

INSPECTION REPORT

Wootton Lower School
Wootton

LEA area : Bedfordshire

Unique Reference Number : 109494

Headteacher : Mr I Stephen

Reporting inspector : Mrs R Frith
2490

Dates of inspection : 11th – 14th October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706958

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	First School
Type of control :	County
Age range of pupils :	4 - 9
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Bedford Road Wootton Bedford Bedfordshire MK43 9JT
Telephone number :	01234 768239
Appropriate authority :	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors :	Mr A Richardson
Date of previous inspection :	February 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs R Frith, Registered Inspector	Under Fives	Attainment & Progress
	English	Teaching
	Information Technology	Leadership & Management
	Music	
Mrs K Berry, Lay Inspector		Attendance
		Support, Guidance & Pupils' Welfare
		Partnership with Parents & the Community
Mr P Thrussell, Team Inspector	Special Educational Needs	Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural Development
	Mathematics	The Efficiency of the School
	History	
	Religious Education	
Mrs J Gibson, Team Inspector	Equal Opportunities	The Curriculum & Assessment
	Science	Staffing, Accommodation & Learning Resources
	Geography	
	Art	
Mrs S Howe, Team Inspector	Design & Technology	Attitudes, Behaviour & Personal Development
	Physical Education	

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

Teaching is a strength of the school and positively contributes to the progress which pupils make. It is very good, and occasionally excellent in 29 per cent of lessons and good in 41 per cent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed.

- Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics, science, information technology, religious education, art and history at both key stages. They make good progress in design and technology at Key Stage 1 and in physical education at Key Stage 2.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good at both key stages and they make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and good behaviour.
- Pupils have good relationships with the staff and each other and their personal development is good.
- Attendance is good
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good.
- Pupils are well looked after and they receive good support and guidance.
- The school's partnership with parents and the community is good.
- The school is well led and efficiently managed.

Where the school has weaknesses

The current arrangements for the organisation and management of provision for the under-fives is complicated and places additional burdens on the staff involved, in terms of their planning and teaching. In some instances there is an inefficient use of resources, including staff.

i. There is a lack of resources for the under fives, including large wheeled toys and outdoor play equipment. The quality of some resources is unsatisfactory.

The school's weaknesses are far outweighed by what it does well. The weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to parents, or guardians, of children at the school. Governors will report annually on how the school is achieving the targets set in the action plan.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection and is now in a good position to improve further.

- II. Effective systems are in place which ensure good planning within year groups. Teachers share their expertise and develop a consistent approach to teaching and learning by using the schemes of work to plan lessons with clear learning objectives. This ensures equality of access for pupils and opportunities for them to learn and make progress.
- III. The role of the senior management team has developed well over the last year and the work of these teachers is effective in identifying school priorities, managing staff and improving teaching. There is a clear focus on raising standards, and the monitoring of pupils' attainment, together with the tracking of their progress, supports this aim.
- IV. Since the last inspection, co-ordinators have more opportunities to influence the development of their subjects and monitor the work of pupils. Together with members of the senior management team, they monitor teachers' plans, review pupils' work and have opportunities to observe teaching and learning.
- V. Teachers are continuing to develop strategies to extend pupils' personal learning skills. The library has been established as a central area where pupils can gain information from books, use the computers to develop their skills in information technology and use facilities such as the Internet.

Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

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

The information in the chart shows that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in the summer of 1998, when compared to all schools and also when compared to similar schools, was above average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. Teachers' assessment of pupils' learning in science indicates that pupils attained above average standards. Overall, these results indicate a maintenance of standards since the last inspection although there was a slight dip in the quality of writing. The school has analysed the results and implemented specific strategies to improve writing and, although insufficient time has passed for the effectiveness of these to be fully evaluated, early indications are that they have had a positive impact on raising pupils' attainment.

Through observing lessons, talking with pupils and looking at their work, the inspectors found the attainment of pupils in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 1 to be above that expected nationally. This supports the 1999 test results. Pupils' attainment in information technology is average at the end of Key Stage 1 and attainment in religious education is above that outlined in the Agreed Syllabus. By the time pupils leave school in Year 4, they attain standards in English, mathematics and science which are above average and standards in information technology which are average. Attainment in religious education is above that expected for pupils of this age.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 9 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Science		Good	Good
Information technology		Good	Good
Religious education		Good	Good
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Good	Good

There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection and this, in turn, has helped to improve the progress which pupils make and the standards they achieve. Across the school, the quality of teaching is excellent in 9 per cent of lessons, very good in 20 per cent, good in 41 per cent and satisfactory in 30 per cent. No unsatisfactory was observed. When teaching is good, teachers have high expectations; plan work which supports clear learning objectives and meets the variety of needs in the class and the pace of learning is good. In a small minority of mathematics lessons, teachers do not use a sufficient range of teaching strategies to ensure that higher attaining pupils are fully challenged. The quality of teaching is good in art, history, and physical education at both key stages, in design and technology at Key Stage 1 and geography at Key Stage 2. It is satisfactory in geography at Key Stage 1, design and technology at Key Stage 2 and music at both key stages. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and support staff.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good overall. The school has a small number of pupils who are identified as having emotional and behavioural difficulties and the staff have recognised the need to review the behaviour policy to ensure appropriate strategies are in place to meet the needs of these pupils.
Attendance	Good. Pupils attend regularly and arrive at school on time.
Ethos*	Good. A well ordered school which offers its pupils a secure and welcoming environment. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and good relationships with adults and each other.
Leadership and management	Good. There is a clear vision and action plan for the development of the school with an emphasis on raising standards. There is particularly good leadership in developing a team of staff who review and develop their teaching in order to improve the quality of education provided.
Curriculum	Satisfactory for the under-fives, although provision for the outdoor curriculum and role-play is unsatisfactory. Good at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 where effective planning supports pupils' learning. There are inconsistencies in the way that teachers assess and record pupils' attainment and progress in reading, particularly in the guided reading sessions in the Literacy Hour.
Pupils with special educational needs	The organisation and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. This, together with the good quality of teaching and support, results in pupils making good progress towards the targets set in the individual education plans.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and provision for their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Arrangements for the professional development of staff are satisfactory although there are no agreed procedures for the induction of teachers who are new to the school. The accommodation is satisfactory, very clean and well maintained. Resources are satisfactory overall but there are insufficient resources for pupils under five and some are of an unsatisfactory quality.
Value for money	Considering the good quality of teaching, the progress which pupils make and the standards they achieve, the school provides good value for money.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<p>vi. Parents are encouraged to be part of the school and find it easy to approach staff with questions or problems.</p> <p>vii. The school encourages pupils to achieve a good standard of work and get involved in extra-curricular activities.</p> <p>viii. The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on children and they behave well.</p> <p>ix. Children enjoy going to school.</p> <p>x. Staff are fully committed to the pupils in their care.</p>	<p>xi. A minority of parents would like to receive more information about how the school is progressing.</p>

Inspectors support the positive views held by most of the parents, particularly in the way in which the school encourages a partnership with parents. Parents receive a good variety of well presented information about the school including information about the curriculum. Satisfactory steps are also taken to inform parents about the progress which their children make. Staff are very approachable and available to talk about the children in their class. Good relationships exist between adults and pupils and most pupils enjoy coming to school.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

To improve the standards of work and the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

XII.Improve the provision for the under-fives by:

- . reviewing the effectiveness of the management and organisational strategies for children on entry to school;
- . improving the quantity, quality and use of resources.

(Paragraphs 71, 73, 77, 80, 81, 83, 84, 85)

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

- .Review the behaviour policy to ensure a consistent and appropriate approach is used to meet the needs of pupils identified as having emotional and behavioural difficulties.

(Paragraphs 25, 32, 48, 52)

- .Improve the systems for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress in reading, particularly for the guided reading sessions in the Literacy Hour.

(Paragraph 95)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

- 1 Wootton Lower School is a community school providing education for both sexes and all abilities from age four to nine years. The school is situated in the urbanised village of Wootton which is south of Bedford. Most of the children live in the immediate vicinity of the school with a small number coming from Kempston and nearby villages. The pupils come from a variety of backgrounds with the range of parents' occupations extending from professional to unskilled. Information from the last census indicates that the percentage of adults with higher education was below the national average, together with the percentage of minority ethnic children and children in overcrowded households. There was an above average percentage of children in high social class households. Pupils enter the school with a wide range of skills and experiences. Some children are articulate and display good levels of concentration whilst others have more limited experiences and underdeveloped language skills. Information gained from baseline assessments and observations indicate that children's attainment is average on entry to school.
- 2 The school is about the same size as other schools of this type with 219 full-time pupils and 33 children attending part-time in the reception classes (138 boys and 114 girls). All children start school at the beginning of the academic year in which they are five. They attend school on a part-time basis until the term in which they are five when they then become full-time. At the time of the inspection there were 42 children aged under-five. Seven per cent of full-time pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average.
- 3 Twenty-nine (11 per cent) pupils are identified as having special educational needs which is below the national average. There are three pupils (1.1%) with a statement of special educational needs and this is slightly below the national average. The ethnic composition of the school reflects that of the local community which is mostly white and there are five pupils who come from homes where English is an additional language
- 3
- 4 The school has the following aim :
“ to create a caring community in which your child can feel happy and secure and where your child's intellectual and physical potential can develop to the full, thus equipping them for life in the modern world.”
- 5 The school's current priorities include:
Successfully implement the literacy and numeracy strategies.
Improve pupils' provision for information communication technology.
Develop the role of subject co-ordinators.
Continue the development of the school's assessment procedures and practice.

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	26	22	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	21	21	25
	Girls	22	20	22
	Total	43	41	47
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	86 (89)	82 (91)	94 (91)
	National	80 (80)	81 (80)	84 (84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	21	21	24
	Girls	22	22	22
	Total	43	43	46
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	86 (94)	86 (94)	92 (94)
	National	81 (80)	85 (84)	86 (85)

1

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	3.8
	National comparative data	5.6
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.1
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	29
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

5 Attainment

- 6 In the 1998 standard assessment tests and teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, results indicate that in comparison with all schools and also with similar schools, the pupils' attainment was above the national average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. Teachers' assessments also indicate that pupils' attainment in science was above average. These results indicate a maintenance of standards since the last inspection apart from a slight dip in the quality of writing. Here, although the percentage of pupils reaching the level appropriate for their age (Level 2) was in line with national averages, few pupils reached the higher levels. Taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together, the performance of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average.
- 7 Results from the 1999 standard assessment tests and teacher assessments at Key Stage 1, indicate that standards were above the national average in all three subjects with an increase in the percentage of pupils gaining the higher levels in spelling, writing and mathematics. This improvement in writing is a reflection of the way in which teachers analysed the previous year's results and took positive action to improve standards by focussing on extended writing. Overall, the results returned to the levels indicated in 1997 and thus confirm that any variation was more to do with that specific cohort of pupils and changes in the English curriculum, rather than any other factors.
- 8 Through observing lessons, talking to pupils and undertaking a scrutiny of their work, inspectors found the attainment of pupils in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 1 to be above that expected nationally. Their attainment in information technology is average and in religious education is above that outlined in the Agreed Syllabus. By the time pupils leave school in Year 4, they attain standards in English, mathematics and science which are above average and standards in information technology which are average. Attainment in religious education is above that expected for pupils of this age.
- 9 Most children have had some pre-school experience. On entry to school, their knowledge, skills and understanding are generally in line with the levels expected for pupils of that age, although there are few pupils with good social and personal development skills. This is confirmed by the results of a baseline test, which is administered to all children by the autumn half-term. Most children, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress and by the age of five, attain levels which meet the expectations of the nationally agreed Desirable Outcomes in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative, personal, social and physical development.
- 10 Inspectors' lesson observations, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of their work indicate the following. Attainment in speaking and listening by the end of Key Stage 1 is good. Most listen and talk with confidence in a wide range of contexts and higher-attaining pupils give articulate detailed answers to questions. By the time they leave school in Year 4, pupils use reasoned arguments and show respect for the speaker and their opinions. Pupils in Year 2 also achieve good standards in reading and the majority are fluent and accurate readers across a range of texts. Higher attaining pupils are independent readers and sustain reading for good periods of time. Pupils in Year 4 show understanding of significant ideas, events and characters and are beginning to infer what will happen next in a story by using previously gained information. Most are expressive readers. By the end of Key Stage 1, the quality of pupils' writing is good. Most pupils use a style which interests the reader and use punctuation and grammar well; higher-attainers use exclamation marks and commas. In Year 4, pupils' writing is often thoughtful and imaginative, and they continue to punctuate well and produce writing that is grammatically correct. Pupils' standards in literacy are good at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they leave school in Year 4.

- 11 In mathematics, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are confident with number bonds up to ten, and can easily count to a hundred and beyond. They are good at mental calculations and identify a wide range of two dimensional shapes, including pentagons, hexagons and octagons. By Year 4, pupils understand numbers up to a thousand and beyond with an understanding of place value, and many recognise decimal points and negative numbers. They have a good knowledge of standard measures and some correctly use the terms perimeter and area. They have a good grasp of multiplication tables and quick mental recall of addition and subtraction up to and from twenty. They have a good understanding of how to solve problems. Pupils' standards in numeracy are good at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they leave school in Year 4.
- 12 In science, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understand some of the conditions necessary for humans to grow and stay healthy, such as taking exercise and eating certain types of foods. They follow instructions when performing tasks and make observations which help them to answer questions about how they feel before and after exercise. In Year 4, pupils have an understanding of the importance of undertaking a 'fair test' and recognise the need to vary one factor whilst keeping others constant. The majority record their results on a graph independently; lower attaining pupils record with the support of the teacher.
- 13 In information technology by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have good skills in using the keyboard, with the more confident pupils showing an understanding of a variety of key functions. They use word processing to write simple sentences and select pictures to complement the text. Pupils use the mouse well to control on screen events and know how to collect and store data. By the end of Year 4, most pupils use a word processor with confidence, showing the ability to change the layout of their work, the font size and style and to use the spell check facility. They understand how to control equipment to achieve specific outcomes by giving a series of instructions in a 'maze' program. Most pupils have a clear understanding of the uses of the Internet.
- 14 By the end of Key Stage 1 in religious education, pupils have a good understanding of beliefs and celebrations in a range of religions. They know that religions have 'special' books and are familiar with stories from the Bible. They understand the pattern of the natural world through, for example, looking at the seasons and begin to see their uniqueness as individuals. By Year 4, they relate stories in the Bible to aspects of their own lives and know how religion can impact on the lives of others. They learn that objects can have a religious significance and special meaning for believers. Standards have improved since the last inspection.
- 14 Progress
- 15 Children often make good progress in the reception classes as a result of the good quality of teaching which, in turn, encourages good responses from the children. Most children come into the class happy and confident and respond well to the adults and each other. The planning takes account of the shorter attention spans of the younger children and provides a range of activities covering all areas of the curriculum. The organisation and management of the day, which has to take into account the varying needs of the children, and the times in which they are in school, places a considerable time constraint on the staff and detracts from the time available to ensure good progress.
- 16 Pupils enter the school with average skills in English. They generally make good, consistent progress throughout the school to reach above average levels of attainment by Year 4. The school's implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is good and is having a beneficial effect on progress, especially by improving pupils' responses to texts and in developing their understanding of the rules and conventions of grammar in Standard English. The good quality of teaching, together with a well-balanced curriculum allows systematic development to be made, through the well-matched provision and good monitoring processes. Parents generally give their children good support, especially in reading and this further enhances progress and gives pupils positive attitudes towards the subject.
- 17 Pupils generally make good progress in mathematics across the school. This is a result of the good quality teaching which stimulates pupils' interest and encourages them to respond. Good quality experiences are provided, for example, in Year 1 where pupils are challenged to develop their understanding of shape, and in Year 4, where a carefully planned lesson encourages pupils' problem solving skills. With the introduction of the numeracy hour pupils are now expected to demonstrate, both orally and in written form, their strategies for investigating and solving problems and this develops their mathematical thinking. Although careful

consideration is taken of previous learning when grouping pupils and planning lessons, at times the higher-attainers make more progress in lessons than expected and quickly complete their work. This is partly a reflection of the teachers' unfamiliarity with the numeracy sessions and should be remedied as staff quickly adapt to the new system of teaching.

- 18 In science, good progress is made overall as pupils move through both key stages. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and respond well to lessons which have a clear structure and are well planned. This enhances their progress. As they move through the school, pupils develop a clearer understanding of the need to establish a 'fair test' when investigating and record their findings with improving accuracy.
- 19 The majority of pupils make good progress in information technology at both key stages. This is in response to the recent developments in the information technology curriculum, the improved resources and the quality of teaching. However, insufficient time has passed for this rate of progress to be reflected in the end of Key Stage 1 attainment levels or those in Year 4. Overall, pupils make better progress in the communicating and handling information sections of the curriculum than in the controlling, measuring and modelling sections as they have more opportunities to do so. The progress of girls, different ethnic groups, and pupils with special needs is comparable with others in the school and is not inhibited by, for example, unequal access to the computers or appropriate resources.
- 20 Pupils make good progress in religious education at both key stages. There is good coverage of the curriculum and the quality of teaching is good. This, in turn, raises expectations and improves the progress which pupils make. Good behaviour, positive relationships and a tolerance for the beliefs of others also contributes to pupils' progress. As they mature, pupils are able to relate religious messages through story to their own lives.
- 21 At Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in art, design and technology and history. They make satisfactory progress in geography, music and physical education. At Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in art, history and physical education. They make satisfactory progress in geography, design and technology and music.
- 22 Pupils with special educational needs, who have individual educational plans, make good progress towards the targets set for them. This reflects the good quality of teaching and support provided. No significant difference was noted in the progress of boys and girls during the inspection.

22

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

- 23 Children enter the Reception classes with satisfactory social skills and attitudes to learning. They settle into school quickly and adjust well to expectations placed upon them. Most of the children are confident and they work and play well together, sharing and taking turns. The older pupils are able to make choices, stay on task and take some responsibility for their learning, for example, when clearing up. Most listen attentively and follow instructions. Their behaviour is good.
- 24 Throughout the school, the pupils' attitudes towards learning, including those of pupils with special educational needs, are good. This finding reflects that of the previous inspection. The pupils concentrate well and show interest in what they are doing. They listen carefully to teachers and to other pupils and persevere with tasks. Nevertheless, their interest waned in the occasional lesson which lacked pace. Pupils take pride in their work as shown by the careful detailed drawings produced by the Year 4 pupils prior to making moving vehicles. The Year 4 pupils are also beginning to take responsibility for their own learning through setting their own personal targets. A key issue in the last in report was "... (to) further challenge pupils to extend their learning skills." This is being addressed through a policy for the more able pupils, through improvements in the information technology curriculum and developments in the library and has resulted in improved learning skills.

- 25 The last inspection noted that behaviour throughout the school was excellent. Evidence from this inspection indicates behaviour is good overall. The school has recently admitted a small group of pupils with emotional and behaviour difficulties who, although occasionally disruptive, do not disturb the classes unduly. The need for a behaviour modification programme to help these pupils develop patterns of good behaviour has been recognised. Pupils are courteous to each other and to adults. They behave well in the classroom and at play and lunchtimes and move around the school in an orderly manner. Behaviour in the dining hall is particularly good.
- 26 Pupils relate very well to each other, they support each other and work together in both the playground and classroom, for example, when working in pairs and groups in physical education lessons. They take turns and listen to each other during classroom discussions and during 'circle' time. Relationships between pupils and adults are also good. They are open, courteous and particularly welcoming to visitors. There was no evidence of inappropriate behaviour towards other pupils during the inspection. They show considerable respect for property, for example, they take care putting equipment away when they have finished with it. There have been no exclusions over recent years.
- 27 The pupils' personal development is good. The ethos of the school contributes very effectively to their sense of community and respect for others. All pupils take responsibility within their own classroom for the different tasks that need to be done. Pupils in Year 4 have specific duties. Some act as librarians and are responsible for not only tidying the library but also monitoring the condition of the books. Others take turns doing a variety of tasks within the school. The pupils collect for various charities during the year and there is a regular commitment to providing funds for the education of a pupil in Zaire. Pupils take part in community events, for example the village fair and singing for senior citizens in the local church. Their personal development is also enhanced by visits out of school and by visitors to the school. For example the visit of a woman from Uganda during the inspection who talked about her journey from Africa to England. Some Year 4 pupils were later responsible for showing her around the school after assembly.

27 Attendance

- 28 The school has maintained the high level of attendance praised in the last inspection, consistently keeping it above the national average. The school's authorised absence rate of 3.8 per cent is below the national average and the unauthorised rate of 0.1 per cent is also below. Parents support their children by ensuring they attend regularly and arrive on time. Pupils obviously enjoy coming to school and come to school ready to learn.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

28 Teaching

- 29 The school has addressed the key issue on teaching arising from the last inspection which was to further challenge pupils to extend their personal learning skills. Although it is difficult to make comparisons using the last inspection report as comments were quite general, it would seem the quality of teaching has improved and this, in turn, has helped to improve the progress which pupils make and the standards they achieve.
- 30 Across the school, the quality of teaching is excellent in 9 per cent of lessons, very good in 20 per cent, good in 41 per cent and satisfactory in 30 per cent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. When teaching is good, teachers have high expectations, plan work which meets the variety of needs in the class and the pace of learning is good.
- 31 The quality of the teaching for children under five is good in 54 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in 46 per cent. Staff work well together and ensure that children quickly settle into school life. A good knowledge of the needs of young children underpins the planning and teaching of the curriculum and a range of teaching methods is used successfully to gain the interests of the children and motivate them to learn. The introduction of the new phonics programme has been particularly successful in improving pupils' progress. Staff work well together and provide a consistent approach to teaching and learning although the management and organisation of the school day, which takes into account the different timings of the day for part-time and full-time pupils, is complicated and sometimes detracts from pupils' learning. All teaching for the under-fives is encouraging and

makes good use of positive comments and praise. This in turn contributes to the children's self-esteem, confidence and positive attitudes to learning. Staff have good relationships with the children and each other and this supports the children's social and personal development through the presentation of good role models. The quality and use of day-to-day assessment is sound although, in some cases, indicates more what children have done rather than what they have achieved. Staff make satisfactory use of homework by extending the partnership with parents and encouraging positive attitudes to reading, in particular.

- 32 In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is excellent in 7 per cent of lessons, very good in 26 per cent, good in 41 per cent and satisfactory in 26 per cent. In Years 3 and 4, the quality of teaching is excellent in 14 per cent of lessons, very good in 24 per cent, good in 34 per cent and satisfactory in 27 per cent. A key feature of the quality of teaching is its consistency across the key stages and subjects. The strengths of teachers have been identified and they have been placed strategically throughout the school to ensure a breadth and good range of experience. At both key stages, teachers have good subject knowledge and expertise and use this well to plan work which supports curricular objectives and meets the needs of the children. Clear learning objectives are identified and often these are shared with pupils. Teachers have high expectations and pupils respond well to this in most cases. They generally manage pupils well so in most lessons little time is lost on correcting behaviour. Teachers have recognised the need to widen their range of strategies to manage the behaviour of a minority of pupils who have behavioural and personal difficulties and, as yet, have not responded positively to the high expectations of teachers in this area throughout the school.
- 33 Teachers' methods and organisational skills are good and used positively to encourage learning and gain the interest of the pupils. For example, they develop pupils' skills well in information technology across other subjects and this results in pupils perceiving the use of computers as being an integral part of their learning. Teachers and support staff work well together and recognise the varying needs in each class. The support from the literacy support assistants is effective and well managed. Little time is wasted throughout the school day and staff use resources well to support the teaching and learning. Work is marked regularly and some teachers are effective in using this activity to further encourage pupils to improve. Others, however, miss this opportunity to help pupils to improve their standard of work. In some classes, the setting of individual targets with pupils is particularly helpful in getting them to understand how they can achieve higher standards. Homework is set regularly and the quality of the work supports the pupils' learning in school, particularly in English and mathematics.
- 34 At both key stages, the standard of English teaching is at least good and is very good and occasionally excellent in half of the lessons seen. Teachers have good subject knowledge, high expectations and the pace of learning is good. All these aspects of teaching contribute positively to the progress which pupils make and the standards they achieve. Systems for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory overall apart for the guided reading sessions where practice is unsatisfactory. The setting of targets and sharing these with pupils contributes positively to the pupils' understanding of how they can achieve higher standards. Teachers have responded well to the weaknesses identified in writing and have developed strategies which have resulted in a raising of standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in the 1999 national tests.
- 35 The quality of teaching in mathematics is good at Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4. Teachers have only just begun to teach the numeracy sessions but have a clear understanding of its objectives and the structure and different elements of provision. In a minority of lessons more challenging work could have been provided for the higher attaining pupils as they completed the work set in less time than expected. This is more a reflection of the teachers' unfamiliarity with the numeracy sessions than any inherent deficiencies in their teaching. Usually, careful consideration is taken of the needs of pupils in each class.
- 36 In science, the quality of teaching is good at both key stages and contributes positively to the standards which pupils achieve. A good range of teaching methods is used, expectations are high and there is a clear focus on learning outcomes. Pupils are encouraged to develop their scientific vocabulary well. There have been improvements in several aspects of teaching since the last inspection.

- 37 The quality of teaching in information technology is good at both key stages and staff have responded well to the recent developments. Information technology is used well to support learning in a range of subjects and plans indicate clear learning objectives. Staff are confident when teaching new skills as a result of recent training and, in the best lessons, give good demonstrations. Where teaching is good, teachers help pupils to resolve problems by encouraging them to draw on their knowledge and skills rather than by telling them which buttons to press or which options to choose.
- 38 The quality of teaching in religious education is good at both key stages and supports the pupils' learning well. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Good teachers plan the lessons well and include activities that capture the interest of the pupils and gain good responses.
- 39 The quality of teaching is good at both key stages in art where the teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject is good and their expectations are high. In design and technology, the quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. This shows an improvement in teaching at Key Stage 1 since the last inspection. In geography, teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good in Years 3 and 4 where teachers have high expectations and good subject knowledge. Teaching in history and physical education is good at both key stages where lessons are well planned and is satisfactory in music.
- 40 The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good and appropriately structured to meet individual needs. Account is taken of the provision identified on the statements and on the pupils' individual education plans and work is planned accordingly. The support provided, together with the good quality of teaching, ensures that the majority of pupils make good progress towards the targets set.

40

The curriculum and assessment

- 41 The curriculum for the under fives prepares pupils soundly for transition to the next stage of their education at Key Stage 1. Planning takes account of pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development through the areas of learning. However, there are some weaknesses in the provision made for pupils' physical development as a result of the limited access to the outdoor play area and in the provision for more effective role play. Baseline assessments are used to target the learning needs of different pupils on their entry to school.
- 42 The curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 is well planned to provide pupils with opportunities to study the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, and to experience a comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education issues. Appropriate emphasis is given to English, mathematics and science with a daily session for literacy and numeracy each lasting an hour. The organisation of the school's curriculum also ensures that pupils have good learning opportunities and experiences in other subjects. Since the last inspection, significant developments have resulted in good planning systems and schemes of work that ensure equality of access for all pupils and opportunities to learn and make progress. Opportunities for the higher attaining pupils to make maximum progress are not always secure in mathematics lessons, however. Extra curricular provision is satisfactory and includes music, information technology, environmental and Christian activities. Outside agencies provide for short tennis, French and guitar clubs.
- 43 The school provides appropriate learning experiences and good support for the pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are reviewed and modified regularly as pupils make progress against the targets set for them.

- 44 Systems for assessing pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science are sound. Pupils are assessed on entry to school and their progress is monitored until the end of Key Stage 1 tasks and tests. Both statutory and optional tests are used to predict attainment in English and mathematics and to set termly targets for pupils in Key Stage 2. Procedures for assessing pupils' learning and progress in reading, especially in group reading activities, do not provide sufficient information to help identify future learning needs. While there are good examples of written comments giving useful feedback to pupils in Key Stage 2, marking practice is inconsistent. This area is identified for improvement in the School Development Plan. There are very good examples of individual pupil records in Year 4 that are used to inform future planning. Assessment information is used effectively in the planning of learning programmes for pupils with special educational needs. Annual reports to parents are informative and show targets for improvement.
- 45 Helpful portfolios of work in English, mathematics and science are maintained to support assessment and agreement procedures. Liaison arrangements at the end of Year 4 are good and relevant information is transferred to support the next stage of pupils' education.

45 **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

- 46 The overall provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral and social development, and so provides a positive contribution to the quality of education and pupils' good attitudes to learning. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory and supports the standards they achieve. Governors, along with parents, teaching and other staff, are continuing to shape a happy and caring community where everyone is encouraged and expected to perform well. Adults offer courteous and effective role models for pupils.
- 47 Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. It is promoted mostly through the school's daily assemblies, which provide a quiet time of reflection and prayer. Pupils come into assemblies quietly, and quickly settle to listen to the music being played. Assemblies have a set theme for the week; during the week of the inspection the theme was "journeys", and included the story of the Good Samaritan, journeys that teachers have made and the journey that a Ugandan had made to England. Birthdays and achievements, in and out of school, are celebrated. Prayers are also said at lunch-time and, in many classes, at home-time; this gives further time for quiet thought and provides a calming time for pupils. In religious education lessons, pupils learn about the main world religions and elements of their religious beliefs and celebrations; they reflect on their own experiences and other peoples' lives and beliefs. The school recognises the range of opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum, but there are insufficient planned opportunities to experience the awe and wonder of the natural and man-made world through their learning.
- 48 Provision for moral development is very good. The strong ethos of care and respect, of knowing right from wrong, is promoted by all staff throughout the school. Codes of behaviour are very evident; classrooms display rules which have been agreed by pupils and teachers; in Year 4 pupils sign the rules as an expression of ownership. These rules are referred to when necessary. Parents are informed of the school's code of behaviour through the parents' handbook; the school's partnership agreement, recently introduced, sets out clear expectations of pupils, families and school regarding pupils' moral development. The school emphasises a positive approach of encouragement and praise which is evident in lessons. Pupils are further encouraged when rewarded with stickers for achievement and good behaviour. A number of pupils with emotional and behavioural problems have recently enrolled at the school and the behaviour policy does not fully meet their needs. There is an anti-bullying policy with procedures for when bullying is reported.
- 49 The school makes very good provision for the pupils' social development. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is part of the school's taught curriculum. A key issue from the last inspection was to further challenge pupils to extend their personal learning skills. Pupils are now taught library skills and skills in information technology are being well developed. The school intends that pupils should be able to retrieve and use information from a wide range of CD ROMs thus adding to their opportunities for personal learning. The school's homework policy also aims to develop pupils' independent learning. Many opportunities are given in lessons for pupils to work collaboratively in pairs or in groups, often with them having to report back to the rest of the class in plenary sessions. Year 4 pupils are given special responsibilities; they set up the overhead

projector and music centre for assemblies, show visitors around the school and help run the school library. They also set their own personal targets for the term. In all classes, pupils are given responsibilities to help with the day to day organisation of the classroom. They have the opportunity to take part in a range of extra-curricular activities including a computer club, the Hedgehog Club, Discoverers, choir and recorders. Pupils become more aware of the wider world through the visits they make and the visitors to the school. Educational trips are arranged for pupils at least once a year. They raise money for charities throughout the year and provide ongoing support to put a young girl through school in Zaire. They sing for old people and take part in a country dance festival.

- 50 Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. An awareness of their own culture is satisfactorily developed through geography, history, art, religious education and music. However, their knowledge and understanding of the variety of cultures in the world is less well promoted. Music from other cultures is sometimes played in assemblies, and visitors from other cultures make an input. In geography they begin to study life in other countries, and in religious education they begin to look at world faiths and the impact they have on lives and cultures. There are few multi-cultural resources in school, except religious artefacts, to promote pupils' knowledge; the library contains few multi-cultural books which put over positive images of people from other races and cultures.

50 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

- 51 This area of the school's provision is good and has been consistently maintained since the last inspection. The procedures for introducing the under-fives to school routines are good and they settle quickly. The information gained through the successful tracking of pupils' progress through the school is used to set individual targets in English and mathematics and group targets in literacy and numeracy. The needs of pupils identified on the special educational needs register are carefully assessed and the support provided is of a good quality overall. This contributes positively to the progress they make and the standards they achieve. Monitoring of personal development is less formal but nevertheless effective. Teachers know their pupils well, celebrating their achievements as well as identifying their needs. Personal, social and health education plays an important role in pupils' development and is separately timetabled for each year group.
- 52 The school has a positive approach to discipline with emphasis on respect, honesty and self-discipline. The behaviour policy is consistently applied and underpins the good behaviour shown by the majority of pupils in and around the school. Effective procedures are in place to deal with any incidents of bullying should they occur. Members of the senior management team have recognised the need to further develop strategies to support teachers and pupils to cope with the recently identified challenging behaviour of a small minority of pupils. The careful monitoring of absence has ensured the school's unauthorised absence rate is well below the national average.
- 53 Management of child protection issues is effective and well known to all staff. There are well established and carefully recorded medical procedures with staff fully trained in first aid are always available. Concern for health and safety is a priority with areas such as safety, security and general cleanliness having a high profile. Some of the pupils have attended a course on how to handle themselves in hazardous situations. Pupils are fortunate in that they enjoy a safe, clean and bright environment in which to learn.

53 Partnership with parents and the community

- 54 Partnerships with parents and the community are good and have been well maintained since the last inspection. The school continues to play an important role within the local area and is well respected in the community. There are open lines of communication and a friendly approach to parents and visitors. When their children start school, parents are given sufficient information about the school's policies and procedures. They are encouraged to work in partnership with the staff and become fully involved in their child's learning. The school's partnership with those parents who have children identified on the special educational needs register is effective. The school development plan highlights the intention of staff to further involve these parents with the development of their child's individual education plan.

- 55 Parents receive a good variety of well presented information about the school, including forthcoming events and activities, but would appreciate a more detailed breakdown of the curriculum for each year group. There are two opportunities a year to discuss their children's progress and a helpful, evaluative annual report with targets for pupils from Year 1 to Year 4. Parents are fully committed to supporting their children's learning and regularly help with fund raising activities. The school encourages the partnership between home and school and welcomes parental support in the classroom. A small group of parents are learning to use the school's computer equipment in order to support more effectively pupils in school and at home.
- 56 The school makes full use of the resources within the local and wider community to enrich the curriculum and provide the pupils with a wide range of experiences. There are regular visitors to the school and close links with the feeder schools and playgroups. Fund raising through voucher schemes and local business sponsorship helps buy much needed equipment for the school.
- 57 The support of parents is a strength and ensures pupils experience a sense of community and citizenship necessary to enhance their overall personal development.

57 **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

57 **Leadership and management**

- 58 The school is well led and effectively managed. The headteacher provides particularly good leadership by recognising the strengths of the staff and managing then to create a dedicated and hard-working team. This results in a school that shares a common sense of values and purpose with a strong emphasis on raising standards through a focus on good quality teaching and learning. These shared aims contribute effectively to creating the positive school ethos. The new senior management team works well together and uses complementary skills to good effect, for example, by developing a whole-school system for planning the curriculum. The roles of the senior management team have improved since the last inspection supported by clear job descriptions and this has resulted in a sharper focus on tasks.
- 59 The management of the school is further enhanced by the work of the governors. There is a good working relationship between the school staff and governors although some governors are unable to regularly visit the school during the day due to other commitments. Each governor, however, has a specific interest in a subject or aspect of the school and contributes to the monitoring process by participation on a planned cycle of visits to the school. Following the visit, a report is written and circulated to other governors. Members of the governing body are fully aware of current issues and play an active part in the leadership of the school. An effective committee structure is in place and sub-groups meet regularly, in addition to full governing body meetings. Governors in the sub-groups are well informed and have a clear overview of the work of the school. The structure of their meetings, and the distribution of written information, ensures that decisions made in one group are known by all.
- 60 The school has a clear educational direction that is supported by the aims and the development plan. The latter is a comprehensive document which contains information on priorities identified by the school, actions in response to the main points outlined in the last inspection report and responses to government initiatives such as the introduction of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy. The document clearly indicates how the school staff and governors work together to prioritise developments with a clear focus on raising standards and improving the quality of education. The fact that most of the issues outlined by inspectors in this report have already been identified by the school in this document is further recognition of the quality of the school's management and its leadership.
- 61 The school's systems for monitoring teaching and the curriculum have been effective in improving the quality of education provided and the development of the curriculum since the last inspection. All teachers have been observed teaching literacy and all have been released to observe the mathematics co-ordinator teach numeracy. This sharing of expertise has ensured a consistency of approach and a raising of standards in writing. Last year was the first year in which some new schemes of work were in place and the introduction of these, and the new planning systems, have been the major focus of curriculum co-ordinator monitoring. They, also sample pupils'

work regularly to monitor coverage of subjects, progress and attainment. There is now a system in place to release co-ordinators from their teaching for short periods to monitor their subjects; they have responsibility for managing subject budgets and each year present a report to governors on the development and need for action in their subjects. The formal role of co-ordinator has developed well since the last inspection when it was identified as a key issue.

- 62 The development and management of the school's Literacy Strategy is good and the implementation of the strategy is having a positive effect on the raising of standards. Staff have been fully involved and have a clear view of the expectations placed upon them. They have received appropriate training and advice which has resulted in them having a firm understanding of the aims and structure of the Literacy Hour. Staff have also been prepared for the introduction of the Numeracy Strategy but insufficient time has passed for the impact of this new development to be fully evaluated. Early indications are, however, that pupils respond positively to the variety within lessons and the pace of lessons. Governors, the senior management team and classteachers work together to set targets for raising attainment in English and mathematics and literacy and numeracy targets are shared with parents. In Year 4, pupils are clear about how they can improve their work and their targets form an interesting display on the wall.
- 63 Communication within the school is good. The staff meet regularly, both formally and informally, to share their practice and ideas and the planning in year groups provides a good opportunity to discuss curriculum issues. Clear and appropriate written guidance is also available on the day-to-day running of the school. The headteacher's reports to governors are clear and informative, enabling the governors to further their knowledge and understanding of the school's work and development. Governors state that they have sufficient information to inform their decision-making. Statutory requirements are met in full.
- 64 The policy for special educational needs is a comprehensive document which has been identified for review in the current academic year. The school has identified a wish to involve parents more fully in the development of pupils' individual education plans and consult them at every stage of their child's provision. The register of special educational needs is accurate and the records of identified pupils are well kept. Statutory requirements for pupils with a statement are met fully. Overall, the good management and organisation of provision for pupils with special educational needs results in them making good progress at both key stages. There is a commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity, evident in a range of relevant policies and provision, and the different contributions of all pupils are valued.
- 65 The daily organisational arrangements are effective and efficient; routines are well established and understood by staff, pupils and parents. The school's administrative officer, support assistants, special educational needs support staff, lunchtime staff, caretaker, and voluntary helpers all make an important contribution to the smooth and efficient running of the school.
- 66 The senior management team has changed since the last inspection but the school has maintained the positive features outlined in the last report. A clear management framework is in place with a focus on improving the quality of education provided and raising standards. Staff have satisfactorily addressed the key issues identified in the last report and due to the success of recent developments, and the creation of a new management team, the school is in a good position to build on its successes and continue improving.
- 66 **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**
- 67 The school is well staffed for the number of pupils on roll and teachers have appropriate qualifications and experience. There is a good match between qualifications and subject responsibilities. Relevant training and professional development for literacy and the start of numeracy is having a positive impact on the effectiveness of teaching across the school. Teachers have participated in a variety of in-service training in connection with their roles and responsibilities. There are ongoing arrangements for the formal appraisal of teachers. The school has satisfactory arrangements for the induction of newly qualified teachers: there are, however, no agreed procedures for the induction of teachers who are new to the school.

- 68 The nursery assistant and learning support staff have received useful training in aspects such as baseline assessment, anti-bullying, child protection, working with statemented pupils, and in curriculum areas such as literacy, numeracy and information technology. Special needs support staff are appropriately qualified and experienced.
- 69 The school buildings provide satisfactory accommodation to meet the needs of the number and age range of the pupils overall. The temporary structure that provides classroom accommodation for Year 4 pupils is, however, limited in size for practical work. The library and small information technology suite share a room that is accessible to all pupils for independent learning. The school is very clean and well maintained. It is enhanced by photographs of pupils' learning experiences, their work across all subjects of the curriculum and displays of art loan materials. Accommodation in the early years unit is adequate. Displays of pupils' work and stimulus materials are not always used effectively to ensure a stimulating learning environment.
- 70 The extensive and attractive school grounds are very well maintained. There is good provision of fenced, hard surface and grassed areas. Interesting features include an adventure play area for older pupils with a safe, soft landing area, a fenced pond and garden areas. Governors have taken the decision to close the outdoor swimming pool due to the financial implications of repair and maintenance. There are well maintained, hard and grassed surface areas for outdoor education and play for reception pupils, but no all weather, safe, soft landing area for the use of large equipment.
- 71 Overall, resources for learning are satisfactory and accessible to pupils. The library is well organised and adequately resourced, and pupils from Year 2 onwards are taught how to locate and access books. The use of computers is good. The school grounds are used effectively to support both learning and pupils' personal development, such as the use of external areas for science and gardens for the gardening club. There are insufficient learning resources and large outdoor equipment for early years and reception pupils, and a limited range of small games equipment for reception and Year 1 pupils.

71 **The efficiency of the school**

- 72 Overall, the financial resources of the school are managed well; this is in line with the findings of the last inspection. The governing body oversees financial matters effectively, delegating certain responsibilities appropriately to the head teacher. Future staffing changes and the school's needs are discussed in order to make the best use of the financial resources available. Grants for the induction of newly qualified teachers, for reducing class sizes and for employing literacy support staff are being used effectively. Educational developments such as the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been well resourced and supported. The school has good financial planning, with areas of development costed and built into the school development plan. Although the school development plan spans a three year period, it is only costed for one year ahead. The maintenance of the current staffing levels, along with the need to finance initiatives such as literacy and numeracy, leaves little surplus to clearly budget for future developments beyond the year ahead. The budget shows a carry forward of less than five per cent, and reflects the prudent management of the budget available. Funds allocated for pupils with special educational needs are properly targeted and efficiently used. However, the school does not publish a breakdown of allocation of resources for special educational needs in the annual report to parents.
- 73 The teaching staff are deployed and used effectively, but because of the school's admissions policy there are periods during the day, in the autumn term, when teaching and support staff in Reception classes are under-used. Subject leaders are now involved in monitoring their subjects to ensure effective learning takes place. The support assistants in Key Stages 1 and 2 are used well and give good support to pupils with special educational needs and to pupils receiving literacy support. They are involved in planning and use their time effectively, often withdrawing small groups of pupils for support. The learning resources and accommodation are generally used effectively to promote pupils' learning. The day-to-day running of the school is smooth and effective due to the good working relationship between the office and other staff in the school. The accommodation is generally used to the full and the good use of display and interest areas around the school enhance the learning environment. However, the area for the under-fives is not well used; some areas are underused and some are overcrowded, which often results in intrusive noise levels between the different teaching groups. The new

library area has enabled the training of staff, parents and pupils in information technology, but the efficient use of the library for independent learning is curtailed by the positioning of computers in the access area and the use of the library area for withdrawal groups.

- 74 The routine financial controls and administration of the budget are now good. The school's 1998 audit report made several recommendations which have all been fully carried out apart from costing the school development plan three years ahead. A new computer system has been installed along with up to date packages for financial management. The head teacher and secretary both received training on the use of these packages.
- 75 The school receives an average budget per pupil. Given the average standard of attainment on entry, the good standards of attainment and good progress made by all pupils, the high quality of teaching and support given to pupils and the capacity for future improvement, the school gives good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

75 AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

- 76 At the time of the inspection there were 42 children under five in school, 33 of whom were attending part-time for either a morning or afternoon session. All children start school at the beginning of the academic year in which they are five. They attend on a part-time basis until the beginning of the term in which they are five when they then become full-time. Most have had some pre-school experience. What they know, understand and can do on entering the reception classes is generally in line with the levels expected for pupils of that age, although there are few pupils with good social and personal development skills. This is confirmed by the results of a baseline test, which is administered to all children by the autumn half-term. Most children, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress and by the age of five, attain levels which meet the expectations of the nationally agreed Desirable Outcomes in all areas of learning.

Personal and Social Development

- 77 Many children make good progress with their personal and social development and by five they work, play and co-operate well with others and have a positive attitude towards school and learning. This enables them to make a good start to their National Curriculum studies. Most concentrate and persevere in their activities and have the confidence to seek help where needed. Through high expectations of good behaviour and the good role models presented by the adults around them, children quickly establish good relationships with other children and adults. During the inspection the behaviour of the under-fives was good. Children are polite and helpful to each other as well as their teachers. They learn to work, play and co-operate with others beyond their family and accept the daily routines of school. For example they sit on the carpet when they arrive to answer the register, and help to tidy up. Although children share resources well, the area is under-resourced and they have restricted opportunities to extend their imaginative play. The area with its own integral toilets and wash basins has a positive effect on good standards of personal hygiene being taught. By the time children become five they are well integrated into main school life and attend assemblies and sit well together at lunchtime.

77 Language and Literacy

- 78 Children have average language and literacy skills when they start school. As a result of the good teaching and the recent introduction of a formal phonic programme, they make good progress and meet the expectations of the nationally agreed Desirable Outcomes by the time they are five. They readily learn new sounds and can recognise the symbols that go with these sounds. They can recognise the letters in words and give suggestions for words beginning with specific sounds, for example, 'l' for lion. They have opportunities to share books, including non-fiction texts, and have stories read to them. They know that non-fiction texts are 'not story books' and make comments about a book on seasons based on their own experiences. Children regularly take home books to share with their parents and this encourages positive attitudes to reading. There are opportunities through the day for the extension of speaking and listening skills. Writing skills are developed alongside reading skills and pupils display a range of attainments. Higher-attainers can write unaided indicating a good understanding by correctly writing the initial letter of each word whilst average-attainers copy underneath the teachers' writing and lower-attainers make marks. They develop good pencil control through practising writing patterns and letter formation, drawing and copying the teachers' model of writing.

78 Mathematics

- 79 Children make satisfactory progress in mathematics overall, although a minority of higher attaining pupils were not sufficiently challenged in one lesson observed. In this case, the children were able to count and recognise numbers at least to ten although the focus of the lesson was to use numbers to five. This was more a reflection of the teacher getting to know the attainment levels of the children and her unfamiliarity with the numeracy strategy in this early part of the term, rather than any overall deficiencies in her teaching. Most pupils in this lesson made good progress and by the end could count on one up to five and know that $4 + 0 = 4$. Children can make sets up to five, using toy animals and cubes and accurately match numbers to objects from one to five. They display an understanding of terms such as 'longer than' and 'shorter than' by drawing lines of appropriate

length and can draw 'larger' and 'smaller' shapes. They recognise shapes such as a square and a circle and make repeating patterns of two colours using beads. By the age of five, pupils attain levels which meet the nationally agreed Desirable Outcomes.

79 Creative Development

- 80 Children make satisfactory progress with their creative development and experience a range of activities, including specific music and art sessions. Their creative development is restricted, however, by the inadequate provision of facilities to encourage role-play and imaginative play. They develop good colour mixing skills when painting Elmer the Elephant and when creating their self portraits which are displayed over their coat pegs. They cut out shapes from paper to develop a collage and explore colour when creating their paintings of flowers. They develop their observational skills by looking at sections of fruit when printing. The youngest children begin to identify a range of musical instruments and use appropriate terms such as 'tap', 'scrape' and 'shake' to describe how they can be played. By the age of five, pupils attain levels which meet the nationally agreed Desirable Outcomes.

80 Physical Development

- 81 Although children's physical development is satisfactory overall due to the provision of specific physical education sessions, it is restricted by the unsatisfactory provision for outdoor play and by the lack of resources in lessons and at playtimes. There are few wheeled toys and little equipment to encourage balancing and climbing. This is particularly noticeable for the youngest pupils, some of whom are just four on entering school, and still require a significant provision of physical and creative play. In a physical education lesson, children follow instructions well and run, stop and walk in response to the teacher's instructions. They demonstrate different ways of moving in a low position and begin to control their movements well. Children have opportunities through the day to develop their manipulative skills by, for example, using construction toys but this, too, is restricted by a lack of resources. Most children make satisfactory progress and by the age of five attain levels which meet the nationally agreed Desirable Outcomes.

81 Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 82 Children come to school with sound knowledge and understanding of the world from their home and pre-school experiences. They make satisfactory progress in their learning about the local environment through the study of buildings in Wootton and develop early historical skills in relation to chronology and using artefacts to gain evidence. They make comparisons, for example, between 'old' and 'new' clothes and toys. Through their science topics, children correctly identify sources of light and know the life cycle of a caterpillar. They use a computer effectively and use a paint program independently to make their own patterns. Higher attaining children print their work unaided. Children develop an understanding of people beyond their own family through the study of 'People Who Help Us' and are also encouraged to think about their own responses, for example, in a lesson which focuses on friendship.
- 83 The curriculum is closely related to the nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes with opportunities for children to work within National Curriculum Level 1 work when appropriate. Both reception teachers and the nursery trained assistant plan well together to ensure the children receive a broad and balanced curriculum. However, this is complicated due to the varying levels of entry of pupils to full-time education and the different timings of activities during the day for part-time and full-time children. Planning takes a considerable amount of time to ensure that the varying needs of children are met and the timetable has to be reviewed at the beginning of each term as more children become full-time. The nationally required testing programme is carried out, which together with information gathered from parents, usually pinpoints attainment when children start Reception and enables work to be matched to meet their needs.

- 84 The quality of teaching is often good in all areas of learning and this enables children to make good progress and develop positive attitudes. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the needs of the children in their care and the teaching of children under five is encouraging and makes good use of praise and positive comments. Both teachers, who are relatively new to the role, work well with the established nursery trained assistant and they are beginning to develop a consistent approach to teaching and learning. This results in sessions with clear routines and well-managed children. Staff are developing procedures for assessing children but currently this focuses more on the activities covered rather than what the children have achieved. They work hard to use the time effectively but due to the different timings of sessions for part-time and full-time children, for some part of the day there is an inefficient use of staffing. Staff have good relationships with the children and their parents and the induction of children into school is good.
- 85 Accommodation is adequate but has been neglected in recent years. The movement of children in uncarpeted areas gives rise to inappropriate levels of noise for some periods during the day and the area lacks the stimulation which should be found in work areas for children of this age. Although children have direct access to an outside area, this is not used regularly due to a lack of resources and appropriate equipment. There is a paucity of good quality resources for the under-fives although the co-ordinator has recently introduced an effective phonics programme.
- 86 In the school development plan, the school has identified the need to improve provision for the under-fives and has begun this process by appointing two new members of staff. Staff are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and keen to improve provision.
- 87 No judgements were made on children under-five in the last inspection so comparisons can not be made.

87 **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

87 **English**

- 88 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in English is above national averages. These judgements are reflected in the standards in reading reached by pupils in the 1998 National Curriculum tests and tasks for Key Stages 1 but not in writing when pupils' attainment was below the national average. Although the percentage of pupils reaching the level expected for their age (Level 2) was in line with national averages, the percentage of pupils attaining higher levels was below the national average. Compared with seven-year-old pupils in schools of similar social and economic backgrounds, attainment in reading was above average and in writing it was below. The school carefully analysed these results and prioritised the need to develop pupils' writing skills. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests and tasks indicate a return to the standards achieved in 1996 and indicate that the action taken by the school was successful. Taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together, the performance of pupils in reading and writing was above the national average. There are slight differences between the achievements of girls and boys but these are in line with national trends. By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 4, they reach levels of attainment above those expected for pupils of the same age nationally. Levels of attainment have improved since the last inspection.
- 89 Pupils enter the school with average skills in English. They generally make good, consistent progress throughout the school to reach above average levels of attainment by Year 4. Good progress is achieved through a number of factors. Teaching is of a good standard and makes a direct impact on the improvement of pupils' standards of performance. A well-balanced curriculum allows systematic development to be made, through the well-matched provision and good monitoring processes. Parents generally give their children good support, especially in reading. This further enhances progress and gives pupils positive attitudes towards the subject. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs also make good progress towards the targets set for them. This reflects the effective support provided and the setting of work which provides appropriate challenge and builds on their prior attainment.

- 90 The school's implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is good. It is having a beneficial effect on progress, especially by improving pupils' responses to texts and in developing their understanding of the rules and conventions of grammar in Standard English. The development of pupils' literacy skills percolates through most areas of the school curriculum, with good examples of written English across a range of subjects.
- 91 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is good. Most listen and talk with confidence in a wide range of contexts and higher-attaining pupils give articulate detailed answers to questions. In one Year 2 class, pupils clearly describe their experiences after reading *Not Now Bernard* and express amusement when hearing others' comments. Listening skills are well developed and the majority of pupils indicate by their answers and actions that they have understood. Similarly, the pupils in Year 4 have well developed speaking and listening skills. They use reasoned argument in Year 4 when discussing the contents of newspapers and respond well to the ideas of others. Respect is shown for the speaker and their opinions.
- 92 Pupils in Year 2 achieve good standards in reading and the majority are fluent and accurate readers across a range of texts. Higher attaining pupils are independent readers and sustain reading for good periods of time. Most pupils have a good knowledge of books and are familiar with terms such as title, author, illustrator, chapter and contents. Phonics skills are used by pupils, including those with special educational needs, in word building strategies. In Year 4, many pupils show understanding of significant ideas, events and characters and are beginning to use inference and deduction. Most read with good expression taking note of the punctuation to add meaning. Pupils are exposed to a satisfactory range of literature.
- 93 By the end of Key Stage 1, the quality of pupils' writing is good. Most pupils sequence their sentences logically in extended pieces of work and use a style which interests the reader. Sentences are clearly delineated with full stops and capital letters used properly and higher-attainers use exclamation marks and commas. The spelling of words in common use is usually accurate. The majority of pupils have a fluent and legible style of handwriting. Pupils write in a wide range of styles. They compile lists of ingredients, write a report following a visit to a butterfly park, write letters and story books as well as writing in the more common narrative style. In Year 4, pupils' writing is often thoughtful and imaginative, for example when writing about their memories of Wootton School and when writing a letter home in the role of evacuees. Pupils use punctuation well in their written work. Commas and question marks are generally used accurately and higher-attainers use speech marks well. Pupils spell most complex words with a good deal of accuracy. Pupils' presentation of work is good. Handwriting is fluently joined in a legible style.
- 94 Pupils' response in English lessons is very good in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Behaviour is good in almost all lessons, with only occasional pupil restlessness towards the end of teachers' instructions. Pupils have good relationships with each other and collaborate well, sharing resources and helping with spellings. Levels of confidence are also good and this allows pupils to comfortably raise questions in discussion sessions. In the best lessons, pupils display high levels of concentration and apply themselves well to the tasks set. Many pupils show genuine enjoyment in literacy work, particularly in response to new texts.
- 95 At both key stages, the standard of English teaching is at least good and is very good and occasionally excellent in 50 per cent of lessons. Teachers' planning is thorough and well matched to the objectives of the National Literacy Strategy. They have good subject knowledge and use this to ask and answer questions which stimulate pupils' learning. Lessons are usually challenging and of a good pace. There are positive relationships between teachers and pupils and lessons are well managed. High expectations for behaviour and the standard of work to be produced in the lesson is instrumental in pupils making good progress. Some teachers use positive marking strategies as well as informal assessments whilst monitoring pupils' work but practice is inconsistent. Systems for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory overall apart for the guided reading sessions where practice is unsatisfactory. Targets are set for pupils and these are shared with pupils and parents. Teachers use praise effectively to encourage pupils and this helps to sustain good levels of self-esteem. Homework is used to consolidate and build upon class work. Pupils undertake reading at home on a regular basis, which aids progress in this area.

96 The co-ordinator has been in post for less than two terms so has had little opportunity to develop the subject. She is, however, well qualified to promote English in school and has a clear view of how to extend teaching and learning and raise standards. Teachers have been monitored and supported during the introduction of the Literacy Strategy and this has improved the quality of teaching and improved standards over the last year. Recent purchases have improved the quality and quantity of books and the library has been developed to provide opportunities to improve pupils' study skills. All National Curriculum requirements are fully met.

96 **Mathematics**

97 In the previous report, standards of attainment were judged to be good at both key stages with some that were outstanding. In 1998 results from national testing in mathematics showed that pupils' performance was above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. Evidence from the last three years (1996-8) National Curriculum tests show a similar overall picture to 1998. Indications are that the school's 1999 results have been maintained at levels similar to those achieved in 1998. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Key Stage 1, and by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, most pupils are on course to attain levels which are above the national average, showing that the high standards of the previous inspection have been maintained. Also, standards in numeracy are good by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils leave school in Year 4.

98 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are confident with number bonds up to ten, and can easily count to a hundred and beyond. They understand odd and even numbers, are beginning to use standard measures and can read the clock accurately. Lessons observed in Key Stage 1 show pupils to be good at mental calculations, quickly holding up correct numbers in response to questions on number bonds. They readily identify two and three-dimensional shapes with some clear understanding of faces, edges and corners. In Year 2, they can identify a wider range of two dimensional shapes including pentagons, hexagons and octagons.

99 In Key Stage 2, by Year 4, pupils are developing strategies for problem solving; they understand numbers up to a thousand and beyond with an understanding of place value, and many recognise decimal points and negative numbers. They have a good knowledge of standard measures and can select appropriate measures, for example, when measuring the length of a room. Some correctly use the terms perimeter and area. They have a good grasp of multiplication tables and quick mental recall of addition and subtraction up to and from twenty; they construct bar charts from recorded information and interpret them; they understand reflective symmetry and can show the lines of symmetry on regular two dimensional shapes. With the introduction of the numeracy sessions pupils are being made more aware of the need to work out their own strategies for problem solving. An excellent lesson was observed when pupils had to explain their own strategies to the rest of the class for solving problems involving money.

100 The inspection found that pupils in both key stages, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress in mathematics. This is clearly evident where lessons are well planned and organised, with good pace and high expectation. In Year 1, pupils made very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of shape where quality experiences and opportunities for learning were provided; pupils were given challenging but appropriate tasks following mental calculations, concluding with a plenary session where groups reported their findings to the rest of the class. In Year 4, very good progress was made by all pupils, including those with special educational needs, in a lesson covering mental calculation, a written tables' test and carefully thought out and well prepared problem solving tasks for all ability groups. Pupils understood that answers could be checked by using inverse operations.

101 Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are mostly good. Where there is sufficient pace and variety, pupils enjoy the lesson and maintain interest and enthusiasm. When the introductions to lessons do not allow enough involvement of pupils or when tasks are not sufficiently matched to the abilities of pupils, there is some restlessness. Pupils work well together in pairs and in groups, sharing ideas and materials; they are eager to answer questions, and give explanations for their answers. The last inspection said that pupils should be further challenged to extend their personal learning skills. With the introduction of the numeracy sessions and an emphasis on finding their own strategies for solving problems, this need for increased challenge is starting to be met.

- 102 The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good overall, with occasional lessons which are very good or excellent. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is good overall with a small minority of excellent lessons. In one excellent lesson there was a very high expectation of pupils. The lesson was well planned and included all the strands of the Numeracy Strategy with a rigorous use of questions linked with technical vocabulary. A scrutiny of the previous year's work shows that although high standards of attainment were being achieved, there was an over reliance of commercially produced work-sheets, which does not always give a clear indication of how the work is being tackled. This work is consistently marked but there are few written evaluative comments to further pupils' learning and understanding. With the introduction of the Numeracy Strategy pupils are now expected to demonstrate, both orally and in written form, their strategies for investigating and solving problems. This was evident in a well prepared lesson where pupils reported on how they had investigated shapes and what they had discovered. Although careful consideration is taken of previous learning when grouping pupils and planning lessons, at times the higher-attainers make rapid progress in lessons which is not always anticipated. Some pupils in Year 2, studying shapes, very quickly learnt their names and properties, and spent time consolidating this learning by colouring in a work-sheet when they could have been moving on. Some pupils in Year 4, organising shapes into sets by their properties, very easily completed the task and needed to be moved on. This is partly a reflection of the teachers' unfamiliarity with the numeracy lessons which they had been teaching for only five weeks when being observed, rather than any overall deficiencies in their teaching. Teaching strategies for the higher attaining pupils need further consideration, so as to provide more activities suited to their ability rather than just a more difficult extension of what the rest of the class are doing.
- 103 The school has recently introduced the Numeracy Strategy and mathematics lessons now follow a structure with mental calculation, a main teaching activity and a plenary session. Teachers are becoming more skilled in oral work, asking many more open questions which require thought-out answers. Pupils are responding positively to the variety within lessons and the pace of lessons.
- 104 The school provides a good, broad and balanced curriculum in mathematics, incorporating the programmes of study for both key stages. Mathematics is being used in other areas of the curriculum, in science in Year 3 where pupils are charting their heights and weights, and in geography in Year 2 where they have made a chart, "Where did you visit?" Information technology is being used increasingly in lessons to aid pupils learning and understanding in mathematics. Assessment is carried out well through teachers observing and questioning pupils in lessons, and the marking of pupils' work. Lesson plans always list opportunities for assessment. Each class has a list of key learning objectives for each half term and teachers record attainment against these objectives, for each pupil; an analysis is made of the results from national testing to identify strengths and weaknesses. Future planning takes account of these assessments.
- 105 The mathematics co-ordinator gives strong support throughout the school. The mathematics' policy is shortly to be revised and the numeracy framework now provides the scheme of work. Careful thought has been given to the introduction of the Numeracy Strategy; training has been undertaken by all the staff, teachers' planning and pupils' learning are being monitored, and lessons will be observed as part of the school's programme for monitoring teaching. There has been a meeting for parents at which the Numeracy Strategy was explained. Some material from the existing published scheme of work is being assimilated effectively into the numeracy programme and other materials are being added. There are adequate resources for teaching mathematics; many new resources have recently been added, some of them made by the co-ordinator. Most classrooms have a mathematics table or corner and displays of work also add interest to the classroom environment. All National Curriculum requirements are fully met.

Science

- 106 Results of teacher assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998 show that the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 was above the national average and the percentage of pupils achieving Level 3 was broadly in line with the national average. These results indicate a maintenance of standards since the last inspection.

- 107 Based on the work saved from the last school year, standards are good by the end of Year 2 and when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4. The inspection findings also indicate that standards of current work are good, both at the beginning of Year 2 and at the beginning of Year 4. Pupils in Year 2 understand some of the conditions necessary for humans to grow and stay healthy, such as taking exercise and eating certain types of foods. They follow instructions when performing tasks and make observations which help them to answer questions about how they feel before and after exercise. In their study of friction, pupils in Year 4 recognise the need to vary one factor, such as changing the surface of a ramp, while keeping others constant in order to carry out a fair test. The majority record their results on a graph independently; lower attaining pupils record with the support of the teacher.
- 108 Good progress is made overall as pupils move through both key stages. In Year 1, pupils show interest and curiosity, make observations and record them through drawings related to work involving the senses. Some higher attaining pupils know that living things grow and reproduce. At Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils relate the need for a healthy diet to the importance of looking after their teeth, and know that some foods cause decay. The majority of pupils know the names of different teeth and that these are used for different purposes. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils predict certain outcomes of an investigation on friction; one pupil with special educational needs working with a more able pupil at the computer, shows a good ability to concentrate and give advice on recording predictions and incorporating digital photographs with text. Other pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set and show their understanding of factors which slow objects down, such as rough surfaces.
- 109 Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Younger pupils concentrate well, behave very sensibly and listen very carefully to instructions when carrying out an investigation, as in Year 1 when using their sense of touch and hearing. Year 2 pupils work purposefully with good concentration when investigating breathing rates. Older pupils conduct investigations sensibly, for example when handling food in Year 3, and use equipment with care. Pupils in Year 4 support one another and show good, independent learning skills when, for instance, working at the computer. All pupils show a pride in their work which is increasingly well presented as they move through the school.
- 110 Teaching is good overall at both key stages. Lessons have a clear structure and are well planned. A good range of teaching methods is used to ensure that pupils make progress and expectations of learning and behaviour are high. There is good consistency in the approaches to teaching and learning in lessons observed throughout the school. Recent changes to planning have resulted in a good focus on learning objectives and outcomes which are shared with the pupils. Experimental and investigative science is given due emphasis in planning and permeates all other areas of science work. Good emphasis is placed on language and science through the development of pupils' scientific vocabulary, speaking, listening and writing skills. All National Curriculum requirements are fully met.

110

OTHER SUBJECTS

110 Information technology

- 111 There has been an improvement in the provision of information technology since the last inspection, particularly within the last year since the appointment of a new co-ordinator. The policy has been recently reviewed and the co-ordinator has adapted the nationally recommended scheme of work for information technology to ensure that the skills learnt in information technology lessons are extended across other areas of the curriculum. Teachers have improved their knowledge and expertise, for example, through training sessions in school, which focus on the use of programmable toys. Also, at least one teacher from each year group has attended specific courses. The school has up-graded its computer system through recent purchases of personal computers, printers, a photo scanner and digital camera. Each of these developments has improved pupils' experiences, the progress they make and the standards achieved. All National Curriculum requirements are fully met.

- 112 At the end of Key Stage 1, standards are in line with those expected of pupils at seven. Pupils have good skills in using the keyboard, with the more confident pupils showing an understanding of the enter, delete, arrow and tab key functions. Pupils use the mouse well to control on screen events and can move through screen commands where they have to make a choice, for example, they click on the file choice to enter and save data. They use word processing to write simple sentences and select pictures to complement the text. Good links are made with other subjects, for example when pupils use a program to design Joseph's multicoloured coat and in geography when they collect and store data about where pupils went for their summer holidays. This information is well displayed in the form of pie charts and bar graphs and positively adds to the classroom environment and pupils' self-esteem.
- 113 By the end of Year 4, standards are in line with those expected for pupils of that age. Most pupils use a word processor with confidence, showing the ability to change the layout of their work, the font size and style and to use the spell check facility. Pupils develop their data-handling skills when undertaking an investigation on friction in a science lesson and present their work well. They understand how to control equipment to achieve specific outcomes by giving a series of instructions in a 'maze' program, make decisions and are aware of the consequences of their choices. Most pupils have a clear understanding of the uses of the Internet.
- 114 Across the school, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are currently making good progress as a direct result of the improvements in provision. Insufficient time has passed, however, for this to impact on pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4. Overall, pupils make better progress in the communicating and handling information sections of the curriculum than in the controlling, measuring and modelling sections, as they have more opportunities to do so. Pupils in a Year 1 class quickly understand how to use a new program to select pictures of their choice and use a word-processing package to write a sentence about it. In Year 3, pupils continue to develop their skills of combining text and graphics; they know how to store and retrieve their work and use appropriate subject specific language to describe these processes. Pupils have also quickly developed an understanding of the digital camera and use this to improve their work. All pupils use word-processing and art packages to enhance their work and their skills develop appropriately as they move through the school. The progress of girls, different ethnic groups, and special needs pupils is comparable with others in the school and is not inhibited by, for example, unequal access to the computers or appropriate resources.
- 115 Pupils' attitudes to their work are generally good. Most enjoy using information technology and concentrate well when using the computer. They develop good levels of independence, persevering when they encounter difficulties and collaborating well in pairs when appropriate. Relationships are good and pupils share resources well. The behaviour of a small minority of boys in a Year 2 class, however, did waste time in one lesson when they wanted to use the computer and not watch the demonstration.
- 116 The quality of teaching overall is good and staff have responded well to the recent developments. A scrutiny of work indicates that staff use information technology well to support learning in a range of subjects including literacy and numeracy. Planning is generally good with lesson plans indicating clear learning objectives based on the requirements of the scheme of work and pupils' needs. Some staff have good subject knowledge and most are confident when teaching new skills. In the best lessons, teachers give good demonstrations and encourage pupils to develop their thinking by asking questions which stimulate their interest. Questioning is also used well to assess pupils' understanding. They use the expertise of pupils to demonstrate good practice and raise pupils' self-esteem by giving appropriate praise. Where teaching is good, teachers help pupils to resolve problems by encouraging them to draw on their knowledge and skills rather than by telling them which buttons to press or which options to choose. Good links exist with the local upper school where Year 4 pupils visit in the summer term and use their facilities.

- 117 The co-ordinator has good knowledge of the subject and a good overview of information technology within the school. On appointment, she quickly assessed the needs of the school and developed an appropriate action plan. She has ensured that staff have appropriate support and also regularly runs a session for parents to up-date their skills so that they can give effective support in class and at home. She has identified the need to review provision after a year of working with the scheme of work and has recently introduced a new system of assessment. Insufficient time has passed, however, for the impact of this to be evaluated. The subject is well managed and developed in line with the targets outlined in the school development plan. This is a good example of how the role of curriculum co-ordinator has improved since the last inspection.

117

Religious education

- 118 The previous report showed that standards in religious education in both key stages were always sound. This inspection has shown that standards in religious education are now good at the end of Key Stage 1 and when pupils leave school in Year 4, when considered against the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. This indicates an improvement since the last inspection.
- 119 In Key Stage 1, pupils consider the natural world and their place within it as a unique individual; they look at how people celebrate special occasions. Pupils in Year 1 look at the pattern of the natural world; they study autumn and harvest, and how the season is celebrated by Christians at Harvest Festival and Jews at Sukkot. They hear stories from the Bible and begin to learn about other sacred writings. In Year 2, pupils find out about the Qu'ran and its special place in Islam. They learn about people in the community who help us and also those who need help. Pupils in Key Stage 2 study religious celebrations and the special food associated with them in different religions. They look at the meaning of the stories that Jesus told and consider what makes them feel good or bad about themselves. Year 3 pupils think about what it means to lose something special after hearing the parables of the lost sheep and the prodigal son. In Year 4, they find out about Buddhism, rites of passage, and that people throughout the world do not have equal shares. They learn that objects can have a religious significance by studying the features of a cathedral and their special meaning.
- 120 From lesson observations pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress. This is particularly evident when teaching involves good planning and well thought out and prepared tasks which capture the interest and enthusiasm of the pupils. The discussion in a Year 1 lesson about the seasons and harvest started pupils thinking carefully about themselves and their experiences, and enabled them to share these thoughts with the class. The scrutiny of the previous year's work does not give such a clear picture of progress being made over the year. Although not all lessons involve pupils completing a written or recorded task, the evidence was often in the form of worksheets, completed and ticked with few teacher comments. However, the work in Year 4 was much better thought out and presented, with helpful comments from teachers.
- 121 Pupils' attitudes to religious education are good. They listen attentively to their teachers and to each other and are keen to join in discussions, making thoughtful and sensitive contributions. They begin to realise the importance and significance of religion to the lives of people.
- 122 The quality of teaching observed is good overall. When lessons are good they are planned with pace, interest and high expectations. One lesson was judged to be very good in which pupils in Year 4 identified the key features of a cathedral. Following an opening discussion, groups of pupils investigated the various features, and then reported back to the rest of the class about these features and their special significance. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, were fully involved in their own learning.
- 123 The curriculum and policy are based on the locally Agreed Syllabus, and fully comply with statutory requirements. Short term assessment opportunities are always shown in lesson planning. At the end of each term a formal assessment is made of the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the term's work. This assessment uses test sheets, prepared for different ability levels and based on the local authority's assessment handbook. An analysis of results assists with future planning for religious education.

- 124 The subject leader for religious education has recently reviewed the policy, and there is a scheme of work for each year group, with clear weekly outlines, based on the locally Agreed Syllabus. This provides clear continuity and progression for the subject. Medium term plans are checked against the scheme of work and teaching will be observed as part of the school's ongoing programme for the monitoring of teaching. Religious education lessons make a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are adequate resources for religious education which are boxed according to topics covered. Materials loaned from the Resource Learning Centre supplement these. Very good use is made of information technology through a package prepared by the local authority that provides a wide range of learning materials, which can be accessed by staff, and pupils as required.

Art

- 125 Standards of pupils in art by the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4 are above that expected for pupils of that age. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4 they have well developed drawing and painting skills. They make carefully observed drawings of plants, fruits and musical instruments and some use a computer drawing program with good control and sensitivity in their observational work.
- 126 Progress for all pupils throughout the school is good. It is particularly good in some lessons at both key stages where pupils are given opportunities to investigate the characteristics of different stimulus materials that are appropriate to the tasks; express their thoughts and feelings and experiment with resources in order to develop their own ideas in their sketchbooks. In Year 1, pupils make very carefully observed drawings of the decorative patterns, lines and textures in clothes and jewellery. They sort and select their own materials and make thoughtful and considered arrangements involving colour relationships, prior to their work on designing clothes for a special occasion. Pupils in Year 2 use their imagination well when modelling animals in clay and applying surface decoration to represent texture. In Year 3, pupils use their developing skills to create good string block prints of leaves and card block prints of designs for a class patchwork quilt. They use paper in different ways to create texture, suggest ways in which it can be used to create landscapes and are beginning to show an understanding of composition. In Year 4, pupils build on their understanding of pattern when working in clay relief. Pupils make good progress overall in developing an appropriate art vocabulary and working with increasing independence using their own ideas. They are clear about learning intentions and understand how to achieve these.
- 127 Pupils display good attitudes to learning and generally enjoy their work. Behaviour is good and most pupils persevere to improve their work. They share resources well and treat them with care. Relationships are good.
- 128 Teaching is good overall at both key stages. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject is good; their expectations of learning are appropriately high and relationships are good. The good progress that pupils make, both within lessons and over time, is directly related to the well planned opportunities for pupils to explore and experiment with materials and ideas, for example through sorting and arranging materials in Year 1, through exploration of the characteristics of clay in Year 2 and investigating the textural possibilities of paper in Year 3. Teachers' planning builds on pupils' previous learning experiences effectively. Literacy in art is promoted effectively by the use of an appropriate vocabulary to describe the visual and tactile qualities of objects, artefacts and other stimulus materials. Good opportunities for speaking and listening are created in lessons for whole class and individual discussions.

Design and Technology

- 129 During the course of the inspection, there were only limited opportunities to observe the teaching of design and technology. Evidence gained from discussions with pupils, scrutiny of their work, displays and photographs has also been used as the basis of judgements. Since the last inspection the evidence indicates there has been some improvement at Key Stage 1 and standards have been maintained in Years 3 and 4. In Key Stage 1, the quality of pupils' products, such as Joseph's multicoloured coat made in Year 2 is good, incorporating both the skills of design and making. In Years 3 and 4, pupils produce sketches of their designs, for example making buggies, they list the materials and tools needed to make their artefacts and

evaluate their finished work.

- 130 Pupils' progress is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good overall in relation to their prior levels of attainment. Pupils undertake a variety of designing and making activities, using different materials and techniques, as they move through the school. Their skills are enhanced in a series of suitable steps over time. For example, at Key Stage 1, the pupils increasingly understand and test the materials they use for suitability for the purpose to which they will be put, whilst in Years 3 and 4 pupils evaluate their artefacts and list ways to improve the finished product. There is satisfactory progression over time in the use of numeracy, literacy and information technology skills used by pupils when designing and making their products.
- 131 The evidence from the lessons observed indicates that pupils' response is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. Overall, pupils are well behaved, work hard and enthusiastically and are well motivated. Pupils involved in making a scene from Cinderella in a Year 1 class were able to carry out instructions, and choose whether to use levers or sliders from information given. Pupils handle equipment sensibly and are able to organise their own work with increasing independence.
- 132 The evidence indicates that the quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. Since the last inspection teaching shows improvement at Key Stage 1 whilst in Years 3 and 4 the quality of teaching has been maintained. Pupils are provided with work in a good range of materials, including stiff and mouldable media, frameworks, construction kits and food. They are given opportunities to design and make different artefacts such as Joseph's multicoloured coat using computer aided design in Key Stage 1 and moving vehicles using electrical circuits and switches in the lower junior classes. Where the teachers manage the pupils well, sustaining their interest and giving them time to reflect on their work, the teaching is good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and provide the pupils with work of a suitably challenging nature. The moving buggies made by pupils in Year 4 were examples of this, with pupils of differing abilities producing buggies of varying degrees of complexity according to their abilities.
- 133 The curriculum is broad and balanced and there is an appropriate allocation of time. The school has recently introduced a new scheme of work which has not yet been fully implemented throughout the school. The recently appointed co-ordinator has not had time to influence the delivery of the curriculum but a sound policy exists which supports teaching and learning across all aspects of the National Curriculum. There has not been time for monitoring the subject on a formal basis although this is planned. A recent audit of resources was made by the local education authority adviser; some new resources have been purchased and others identified for future purchase. The subject makes a suitable contribution to the pupils' social development, for example when they work together, and there is satisfactory emphasis on the implications of technological development.

Geography

- 134 Much of last year's work was based on the school's previous geography curriculum and shows that standards were below those expected of pupils by the end of Year 4. The most recent work on local environmental issues shows pupils purposefully engaged in geographical enquiry through observing and questioning change in the immediate school environment and suggesting improvements. Good links with information and communication technology are made through the use of a digital camera, a word processing program and tape recorder. Pupils' work is attractively presented but the majority have difficulty constructing reports. Other work, such as drawn maps of the route to school and food from around the world, is not sufficiently challenging for pupils of this age.
- 135 Work from September shows both satisfactory standards and progress at Key Stage 1. Year 1 pupils identify the location of buildings in photographs of the area around the school and use appropriate vocabulary such as near and far, church, library, bungalow and shop. Their understanding of how places have changed is less secure due to the too challenging task involving the comparison of photographs. In Year 2, pupils use pictures and a video recording to identify differences in the seaside between the past and present times, such as bathing huts and amusements. Some pupils use the term 'physical features' when describing cliffs but others have a more limited vocabulary. Good links with information and communication technology are made through the use of data handling on places that pupils have visited and their methods of transport.

- 136 At Key Stage 2, standards and progress are satisfactory overall. Using a range of resources, including aerial photographs, most Year 3 pupils make good observations of the way the local landscape has changed. They describe physical and human features, respond to questions about the landscape and give their views on recent developments. The majority of Year 4 pupils make good comparisons between aspects of life in their own village and a village in India, but many are unsure about some of the reasons for their observations, for example the differences in the clothes worn. They are beginning to be aware of similar and different characteristics, as in their study of markets, but their skills in using and understanding an appropriate geographical vocabulary and using sources of evidence such as globes and world maps is underdeveloped. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to that of their peers.
- 137 The majority of pupils display interest in their work and have good attitudes to learning. They listen well to the comments of others and display by their answers that they have understood. Behaviour is generally good.
- 138 Teaching is sound at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Insufficient time has passed for this good teaching at Key Stage 2 to fully impact on the progress which pupils make and the standards they achieve. Recent developments in planning have resulted in a more coherent geography curriculum that will enable teachers to build more effectively on pupils' previous learning. Learning objectives are clearly explained, good emphasis is given to the development of a geographical vocabulary and good opportunities are planned for whole class and small group discussion of geographical issues. In the lessons observed at Key Stage 2, teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of learning. At both key stages they encourage and help pupils to improve their work.

138 **History**

- 139 The last inspection showed that all pupils achieved sound standards, and many achieved better. This inspection shows that pupils at both key stages are now achieving good standards, which is an improvement since the last inspection. With the recent introduction of the nationally recommended scheme of work for history, pupils are now making good progress. The scrutiny of the previous year's work suggests that this good progress was not consistent. Some lessons involved colouring in work-sheets or copying out writing from the board. Other lessons, particularly in Year 4, showed that teachers had planned well, marked with useful comments, and that good progress was therefore being made.
- 140 In Year 1, pupils begin to understand that the world changes over time; they look at old and new toys, noticing the differences between them. They investigate teddy bears, looking at different styles and materials, and place six of them in date order using words such as old, older and oldest. In Year 2, pupils look at changes in history through a study of Florence Nightingale; they consider the hospital conditions in which she first worked, the changes she made and how these link with modern day hospitals. Year 3 pupils start to build up a picture of different life-styles and the lives of rich and poor people through their study of Tudor times. By Year 4, pupils are considering historical evidence from different sources. When studying Celts and the Roman invasion of Britain, they find out about the discoveries of archaeology and other sources of evidence. They learn that accounts may differ and can be contradictory, depending on people's points of view.
- 141 In the lessons observed behaviour was good. Pupils are able to discuss sensibly the purpose of the lesson, and their interest is carried over into the main task. They work co-operatively and collaboratively.
- 142 The quality of teaching at both key stages is good overall, and lessons are well planned. In a very good lesson, which was well organised and managed, pupils compared hospitals of the past with those of today and were all involved in the opening discussion. In their group work they selected what they felt to be the three most important changes made to hospitals, from a list of five, giving reasons for their choice. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to act out events and situations from history. Year 4 pupils held a Roman banquet at which they dressed in Roman costume and lay on the floor to eat.

- 143 The recently appointed co-ordinator has helped to introduce the new scheme of work which provides for continuity and progression. The subject is taught in three half-term blocks with one class in each year group studying history and the other geography. This enables a more efficient use of resources and artefacts. An audit of resources has recently been carried out with the introduction of the new scheme of work. These resources are adequate but may need to be re-sorted to tie in with the new scheme. A selection of videos and CD ROMs for history has recently been added to these resources. Medium term planning is monitored and teaching is intended to be observed as part of the school's programme for monitoring the quality of teaching. Classroom displays on history topics enhance the learning environment.

Music

- 144 Few music lessons were observed during the inspection but evidence was also gained through attending assemblies, hymn practice and a recorder club. The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress overall although most make good progress with singing. This represents a maintenance of standards since the last inspection. Those pupils attending the recorder club, practice hard and also make good progress. In large groups, such as during assembly, pupils respond sensitively to the mood of songs and sing rhythmically and in tune; many enunciate their words carefully. People in the community such as those from the local church and senior citizens benefit from performances by the choir who also regularly gain recognition in the Bedford Music Festival.
- 145 Throughout the school, pupils make satisfactory progress in their lessons. In Year 1, pupils name a range of instruments and play using a colour score after suggesting an appropriate instrument to represent a colour. They follow conducting by the teacher and listen carefully to the different sounds of each instrument. In Year 3, pupils perform musical patterns by ear, successfully clapping a rhythm. The higher attaining pupils, mostly those who receive additional music tuition, use appropriate terminology and identify four different types of notes. In Year 4, pupils chant in tune to a recording by following the score and respond to 'rests'; the higher-attainers indicating the need to maintain a 'four beat pause'. These pupils are also able to identify a range of notes and give the time value, for example for a whole note and a dotted quarter note.
- 146 Pupils enjoy singing and overall maintain satisfactory responses to their lessons. Most concentrate well although a small minority need reminders from the teacher to keep focussing on the task. They behave well, for example when waiting to select an instrument, and listen to others in the class well. Pupils work in groups, co-operating and practising their rhythmic patterns and then performing for their classmates. Pupils look after the instruments properly and play them correctly.
- 147 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and some good teaching was observed in Year 3. Teachers are well prepared and have good control of their classes. They efficiently organise their resources, particularly the instruments that the pupils use, and very little time is wasted in their distribution and collection. In the best lesson, the teacher uses her good subject knowledge and expertise to plan work which interests the pupils and builds on their prior attainment. The pace of learning is good for all pupils including those with special educational needs.
- 148 The subject is led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has been in post for only a few weeks and is acting in a temporary capacity. She has good subject knowledge and is able to support her colleagues as required. The previous co-ordinator had developed a policy that reflects the school's practice and gives appropriate guidance on teaching and learning. A published scheme of work has also been introduced but as it has been in place for less than a year, insufficient time has passed for it to be fully evaluated. However, it provides good guidance for non-specialist teachers, enables them to plan lessons confidently and provides pupils with a broad and balanced music curriculum. There are opportunities for pupils to learn to play musical instruments in addition to their music lessons, for example, strings and recorders.

Physical Education

- 149 Only activities related to the playing of games were observed during the inspection. Other evidence, including a review of the documentation and discussions with the co-ordinator, has been used to support judgements. At the last inspection, standards were considered satisfactory and sometimes better. Evidence indicates standards have been maintained at Key Stage 1 and have improved in Years 3 and 4 where they are now good. By the end of Year 4 most pupils have the skills and knowledge to play a variety of ball games, have experienced different forms of dance, including modern and country dance and have good co-ordination and balance. However, pupils do not now have the opportunity to learn to swim as the school's pool has had to be closed due to the high cost of repairs and maintenance. The school has reviewed the provision for pupils to experience outdoor and adventurous activities and is liaising with the middle school to develop appropriate activities for the Year 4 pupils.
- 150 Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Years 3 and 4. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. In gymnastics, pupils show progress in the range, complexity and control of their movements. The various forms of dance taught, which include modern educational dance, dances using poetry and drama as a stimulus and dances from other countries, enable pupils to experience a range of expressive movements. In games lessons there is planning for progression of skills and principles and pupils are given opportunities to play a variety of games at their own level. In all three aspects pupils learn to work with partners and in-groups. In gymnastics, dance and games, pupils' progress is assessed using criteria from the National Curriculum programmes of study and is used to assist future planning. Effective support is given in lessons to some pupils with special educational needs. All pupils have full access to the curriculum.
- 151 Pupils are very responsive in all lessons. They listen carefully to instructions, use equipment sensibly, work hard and show enthusiasm and enjoyment. They apply what they have learnt to improve their own performance. Overall their behaviour is good. They organise themselves into pairs and groups, co-operating with each other, for example in sending the ball to a partner most older pupils are able to adjust their pass to take account of their partner's ability. Their use of the playground when practising ball skills in small groups is particularly good with all pupils aware of each other and the space available.
- 152 In the last inspection the quality of teaching was consistently good. Evidence indicates this standard is being maintained, although occasionally when the pace of a lesson slackens the teaching is only satisfactory. Lessons are well planned and pupils are quickly involved in appropriate physical activities. Good use is made of both the teacher and other pupils, acting as models, to highlight techniques and reinforce teaching. Teaching is very good when pupils are given clear instructions followed by a variety of short practice sessions interspersed with specific comments thus enabling them to improve their own performance. Secure subject knowledge and high expectations in lessons also enhance pupils' learning.
- 153 The subject is managed effectively. There is a policy and schemes of work which have been reviewed and updated. The co-ordinator oversees the planning and offers advice. She also influences the delivery of the curriculum through teaching classes other than her own. At present the progress of pupils is monitored by their own teacher but there are plans for the co-ordinator to be involved with monitoring. Overall, curricular provision is broad and balanced. There is a statutory requirement to teach swimming at Key Stage 2 but no requirement for this to take place in Years 3 and 4. Generally, resources are good, although there is a lack of small equipment to enhance the gymnastic skills of the younger pupils. The school has a good sized field; a suitable area of hard surfaced playground, a small adventure playground and a hall. The arrangements for storing apparatus are good and the equipment is of good quality. The school has sports days for younger and older pupils. Both girls and boys play netball, football and rounders in lessons. There are no competitive games against other schools although the pupils in the Year 4 classes play rounders against each other. They also play a match against the staff. Five a side football matches were a regular feature up to this year.
- 154 The school offers some extra curricular activities during the year. Short Tennis, run by an outside organisation, is offered as an optional after school activity. The school has been involved with the Bedford Country Dance festival and with giving dance and gymnastic displays at the Summer Fair in the village.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

154 SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 155 The inspection was carried out by a team of five inspectors, who spent a combined total of 16 days in school. During the course of the inspection, the team observed 69 lessons in whole or in part, attended assemblies and observed registration periods and beginnings and ends of sessions. Three pupils from each class were heard reading aloud. Pupils discussed their reading habits and books and talked about other aspects of their work. A scrutiny of pupils' work was also undertaken. Observations were made of pupils in the playground, at lunchtime and around the school. This provided opportunities for inspectors to talk with them. A total time of approximately 69 hours was spent on the above activities.
- 156 The inspection team scrutinised minutes of the governing body meetings, curriculum and other policy documents, teachers' plans, financial statements, pupils' records and attendance registers.
- 157 Discussions were held with members of the governing body, the headteacher, teaching and non-teaching staff. Approximately 15 hours and 40 minutes was spent on this activity.
- 158 There were 51 responses (23 per cent) to the parents' questionnaire and approximately 29 parents attended the parents' meeting. Discussions also took place with parents in the playground during the week of the inspection.
- 158

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y4	219	3	29	15

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y4)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	11.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21

Education support staff (YR – Y4)

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked each week	116.75

Average class size:	23
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Financial data

Financial year:	1998/9
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	£
Total Income	396,614
Total Expenditure	405,969
Expenditure per pupil	1,617
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,649
Balance carried forward to next year	15,294

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

221

Number of questionnaires returned:

51

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	39	55	4	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	51	39	4	4	2
The school handles complaints from parents well	12	43	24	8	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	18	53	16	14	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	24	53	8	16	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	33	57	4	6	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	35	55	6	4	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	31	51	8	8	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	45	43	10	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	33	51	8	4	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	53	43	2	2	0

Other issues raised by parents

The majority of parents were positive about the school and the education provided. They made comments about the commitment of staff and the 'extra time that they gave to the school'.