-developed. Like the younger pupils, they lack opportunities to produce independent written work about significant historical characters or events. Pupils understand how invaders have influenced the British way of life. For example, they know the Romans introduced a road system and built impressive villas. They also are aware that the Romans met resistance from British tribes, such as the Iceni. They know about the monarchy in Tudor times, especially Henry VIII and his six wives. They visit a local country house to envisage what life was like in those times and they dress in Tudor clothes and engage in role-play to fully appreciate the concept. They know of life in ancient Greece, and how the Greeks worshipped their gods in temples. They know the names of some of the gods and the myths that surround them, such as the Labours of Hercules, and they have some appreciation of Greek architecture.

132. Teachers do not teach the subject in sufficient depth. As a result pupils are insecure about key facts. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of their pupils and do not match work with pupils' abilities. As in geography, teachers provide far too much work on worksheets and do not build on existing skills or knowledge. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to research and present information for themselves as, for example, through the use of computers. Little use is being made of geography and history to develop pupils' literacy skills nor do they insist sufficiently on accuracy and care in pupils' written work.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

133. Only two direct teaching lessons were timetabled during the week of the inspection. Evidence of standards and provision is largely drawn from a scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with teachers and pupils and an inspection of teachers' planning.

134. Pupils' attainment in information technology is below the standard expected nationally at the end of both key stages. Standards are below average because resources are inadequate, the curriculum presented to pupils is too narrow and teachers lack subject knowledge and confidence in aspects of the subject. Standards at the time of the last inspection were reported as being below the national expectation and there has been some overall improvement in this position. Teachers have received some training in this subject

and now plan for it in their half termly planning. The school is aware of the need to raise attainment in information technology and there has been some improvement in provision made by adding to the number and quality of computers, by providing some training for teachers and by purchasing software. The school continues to fail to cover all the required strands in the subject and there is too little development of skills within control technology, data handling and modelling.

135. In Key Stage 1 the progress made by pupils is slow due to the limited opportunities presented to pupils to spend time working on a computer. Pupils in Year 1 learn to recognise the different parts of the computer, referring correctly to the mouse and the keyboard. They use simple art and design programs to make patterns. Pupils are beginning to learn to control an object and make it move forward and backwards and to turn at ninety degrees. In Year 2, pupils learn to control the mouse correctly and develop keyboard skills. They make use of a range of programs to support activities in subjects of the curriculum, for example writing diaries and stories in National Literacy lessons and creating pictures in art lessons using "Dazzle". Skills in other areas of the subject are, however, limited. Pupils have little experience of compiling graphs using simple spreadsheets or in the use of control technology.

136. Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils, progress continues to be slow due to the limited opportunities presented to them to develop their skills in the range of applications required in the National Curriculum. Word processing skills are developed in Years 3 and 4 with pupils writing their stories and letters. They edit their stories using delete, and save and print their work. They use the program "Creative Writer" to design covers for their books and combine text and pictures. Pupils insert photographs into their work using the digital camera. Correspondence with a school in the United States of America has been conducted through the use of e-mail. Skills in control are less well developed. Pupils have only a basic understanding of the use of "Super Logo" and are not able to develop a series of instructions into a routine to direct an object on the screen around a route. By the end of Year 6, pupils can edit their stories effectively moving text and changing font. They add pictures to their work using clip art and the school Digital Camera. Pupils have only limited experience in using databases to obtain information and do not create their own database of information. Some use has been made of "Encarta" to support work in science but little use is made of the Internet due to the school having only one computer with access and this is situated in the school library. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils' skills in data handling are poor. They have used "Chart Mate" to make block graphs in science but they make no use of spreadsheets to collate their data and create different types of graphs to enrich work in other subjects.

137. During the inspection only one teacher was observed teaching the whole class information technology. The teacher demonstrated confident subject knowledge and gave clear instructions when teaching Reception/Year 1 pupils to change the style and size of font. Pupils responded to the enthusiasm and confidence shown by the teacher by working productively in the lesson. The use made of computers by teachers in general is, however, limited and their knowledge of some aspects of information technology is limited. Opportunities for pupils to develop skills in computing across the curriculum are few. As a result pupils make limited progress

138. The co-ordinator has effected some improvements recently. Teachers have been supported in developing confidence in particular strands of the curriculum. She monitors the school's performance through examination of planning and pupils' work and working alongside colleagues and discussion after the lesson. Software has been purchased and improvement made to the number of computers in each classroom but the school suffers

from having no computer suite. This limits the opportunity for pupils to have regular sessions to develop their skills. A clear policy and scheme of work has been written. The scheme of work covers the development of skills overall but does not give clear guidance to teachers for the requirements for each year group of pupils. As a result teachers are unsure of the required programme they should deliver each year. Whilst teachers keep their own individual records of pupils' progress, there is no overall school system. Together, these two factors result in teachers having limited awareness of the progress being made by their pupils with regard to National Curriculum requirements.

139. There have been improvements made to information technology provision but the number of computers remains barely adequate. Each classroom has one or two computers but there is no computer suite. The school has yet to receive its National Grid for Learning Fund Grant and this will make a significant improvement in provision if the school acquires extra accommodation to enable the creation of a computer room. Software has been improved since the last inspection. The previous inspection found that attainment in information technology was below the national expectation and this remains the situation. There continues to be little evidence of data handling, control, modelling or monitoring aspects of provision. The school has improved provision in the subject both in terms of the resources available and the skills and confidence of teachers but these remain areas for further development.

MUSIC

140. During the inspection one lesson was observed in Key Stage 1 and two lessons in Key Stage 2. Pupils' responses to music in assembly were also noted, but there is insufficient evidence on which to base an overall judgement of pupils' levels of attainment.

141. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils, including those with special educational needs, have made satisfactory progress in the tuneful singing of songs and rhymes. They enjoy playing percussion instruments to create sound effects to illustrate the story *Peace at Last*. When listening to each other's performances they are able to suggest suitable ways of changing the volume or tempo of the sounds. During morning assembly pupils join in with the singing but the words of the songs are sometimes rather difficult for them to remember.

142. Good opportunities are provided for pupils in both key stages to listen to music in assembly. They listen carefully and are interested in hearing the story behind Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*, the music of the week. Pupils also enjoy listening to occasional performances by pupils who take private music lessons. A recent examination piece played on the violin added to their experience of live music. Performances of singing, drama and music are shared with parents during seasonal celebrations.

143. In Key Stage 2 pupils show interest in listening to recorded music, offering suitable descriptions such as 'exciting' and 'joyful' after a lively orchestral piece. They sing enthusiastically to a recorded song about a grasshopper, keeping good time during a percussion accompaniment with their own 'mini-beast' sound effects. Older pupils can identify non-standard notation of three note tunes, distinguishing between differences in pitch. Although they have some experience of the different elements of the music curriculum, pupils make little progress in Key Stage 2. They have few opportunities to experiment and develop at the appropriate level. There is no systematic building on earlier musical understanding to move pupils forward in their learning.

144. Some teachers feel insecure about teaching the subject because they lack expertise. Suitable resources have been provided since the last inspection, and advice from the local educational advisory service has helped to provide a suitable sequence of learning activities. Teachers no longer rely on broadcast lessons, but there is not a sufficiently simple, coherent programme of work yet to replace them. Further professional input, together with contact with local 'musical' schools is needed to support the school's lack of confidence in this subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

145. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs, are making at least satisfactory progress at both key stages. Progress in swimming is good. Standards in most aspects of physical education are similar to standards generally seen and in swimming standards are high.

146. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 are achieving reasonable skill in managing small equipment such as bats and balls. They consolidate and improve their skills as they move through the key stage. They skip, run, twist and turn with reasonable agility and control for their age. They have a good understanding of how to use space safely. Satisfactory progress is made in dance, building on a wide range of dance and drama activities offered for children who are under five. Pupils respond to music of different moods appropriately, matching the speed, rhythm and theme of the movement with interesting interpretations. They exercise particularly good control when composing dances that require them to mirror each other's movements. Year 2 pupils achieve good standards in swimming. They are confident in the water. All are prepared to touch the bottom of the pool and they swim a length with floats. Most pupils can swim at least 6 metres unaided. They are developing a good awareness of style in their swimming and making good progress in learning the front crawl.

147. At Key Stage 2, pupils have good opportunities to experience all the required aspects of the National Curriculum physical education programme. The younger pupils apply the skills they have developed at Key Stage 1. They develop suitable control and balance when devising sequences of movement in gymnastics and are able to perform these sequences competently both on the floor and on apparatus. Pupils are able to evaluate their own and each others performances and to identify what they need to do to improve. They understand the need to practise their movements in order to refine and improve the quality of their work. In Year 6, pupils are improving their skills in athletic activities such as throwing and jumping. They sustain energetic activity for a reasonable length of time. Pupils achieve good standards in swimming. Most are able to swim at least 25 metres by the end of Year 5. They are very confident in the water, able to float and swim on their front and back.

148. Overall, teaching throughout both key stages is satisfactory with some instances of good and occasionally very good teaching. Generally the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection with no unsatisfactory teaching being observed. A particular criticism was the use of time in lessons, with pupils spending too long listening to instructions and not being given enough time to take part in physical activity. This is certainly not the case now. Lessons move at a pace that is at least reasonable and often very brisk. In most lessons teachers give clear instructions and opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their achievements and to appraise each other's work. The pupils respond well to this and their comments on each other's work are always positively framed. In the better lessons there is a continual insistence on effort and achieving the highest standards. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning as they strive even harder to improve the

quality of their work. Teachers have taken note of comments in the last inspection report and throughout the school they alert pupils to the effects of energetic activity on their bodies. For example, the increase in their heart beat. They discuss the reasons for changes with the pupils. Thus pupils acquire a good understanding of these changes at an early age. There is careful attention to safety rules throughout the school. Physical education makes a reasonable contribution to pupils' literacy. Teachers' make consistent use of subject specific language and pupils are encouraged to discuss their performances and how they might improve. Year 6 pupils have occasional opportunities to take part in orienteering activities and these make a good contribution to numeracy and to geography.

149. Since the last inspection there has been considerable improvement in provision at Key Stage 2. There is now a reasonable supply of appropriate resources for games activities. There are useful schemes of work in gymnastics and games, which ensure that lessons are well planned and build on the achievements in earlier lessons. A strength of provision is the school's indoor swimming pool, which is very well used, and pupils benefit from swimming lessons provided to half class groups. The co-ordinator gives positive leadership and manages the subject well. She monitors the quality of teaching and learning through scrutiny of teachers' planning and through occasional observation of lessons. Class teachers record pupils' progress and these records inform their reporting to parents.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

150. At Key Stage 1 all pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. At the end of the key stage their attainment meets the standards outlined in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Progress slows at Key Stage 2 and by the end of the key stage pupils have not made sufficient progress for their attainment to meet the expected standard. Provision for religious education does not fully meet statutory requirements at Key Stage 2.

151. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have appropriate knowledge of the festivals observed by major faiths to celebrate light, such as the Hindu festival of Divali. They have a reasonable understanding of the main events in the life of Jesus Christ and relate these to the main festivals of the Christian faith. They have good recall of some of the principle parables Jesus told.

152. As pupils move through Key Stage 2, they build soundly on the understanding of the Christian faith that has been introduced at Key Stage 1. By the time they are eleven, pupils have a suitably detailed understanding of Christian rituals and the life of Jesus Christ including the events leading up to Easter. They know that Jesus' message was one of love for God and human kind. They understand the significance of such ceremonies as baptism and confirmation. However, their knowledge of religions other than Christianity is very sketchy. They know that all religions have special places of worship and sacred texts but their understanding and knowledge of the significant detail of Judaism and Islam is extremely limited.

153. As they move through the school pupils make sound progress in their understanding of how peoples' actions can effect others' lives. At Key Stage 1, the older pupils consider that the ability to share their time and attention with those around them is central to harmonious living. They relate this to their own experiences and make links with stories from the New Testament such as the Prodigal Son. In Key Stage 2, pupils consider the impact

that significant leaders such as Martin Luther King and Gladys Aylward had on the lives of the communities they worked for.

154. The teaching of religious education at Key Stage 1 is good overall with examples of very good and satisfactory teaching that have a positive impact on the pace and depth of pupils' learning. In the better lessons teachers establish positive relationships with their pupils, enabling them to discuss issues and ideas in a sensible and reflective manner. In a very good lesson at Year 2 the teachers' directed a discussion about caring very skilfully. Pupils progressed from a general consideration of those that they cared for to a realisation that sometimes they experienced negative feeling such as jealousy for the same people. Several pupils made links with the parable of the Prodigal Son, which they recalled from an earlier lesson. There was very effective use of role-play to further develop pupils' consideration of reasons for and the impact on others of jealousy. Pupils' questions were all very relevant to the theme and answers showed a developing understanding of the impact their feelings could have on others.

155. Very little teaching was seen at Key Stage 2. However, evidence taken from the teaching seen, from the scrutiny of work and teacher's planning indicates that teaching at Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. The curriculum is structured to link with themes covered in assemblies. This works satisfactorily for Key Stage 1. Teachers at Key Stage 2 make every effort to adapt these themes appropriately for the age and ability of their pupils. However, they do not cover the work in sufficient depth to achieve the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Additionally, the level of resourcing is unsatisfactory and there are no religious artefacts or relevant posters to inform the teaching of major world faiths. A scrutiny of pupils' written work and conversations with the oldest pupils further confirm that the pace of learning at Key Stage 2 is too slow. Teachers lack sufficient expertise or support to be able to cover the required curriculum satisfactorily. The school is aware of the shortcomings of its provision for religious education and there are detailed plans in the current school development document to address this issue. At the time of the last inspection attainment in religious education was found to be "just satisfactory" and similar concerns to those expressed above were raised about the organisation of the curriculum and its dependence on assemblies to introduce key themes. It was also noted that very little work about major faiths other than Christianity was undertaken. Since then, although standards have been maintained at Key Stage 1 they have declined further at Key Stage 2 and there is an urgent need to give attention to the provision for this subject.